

Halfway to Canaan: The Peril of Settling for Less

Pastor and Author A.W. Tozer

July 6, 1958

Over the past weeks, talking on the 23rd of Exodus, where the Lord told Moses, Israel, that he would lead them into the land. Behold, I send an angel before thee, and the series of sermons has been called, the angel before thee. And now we left that 23rd chapter and went to another passage where we dealt with the people of God at Paran, Kadesh Barnea, where they sent the spies over and came back with an unfavorable report, saying the spies were huge and the cities walled up to heaven. And they didn't go over, they went back.

Now tonight, we skip ahead about 40 years, 39 years, I guess, anyway, and I read these words. Now, after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, Moses, my servant, is dead.

Now, therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this people unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses, from the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your coast. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life.

As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee, be strong and of a good courage. For unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance, the land which I swear unto their fathers to give them.

Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayst observe to do according to all the law which Moses, my servant, commanded thee. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, thou shalt meditate therein day and night. Have not I commanded thee, be strong and of a good courage, and be not afraid? Neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Now we have followed watchfully and reverently the teachings of God, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, and the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel. Behold, I send an angel before thee to keep thee, lead thee, defend thee, and bring thee in. And we have seen how, while the church dwells in the spiritual realm and Israel more or less in the natural, yet the principles that underlie the teachings to Israel underlie the teachings to us in the New Testament.

And therefore, we have been reverently trying to learn the ways of God with men. And we have been more than trying to learn those ways. We have been trying to learn in order that we might believe and accept and receive the benefits of.

Now, for ourselves and for this church and for the church. Now it says here, after the death of Moses, the Lord spake unto Joshua and said to Joshua, arise and go over this

Jordan and take with you the people on to the land which I promised that I would lead you by mine angel, by my cloud and fire by day and night. And it's all yours, and every place the sole of your foot shall tread upon. That have I given unto you as I said unto Moses.

Now they could have been in the land 39 years before. They could have been enjoying milk and honey and pomegranates and the grapes of Eschol. The cities built for them, the fields plowed for them, the orchards pruned and trimmed for them. They could have been enjoying that 39 years. But during those 39 years, they were wandering in a semi-desert wilderness.

And it had been their fault altogether and alone. Yet I ask you to notice something here very wonderful and very beautiful. That even though they had at Paran rebelled against the leadership of the angel and had gone back, declaring petulantly that God was going to destroy their family. That's what God's trying to do. Forgetting that God is love and that the kind love of God had brought them out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt. Forgetting that, they petulantly, impudently whined and whimpered against God and refused to go in.

And then to give it a little bit of respectability, they said, for our children's sake we're not going in. The worst thing you can do, brother, is to disobey God. And if you disobey God, your children will suffer all the rest of their lives and yours. And the best thing you can do is to obey God regardless of what it may seem to do to your children. Your children will come out all right if you obey God.

But if you disobey God for any reason, you are not doing your family any good. If you refuse to give your tithe because you feel you can't keep your family on what's left, you're not doing your family any good. If you refuse to get up and scrub them up and comb them up and get them off to Sunday school because you like to see the poor little fellow sleep in, you're not doing them any good. If you let them do things which your conscience tells you you should not, you're not doing them any good.

Remember that the will of God is the best for you and for your family. And these Jews nevertheless managed to twist out of faith and obedience by saying you brought us up here to kill our children, an insult to God Almighty. And yet, after 39 years now, after that episode, they had not been able to alienate God from them.

God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that He would lead them into the land. He had promised Israel that He would lead them into the land. And they had not been able to alienate God from them. His covenant still remained with them, and His purpose for them was the same.

You know, some of you who have been disobeying God and are very despondent now, it would be wonderful if you could straighten up and come out of your despair and find out that though you have been unfaithful to Him, He has never been unfaithful to you. For He abided faithful, He cannot deny himself.

Now remember, my friends, whether you're on the Arminian or Calvinist side, I don't care nor ask, but I just want you to get one thing clear, and that is, if it wasn't that God

was working to be true to Himself, we would all have been in hell long ago. Remember that if it wasn't that God was working according to a covenant which He made in Christ Jesus before the world began, purposed in Christ before the world began, there wouldn't be one of us remain a Christian 24 hours, talking about the perseverance of the saints. They used to call it the perseverance of the saints, the doctrine being that the saints will persevere if they've ever been true saints.

Somebody asked Torrey, Dr. Torrey, do you believe in the perseverance of the saints? He said, no, but I believe in the perseverance of the Savior. That's quite another thing, and that I believe in too, in the perseverance of the Savior.

Now, if it had depended upon the perseverance of Israel, about 80 percent of Israel was lying sleeping out in the sands of the desert. But still, God hadn't forgotten them, and His covenant and His purpose and His promise still stood.

And then suddenly, Moses dies. We'll not go into this about Moses dying when he was still healthy. He was. He was the only man I know of in Bible or out that died with nothing wrong with him. His eye had not dimmed, and he was as healthy a fellow at 120 as he had been at 40 or 50, and suddenly now he dies at the command of God.

And this must have certainly been a tremendous shock to Israel, because a whole generation had not known anybody else except Moses as their leader, a whole generation. Those who had gotten acquainted with Moses when they were adults and older and had come across the Red Sea into the desert, they'd all left their bones in the desert because they wouldn't go over, wouldn't go on into the land. But this younger generation, the ones that were now grown up and had reached the ages of anywhere from children on up to, say, 50, 60 years of age, they had known Moses only, and he had been to them a symbol of God's leadership.

Here's something I want to warn you about, my friends. It is this. Never get attached to any of God's ministers as a symbol of His leadership. When I was a young Christian fellow, my pastor, S. M. Gerow, had a great organ voice, and he used to preach so beautifully about the great things of God. The first sermon I heard him preach was, was that one on where Sanballat and his crowd of Communists had tried to get Nehemiah to come down and stop building the temple or building the walls. And Nehemiah had sent back a word, I cannot come down. I am doing a great work. I cannot come down. He preached on that.

Well, I fell in love with his preaching, joined his church. I was looking around for one that preached the gospel. I'd been converted after hearing a street preacher. And I got so that he was to me the sound of piety, and the echo of spirituality, the flavor and timber of his voice, I made, I associated with godliness. So that for years afterwards, even if he had just said, pass the butter, it would have sounded spiritual to me, because I had associated his voice and his leadership with godliness.

Now, there is something you've got to look out for, my friend. Remember one thing. You need everybody, but you don't need anybody. We are a church. Churches trust each other, and lean on each other, and long love each other, and help each other. But

remember one thing. You do not need any body. There are no indispensable ministers. God had no indispensable prophets, not even Moses. Moses, my servant, is dead.

That sounded like the thunderclap of doom to Israel. Now, Moses is dead. And yet, God speaks now clear and encouraging, and said to them, you have Me, you have the angel, you have the fiery pillar by night, you have the cloudy pillar by day, and you have My promise, you have My covenant, you have My known purpose, you have Me all around you, therefore go on into the land. And now I give you another leader. Moses, my servant, is dead, and you don't need Moses anymore.

Now, remember this. You don't lose God when you lose a man of God. There have been great Christian leaders, so great that when they died, the whole Christian church worried about it. They were deeply grieved and shocked when they died. But the church of God goes on, for the gates of hell cannot prevail against her. You don't lose God when you lose a man of God.

You know, God is the God of today, just as he was the God of yesterday and will be the God of tomorrow, because God dwells in an everlasting now, and there is no time in God. Someday I'd like to preach on that again. I preached on the eternity of God many years ago and have referred to it. But I'd like to give a full sermon. It would take a series of them really to do it even a slight justice.

But you and I are creatures of time. When you see somebody, you haven't seen for ten years, you say to yourself, how he has changed. It's strange that my friends are all changing, and I alone remain unchanged with the passing of the years. You've gotten used to your balding dome, brother. That's what's the matter. And you don't notice how you're changing. And people stand and look me in the face and smile and tell me the nicest little lies. They say you never change.

Well, they must have poor memories, because I know what time does the people. Friends, time cuts you down. Time, the ever-rolling stone, grinds you down. We're the victims of time. We're the victims of the sunrise and the sunset and the changes of the moon and the weather. But God's eternal thought moves on his undisturbed affairs.

The eternal, sovereign God is unchanged. God is the same yesterday and today and tomorrow. Who's yesterday? God's? No. God has no yesterday. Who's tomorrow? God's tomorrow, no. God has no tomorrow. God has already lived all of your tomorrows as He lived all yesterdays. He's alive forevermore and holds time within His heart. And all of the little sputniks and all of the little calendars and anniversaries and events all take place in the mighty heart of God. For the Scripture says that the heaven of heavens cannot contain God, and that God holds in His hands the stars of the heavens.

I've been listening to lectures Saturday nights after I go to bed. I lie and listen to lectures on astronomy. Why, my brother, they tell us about light years, distances, galaxies, stars. They tell us of a sun out there that you could take three a million, I think it is, of our suns and plop them into it and then still have room for some more little suns here and there to fill up the extra space. And yet God almighty contains all of that.

And think of the time. They talk about years and light years because they can't measure time by ordinary calendar years. They talk about light year. What's a light year? It's the time, it's 186,000 miles a second light is traveling. And they measure, they measure therefore years or space, space by light years. How far it will take light, how far light can travel in a year traveling 186,000 miles. Oh, there's no use. There's no use. It's all beyond us, my brother. It's all beyond us. But God is the God of today because God contains today and yesterday, tomorrow in His great infinite heart.

Now to most Christians, God is the God of yesterday. I've come to the conclusion that orthodoxy is pretty much believing that God was. And what God was, if you believe that really well. You believe in the spatial creation, and I do. And you believe in the creation of Adam and Eve, and I do. And you believe in the fall, and I do. You believe in the flood, and we all do. And you believe in the call of Abraham and Israel, and you believe in all of that, and we all do. You believe in the virgin birth of Jesus and the bodily resurrection and His ascension to the right hand of God the Father Almighty, and His coming down, the Holy Ghost coming down. We believe all this.

But don't forget, all of this was in the historic past for you and me. And so, it seems that it's possible to be entirely orthodox and be accepted by the orthodox churches, the fundamentalist churches, if you're ready to subscribe to a doctrine of a God that was. But do you know that the God that was, is? The God that was is the God that is, and the God that will be.

So I'd like to, I'd like to, I'd like to inspire you somehow to dare to rise and believe that the God who was, is, and the God who is, will be; and ask you to cease to be an historic Christian, a bee in amber, embalmed in all the niceties of doctrine, but embalmed nevertheless, wrapped like Lazarus in the winding sheet of orthodoxy, but wholly unwilling to believe that God will ever do anything now.

Oh, my friend, the Lord spoke to Joshua after Moses was dead and said, now therefore arise and go over this Jordan. Now, 39 years before, He had told them to go into the land at Paran and they had refused to go and they had wandered around. Paran was south of the land and all they had to do was to wind their way through some hills and low mountains into the land. That's all there was to it.

Now they had wandered around and were on the east of the land with a turbulent, muddy river flowing between. In other words, they had left a better place for a worse place. Their long wandering around had not helped them as far as they were concerned. It would have been easier to go into the land from their geographical position south of the land than it was from their position east of the land. And you know what? I think that often, if not always, God takes us in from the least likely spot.

But you say, what do you mean by taking you in, Mr. Tozer? Well, I don't think I need to tell this congregation that I believe that there's a better place for us Christians, and most Christians are willing to accept, that there is a place where we can live closer to God in a place of sweeter communion and greater power and more consistent spiritual victory than most Christians know. And it's rather sad that there are people writing books and making lectures proving that that isn't so. That just isn't so.

When somebody writes you a letter or sends you a tract showing that there isn't any better place than the wilderness, that the wilderness is it. Where God said no, the wilderness is interim. It is that through which you must travel to get to the land which I will show you.

Now, what is this land? Well, I've told you over the last eight sermons that it is an improved spiritual position here in this life, a better spiritual state down here now. Oh, after all, it's only New Testament Christianity. That which we see everywhere about us is substandard. We bear the same relation, we Christians in the United States of America, we fundamentalist gospel Christians, bear the same relation to the Christians of the New Testament that a scrub hen bears to a full-blooded Minorca.

Now, on the farm where there used to be blooded chickens, that is, the great old Rhode Island reds with the feathers clear down to their feet, heavy bodied and fat, and the white leghorn and slim and egg layers, and the Plymouth Rocks, great friendly old heavy chickens, they'd lay eggs awhile and they always seemed to be good and fleshed, the kind you wanted when company came.

Well, all you had to do was just let them alone, just let them alone for say five years. And you know what happened? They crossed and crisscrossed and inbred and crisscrossed, and pretty soon you had scrubs. And most farmers had scrubs. They were just half-sized scrubs laying half-sized eggs because they were scrubs compared with what they could have been.

And I believe that the average Christian now is a scrub compared with what we Christians could be. What is a revival, brethren? A revival, it isn't really too much. It is simply where God succeeds in producing a strain of pure-blood Christians, good ones, the Christians that are not scrubby, but that are full up to what they ought to be, pedigree, real, real Christians.

But the average Christian today is a scrub. He's learned to love scrub music. He reads scrubby Christian literature, cheap books of fiction written by old maids who are sublaxating their sexual longings and writing books and having them published. And we read that cheap trash, that literary garbage, and fellas write junk that never should have been allowed to exist in order that they might get it into a book and get the royalties on it. And we poor dumb scrub sheep who have never known what it is to see or gaze upon a flock of pure-blood breads, we're living in the shadows, scrubs compared with what we could be.

Now, I know that doesn't sound very good and it doesn't fill a church as a rule. People don't want to be talked to that way. They want to have their backs scratched. I know how to scratch people's backs. You scratch them, I know how to do it with our gray cat. Scratch her back and she'll close her eyes with a look of absolute feline bliss on her face. And the average preacher just scratches the backs of scrub cats, and they pay the bills and so that's all a man wants. God Almighty help us, brethren. There ought to be a pressing forward. Moses, my servant, is dead now. Therefore, arise and get thee into the land which I have given you.

Why, one denomination calls it the victorious life. Another one calls it the deeper life. Another one calls it by some other name. But I think we're all trying to say the same thing, that there's a better place than the average Christian has found, a place of light, a place of spiritual fullness, a place of rapturous worship, a place of power, a place where prayers are answered, a better place. And that's the place.

Now figure it out the best you can, but that's what I'm talking about. And I say that often the Lord takes us in from the least likely spot. After we've made everything difficult. See, they had wandered around for 39 years and had complicated the simple act of going into the land. They'd complicated it terribly. They were psychologically all unprepared for it. They'd come to expect only the wilderness with its wanderings.

And I am perfectly certain, just as Jesus said to a man that lay by the pool, wilt thou be made whole? Why did He ask him, do you want to get well? That's what the word means in Chicago English. Do you want to get well? Why did He ask a man, do you want to get well? Because illness has a psychology. And when it becomes chronic illness, after a while you learn to live with it. And pretty soon you'll even may learn to like it.

There are people that are so small in their experience that if they didn't have a pain, they wouldn't have a topic of conversation. Now I mean this, I'm not kidding. And Jesus knew it. And Jesus said, do you want to get well? And the man said he did, and the Lord delivered him.

Now here, you'll find there are Christians they wouldn't want. There are some of you Christians listening to me, you wouldn't want a revival to come to this church. You wouldn't want it. You've got your life all carefully laid out. You know just what you do. You know just how many meetings a week you go to church. You know just exactly how much you give. And you have managed to work out a comfortable pattern for your spiritual life.

And if a revival came, the first thing it would do would be to disturb your comfortable pattern. And you've learned to live with your scrub Christianity. And any accelerating of your spiritual pace, any elevation in your spiritual altitude, and for a while you'd be dizzy.

So you pray send revival, but you don't mean it. Just as Israel, 39 years Israel had been in the wilderness, they went to sleep at night to the sound, or whatever sounds there were. They woke in the morning to the same sounds, so they did not have the psychology of advance. And I believe that's one thing that's wrong with our churches. That's why soft preaching will never bring revival to the church of Christ. That's why preaching that tries to please everybody never will be, never will bring revival.

Now let me raise my hand to heaven and tell you this. That if the church, the fundamentalist evangelical church of which I am a part until you'd have to amputate me to get me out of it. If that church ever recaptures the glory of New Testament Christianity, it will be on the preaching of men who do not try to stay in good with everybody but are perfectly willing to make some people mad. Do you hear me?

The idea that we can glorify God and bless His church and bring revival to the world while at the same time walking carefully on eggs so as never to offend anybody, that is heresy of the lousiest kind. There never has been a revival touched the world yet that wasn't led by some rough man who didn't care whether people liked it or not.

Well, don't forget this one thing, however. It is this, the land is a gift, the land which I give unto thee. Draw a line under that word, "give." I do give it to them. We can't overemphasize this, that anything you get from God is a gift from God to you out of the goodness of His heart. You can't earn it; you can't merit it. It isn't yours by any right, nor justice, nor logic. It's yours as a gift to be received and not a reward to be earned. It's still there waiting even after the long blundering.

Some of us Christians have blundered so terribly after we get converted, blundered so terribly after the long years. And yet God says, every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given you. There's the tread of faith, as much as you will take, as far as you will go.

Now I'm nearly finished, and I want to talk a little about the judgment of all believers. It is that everybody is as far along as he wants to be. Hear me. You're as far along in the spiritual life as you want to be. I've been saying that for quite a number of years. The other day I read a devotional book or read in a devotional book. You don't read devotional books through, you read in them.

And I read in this devotional book by some old saint many, many centuries ago, and lo and behold, he said, everybody is as far along as he wants to be. And I'd never read it from him, I'd been saying it. Which says once more that the Holy Ghost always talks the same language, whether he is talking in the 20th century or in the 14th. Everyone has as much as he wants to have, everybody's as holy as he wants to be, and everybody's as full of the Spirit as he wants to be.

Now, do you hear that? This is the judgment of God on all believers. Israel was as far into the land as she wanted to be. And you are as far into the land as you want to be. And you are as near to God as you want to be. So don't say, pray for me that I may be near to God. No, no, no, no, that's a cliché, a religious cliché, don't use it. You can be as near to God as you will be. You can be as full of God as you will be.

When Dr. Torrey was a very old man, I heard him preach when his voice was practically gone. He never preached many sermons, if any, after that, and then he died. But I heard him preach on being filled with the Spirit. And he said this, and I've never forgotten it. He said, we talk about getting more of the Spirit, forgetting that we're approaching it from the wrong direction. We ought to see that the Spirit gets more of us, instead of seeking to have more of the Spirit. You have as much of the Spirit as you want. For as you give yourself to God, you will be filled.

Bring your empty earthen vessels. Bring your vessels, not a few. And when they brought the vessels and kept bringing the vessels, the oil kept flowing into the vessels. And it was only when they came and said, there is not another vessel, that the oil stayed.

So, my brother, you are as holy as you want to be. You are as full of God as you want to be. You're as close to God as you want to be. And you're as far into the spiritual land as you want to be.

But you say, Mr. Tozer, I don't want to contradict, but I know better. My heart longs and yearns, and I cry to God that I might be a better Christian. You cry to God to be a better Christian, but you won't let God make you a better Christian. You won't follow the Lord into the land. You say, O God, give me the land, but you won't enter the land. You say, Lord, I want to be holier, but you won't let God make you holier. You're as holy as you'll let God make you.

It's time we took the onus off of God Almighty and put it on our own souls where it belongs. The fact we have no revival and that we're scrub Christians living infinitely below our spiritual privileges in Christ is not the fault of our Father which art in heaven. For after 39 years of wandering, Israel was told, I'm with you still. I didn't desert you. You deserve to be deserted. But I remember my friend Abraham. I'm with you still. The covenant still holds.

Some of you that are listening to me now, you've gotten old and bald, and you've hardened up, and your habits have congealed, and a kind of premature rigor mortis has set into your spiritual life. And still, the God who gave His son to die in anguish hasn't given you up, and He won't. He won't. He's still on your side, still waiting for you to wake and come to yourself. Every place the soul of your foot treads, that's yours if you'll take it.

Now, this is the eighth message that I've given. And I have told you from this 23rd of Exodus and pointing out that this is history and that it had to do with a physical nation in a physical world, but that the spiritual principles which underlie it apply to us in the spiritual world.

And I've shown you how God says, I will go before you, I'll be an enemy to your enemies, an adversary to your adversaries, and I will bring you into the land of your enemies, and I will drive them out, and I will bless you, and there shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfil. And I'll send my fear before you. I've told you that.

And now I tell you, I've had no advantage to gain. What could I gain if any of you suddenly decided you were going to stop fooling around and take your Christianity seriously? What could I gain by that? You tell me, any raise in salary from me on that? Any big car, nicer parsonage from me? No. No, we've learned to get along, half dead the way we are.

And if we continue that way, we'll still get along all right, as Israel got along in the wilderness, wandering around in the desert. They got on, but they died one at a time, and we buried them out of here one at a time, and I don't know whose turn it'll be next. And I've prayed, and I've labored, and I think unselfishly, for I've had nothing to gain. And I believe the Holy Ghost has spoken.

And what have you done about it, dear Christian friends? I'm not finished. There'll be some more sermons on the same subject. We're going to talk next week about the actual crossing over at the Jordan. But what have you done about this? Oh, I don't want to listen to the devil. I don't like the devil. I don't like the devil. I don't like Communists, Communism, and I don't like the devil.

But if I wanted to get blue, I think that I could make indigo look pink by comparison, because just think of the people that have listened to my preaching over these last months and years and have kept coming back indicating that for some reason, something brought them, and haven't done one lowly thing about it. You have not made any spiritual progress at all. You haven't gotten anywhere. You're right where you were. And not only that, but you also don't intend to do anything about it tonight. You're casting quick looks at your watch and wondering if you'll be, I'll let you out in time for that program.

Moses, my servant is dead. Now, therefore, arise and get thee over this Jordan. And don't forget that it's all by the blood of the everlasting covenant, all by the blood of the covenant. Everywhere we look, every direction we turn, every word we utter, every prayer we make is by the blood of the everlasting covenant. That Great Shepherd of the sheep which God brought back from the dead, took to His own right hand to be our Advocate above, a Savior above the throne of love.

And I think that He is both more severe with you than I am, but I think also He's infinitely more understanding than I could be. Moses tended to get irked with Israel, and I'm afraid sometimes that I get irked with people I don't want to, you know, that kept Moses out of the land. But brethren, why do we fool around the way we do?

Now, some of you got a pattern. First thing you'll do is duck out of here and hit for Melody Lane or someplace else. And you're going to do that, or dash home for some TV program. You're going to do that, and you'll do that regardless of what I say. Who's that old guy anyhow?

Well, I've said that, and the devil said it, and there's only one person who thinks I'm out to anything, and He went out and died for me on the cross. He's the only one who thinks it. And if you want to dismiss me with a carnal shrug, I'm dismissible, brother. But there'll be a judgment when we'll all stand before the judgment seat of Christ to give account of the deeds done in the body.

And this sixth day of July 1958, at seven o'clock in the evening, there was a service, and you attended it. And you heard an exhortation based upon the imagery and history of the Old Testament, a typology, if you like, and then you went out to follow your pattern, convenient, undisturbed, the same rut you've lived in for years. Dear Heavenly Father, are we going to continue like this in our circle, or are we going to break out of it and move on toward God? Let us pray.

O Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Christ and Lord and King and Prince and Advocate and Priest and High Priest and Lamb that was slain, someone pointed to Thee and said, Behold the Lamb of God, and we followed Thee, and we thank Thee Thou didst accept us and take away our sins. Then Thou didst say, now if you will follow Me, take up your cross, deny

yourself, follow Me, and where I am there my servant will be. Then began our compromising. Then we learned to make compromise. And we've learned it, we've come as skillful as a scholastic theologian. We've made ourselves comfortable and convenient.

O Lord Jesus, what shall we say to Thee? What shall we say to Thee? We send sixty-two percent of our income to the foreign field to make converts in Africa, Indonesia, South America, and the islands of the sea. But some of those same converts would be shocked if they came back and saw how cold we are, how full of jokes, how engrossed with the size of our automobiles and our rugs and our picture windows.

My Lord Jesus, we are ashamed before Thee this day. We pray that Thou will help us to set our hearts like a flint, determinedly and like Daniel, refuse to partake of the world's meats. Help us, we pray, to hear Thy cheerful, encouraging voice even after our disgraceful wanderings, saying, now rise, rise, get up, move in, I'll be with you.

Gracious Lord, we pray Thee, touch every one of our hearts and tear away all of our little playhouses. Tear away, we pray Thee, our God, all of the little idols that we've made unconsciously. We don't know have. We have all the little comfortable pillows for our heads. Take them all away and bring us back down as Jacob was to the rock. Grant, we pray Thee, that there might be some serious heart-searching during this week that lies ahead.

Dear Savior, Thou knowest with rebellions and revolutions and hydrogen bombs and leagues of nations, Arab leagues and the United Nations and the shaping up of things for the end times, and with man holding in his hand a weapon for suicide, Lord, we can't afford to play. Yet we're so well off, so moneyed, so comfortable, that we're learning to play and we stretch ourselves on beds of ivory and invent instruments like David and drink out of bowls and care not, care not that the tread of the advancing enemy can be heard till it shakes the earth and the sound of the shout of the enemy is carried to us on every wind, and yet we go our way.

My Father, help America. Help us of the fundamentalist churches. Help us of the gospel churches. Help us, we beseech Thee. Help us. We have our Bibles, and we claim to believe, but, O Father, so did the Pharisees. We beseech Thee, help us to put our beliefs to practice. Let it cost us something, we beseech Thee. Now we're trusting.

We pray for our people that are out and gone and away, many of them, and they'll be back tomorrow. They'll be back in time to work, but they didn't get back in time for church today. But bless them anyway, Lord, and help them and let them not leave their bones on the highways. Have mercy upon these poor people who are traveling in bumper-to-bumper, long lanes of traffic coming into the city tonight. Let there be few or no accidents. Preserve lives. We don't deserve it but have mercy on us for Jesus Christ's sake.

Put into the hands of the right people, the right literature, we beseech Thee, that we may break out of this conventional shell of dead level of mediocrity and break through into courageous, daring, unusual, radical, if need be, kind of spiritual lives that our frightened friends will call us fanatics. But Thou wilt smile as thou dost see that we are pushing on into the land which Thou hast promised us in Christ Jesus, the spiritual

places, the heavenly places with which we've been blessed but about which we do so little. We ask all this in Christ's name.

Amen.