

The Antichrist

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Now please turn to Revelation 12. We'll read it. It's quite a good-sized chapter. We'll read the chapter. Pray that the Spirit of God may open our eyes even as we read. Suppose that we read as we usually do responsibly. The chief value of that method is to keep us from reading too fast. And then we'll all read the last verse together. Revelation 12.

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. And there appeared another wonder in heaven, and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns upon his head. And she brought forth a man-child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron, and her child was caught up under God into his throne.

And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world.

He was cast out into the earth and his angels were cast out with him. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought the man-child forth.

And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that it might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth bowed to the woman, and the earth bowed to the man. And the dragon was wroth with the woman and went to make war with a remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus.

Now, I note here that this chapter begins by saying, there appeared a great wonder in heaven. Of course, it was a sign, it was a wonder with significance. And I might begin by saying to you that we live in a world of wonders, if we only had eyes to see.

We live in a world of wonders, and I believe they are not only wonders, but they are signs. The poet you know said there were tongues in trees and books in the running brooks. He was only a poet, but sometimes the poet blunders into saying things that are very true, and that is one truth.

I wonder how we'd feel if we saw the sun come up for the first time, or if we saw the stars out for the first time. Imagine how the first man felt who looked for the first time at Niagara tumbling over the rocks, or the great Grand Canyon yawning there in its terrible beauty. The world is full of wonders, but if the earth can show wonders, how much more can heaven? There was an Englishman by the name of Lord Dunsany, whom

I read a great deal when I was a younger fellow. He wrote a book called the "Book of Wonders."

But the Book of Wonders had already been written. This Book of Wonders I hold in my hand, this Book of Wonders. It is not a book spun out of man's imagination. It is a true account of actual events before they happen. You hear what I say? This book is an account of things that have happened, and a true account of things before they happen.

The prophetic past, I saw, and I saw, and I saw, and yet, to us, it's a way out in the future. But that which is to be already has happened in the sight of God. And the man John, from his high lookout in the spirit, sees that which is to be as though it already had been.

And this Book of Revelation is a drama of wonders. It is unique in time. It tells us of things that never happened before and never will happen again. Some things God has repeated. We may see them today and wait and see them again tomorrow. Some things happened a century ago and will happen in the next century and the next.

But there are some things that only happened once. As, for instance, when our Lord told us of that terrible period which this twelfth chapter takes in, when nothing like it ever had been before and nothing like it ever was again.

So, this John, from this high lookout, sees the procession of the skies of heaven and earth and hell, and he sees here a woman.

Now, there are several views of this woman. I might mention them and pass on. One of them is that this is the Virgin Mary, and this glory in which she is clothed with the moon under her feet and clothed with the sun and the crown of stars about her head, that this is a picture of Mary. But we know better than this, and we dismiss this, because we do not believe that it has any support from anywhere else in the entire Word of God.

Then there is the view that this is Israel, and then there is the view that this is the Church. I believe there is only one view that is tenable and that can be supported by the Old Testament prophets and by other passages from the New Testament, and that is that this woman that appears as a sign in the wonder in heaven, clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and the stars about her head, is Israel. I cannot see anything else.

And I ask you to behold then the nation of Israel, a nation as men see her, humble from the beginning. Israel has always been humble. Her glory has never been the glory of Rome or Babylon or England. She came from a simple man who came out of her of the Chaldees and was a nomad traveling south. Her history is known, and she's been in more trouble than she's been out of, and she's had more feet on her neck than we can imagine down the years.

She's been humble, I say, from the beginning, often in exile and often in captivity. She's been robbed and spoiled, but she's been subjected to pogroms and assassinations even down to the present day. And she has been a snare and a curse and a hissing and a byword down to this hour. That has been Israel. That's the woman as man sees her. But behold, a nation in the eternal purposes of God.

Oh, if we were only wise to be able to see as God sees and see what God sees, we might look at a little child, if we could see as God sees, and behold in that little child a receptacle for the glory of God for all the ages to come. But we see only a little freckled child who has a genius for getting under your feet. We don't see as God sees.

It's the same with the church. We see otherwise than as God sees. We ought to pray day and night for the anointed eye that we might see as God sees, that we might have God's values of things, that we might look upon the world and see it as God sees it, that we might look upon little things and see them as big as they are in the sight of God, and upon big things and see them as little as they are in the sight of God.

This woman as man sees her is nothing. Go down on Maxwell Street and you'll see her there. But as God sees her, a nation invested with light, the sun and the moon and the stars, crowned and crowned with the stars and clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet.

Now it says that there was a great red dragon there. And I call attention to the glory and the tragedy of being a moral creature. I can perfectly understand why John Bunyan, when he was under blistering, terrible, devastating conviction for sin, why he looked at a dog loping down the sidewalk and looked up and said, O God, I wish I were a yonder dog, for that dog can die and remain dead, and I, a man, have to die and come again to judgment.

The creature without moral quantities and qualities, that creature we can write off and dismiss. But the terror and the glory and the tragedy and the wonder of the creatures who were made in God's image with progression and regression, degeneration and transfiguration, this we see, this great red dragon.

Now we have him pictured here. We know who he is. We don't have to be great or profound scholars to know that this is the devil. This is that terrible beast that was once the covering cherub that has come to destroy men.

And some who stand on Mount Zion there, in the 14th chapter, later on in Revelation, they were at one time simple people that nobody, nobody ever dreamed that someday they would stand on Mount Zion. But there was the sun of the morning, that creature that was created by God to overshadow the fiery seat of God there, the throne and the stones of fire. That creature fell, and oh, how he fell and how far down he fell.

What does that teach you and me? It ought to teach us that no matter how far up we may go, it's possible to descend tragically, and no matter how low down we are, it's possible to rise in the will of God by the grace of God and be made new creatures in Christ Jesus. That's the thought I throw in here about this great red dragon. And then here was the man-child.

Now, this man-child, you see, there are also two views about this man-child. I wish that sometime, I imagine when we get to heaven, there'll only be one view of things. But almost everywhere you'll find, always find two views.

And if I've had illumination on it and God's spoken to me on it, and if it has to do with things that matter, I usually come down hard and have one view. But where you can believe either side and still be a good Christian, I'm a little more cautious, and there are more than one side.

We used to have a man in the Alliance by the name of William T. MacArthur. He was the father of the MacArthur who runs a big printing house in Oak Park and publishes the paper out there, Oak Leaves. He was the father of Charles MacArthur, the playwright. But he was a godly man, and he had a view, more or less, all his own about this.

And he says that this woman was the church, and that this man-child is that part of the church that's ready at the coming of Christ. And that the great church in her glory that's not prepared for the Lord's return, she gives birth to the small church within her that is prepared. And that was his view.

And he got away with it, and it was all right, I guess. Not very many people followed him in that view, I guess. But I hold to the view that this man-child could be nobody but Jesus Christ, our Lord, and the church seen in one view. Christ Jesus the Lord in the church, Christ Jesus the Lord.

And here we see this woman, Israel, giving birth to the man-child. And of course it was Israel that gave birth to the man-child. And when she gave birth to the man-child, she also automatically gave birth to the church, for it was from the wounded side of Jesus that the church was born.

And here was this red dragon waiting before the man-child to destroy him. You well know that when he was born in Bethlehem, that Herod immediately sent out to destroy him. You know how he was hounded on down and killed another Roman pilot, had him taken out and crucified. You know the enemy, Judas, and you know how Rome persecuted the church.

Now this man-child was caught away. He was taken away and a cloud received him out of their sight. That was said of the head of the church. But you know every head has to have a body, just as everybody must have a head. And Jesus Christ was the head of the body, the church. So when we see the great woman here in her glory, seen as God Caesar, giving birth to the man-child, we see her giving birth to Jesus, the head.

But we also see her giving birth to the church, which is the body of Christ. And so, both that Christ was caught away to the right hand of God the Father, and his body will be caught away to the right hand of God the Father.

You know, my friends, it's good to continue to believe some things. We have shifted, as I have had occasion to say several times during my talks from Revelation, we have shifted over the last years from the old-fashioned Scofield Bible view of prophecy. I mean, the fundamentalists and the evangelicals have shifted until they're all mixed up among themselves. They won't invite a man to come and preach on prophecy anymore without their first asking him what he believes.

I had some Jewish brethren come here one time to see me. They asked me what I believed about this and what I believed about that. And when I told them what I believed, then they cautiously invited me to their conference. They were going to have a world conference of religious or Christian Jews in the Calvary Baptist Church in New York. And there were to be, I think, twenty-three speakers at that. They were all to preach on prophecy.

And they had gone around and called them all out so every man would say the same thing. Well, you know what I did? I didn't accept that invitation at all. They announced me that I, I said, no, I never told you that I would come, and so I didn't show up. I didn't go because I didn't want to be told what I was to say. I wanted to have views of my own.

But it so happens that with all the study of the Bible that I can do, and all the praying, and looking at world events, and reading as widely as I can, I still believe that Jesus Christ is coming back to the world again, and that he's going to catch away his church. The body has already been, the head has already been caught away to the right hand of the Father, and the body is going to be caught away.

You can't separate the bride from the bridegroom. You can't separate the body from the head. You can't separate Christ from his church, and so there's going to be a glorious rising to get out of it all, and to get away from it all.

And so I'm, I'm not going to go along with the brethren who argue with each other about details. There are enough details in the book of Revelation to keep man preaching from now until the next Democrat's elected president.

But I am not going to go into details. I'm not going to do it. I'm only going to pass it over lightly here, and to say that there's the great wonder, Israel, the nation of God, and the great dragon, that devil and Satan, who is determined to destroy not only her, but to destroy the man-child born of her, and destroy the church, which is His bride, and destroy every good thing. The devil hates every good thing that's of God, everything that God blesses, Satan hates.

And now there was war in heaven. Have you noticed this, there was war in heaven? This is one of the astonishing sayings of the Bible. We could have understood it if it had said there was war in hell, because wherefore comes wars and fightings among you, if they come not even of your lusts, but war in your members.

And if the word had said there was war in hell, we could have understood it. And if it had said there's war on earth, we could have understood it, because there's hardly one of us alive that's lived during some war or other. There's scarcely been a period of one whole year and centuries that there hasn't been war, big ones or little ones, somewhere among men. And yet they tell us that we're righteous, basically, that we're good, basically. And if we'll only accept a few pointers from the psychologists and the sociologists, we'll all brothers be for all that and all that.

But the simple fact is, we've never been able from the time Cain slew also his brother, we've never been able to get along together. Do you feel bad when somebody swears at

you from the rear with a horn? You know, they manage to make these horns so they can swear with them.

I have ridden in many an automobile and heard some fellow swear behind you. He didn't with his own voice, but they managed somehow to play a bunch of curse words on a horn. I've heard, just stand where there's any red light changing to green and hear them. And so why should you worry? Why should you worry if you can't get along with the neighbor next door, if he just won't be decent? He's human and that's humanity.

So, if it had said there was war on earth, we'd have said, yes, how sadly true. Has there ever been a time when there wasn't war on earth? And lately there's been war in the sea and the sky because we've taken war down into the dips of the sea and up into the air. And we're threatening to take it to the planets that revolve around and the satellites that girdle our earth.

But look at the words, there was war in heaven, the brazen effrontery of Satan. Whoever stopped to think what an insane genius this is, this Satan, what a rabid dog of the heavens, what a sin crazy outlaw we're dealing with here, that he can take war to the very gates of heaven, that he can enter the very circle of Jesus' disciples and enter a man. And Satan entered into him, it said of Judas, that he can follow Christ into the wilderness and up into the tower and tempt the very Holy Son of God.

There's an old saying of which I do not believe one word, it is, tell the truth and shame the devil. To shame anybody, they have to have a sense of shame. The devil has no sense of shame. The devil can't be shamed. The devil has nothing in him that can respond to shame.

He's a shameless, morally insane, rabid, sin crazy being that hates God, and for God's sake hates everything that God loves. And he's against you, and he's against this church, and he's against every church in Chicago, and he's against every praying man and woman, and he's against the conversion of your family, and he's against the solidity and cohesiveness of your family. He wants to scatter every good home and destroy every good church.

I remember when Dr. Philpott was pastor of Moody Church. He was preaching in one of our conferences, and he read that passage where Satan's seat is. And he said, where is Satan's seat? In the saloons? No, he dismissed that. Where is Satan's seat? In the gambling dives? No, he said. Where is Satan's seat in Chicago? And then he shouted in that great voice of his, "Moody Church," he said. And that wasn't because he thought Moody Church wasn't a good church. That was because the better you are, the more you have to fight the devil.

The more you hold true to the faith, the more you have to fight the devil. And it so happens that Moody Church has stood true to the faith through these years. Wherever you go liberal, wherever you don't care, wherever Shakespeare takes the place of and Browning crowds out Paul, Satan's busy somewhere else.

But wherever the word of God stands as true and wherever Christ occupies the center of the hope of that church, that's Satan's seat, that shameless, conscienceless dragon. And

so he carried war to the gates of God. Satan is there permitted to accuse the brethren, accuse the brethren.

You know, the devil can only blackmail you when he's got something on you. The devil is a blackmailer, and he'll blackmail you if he can get something on you. He went before God and tried to blackmail Job. But Job happened to be decent enough, though he needed a little bit of trimming up and God gave it to him. He happened to be good enough so that the devil couldn't do anything with him.

We never have to be afraid of the devil telling on us if the blood has covered our hearts and God's forgiven our sin. The devil can't even utter a forgiven sin. Sin that's been forgiven, God won't even let him get his mouth open. He can only accuse us by lying and God knows better. I'm not worried much about the devil. I've never been particularly devil-conscious preacher, really.

I've had preachers in this pulpit that made your flesh creep. We've had a few of them here, good brethren. But they were so conscious of the presence of the devil that they preached and preached so much about the devil that I got hives listening to them, you know, almost. You know, actually your flesh creeps after they've talked about the devil crawling in and out of your body and all that kind of stuff. I get, I get jeebies.

Now, I don't believe that we need, I don't think we children of God need to worry about the devil like that. He hates us, he hates us, he's after us, but they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. Just as the angel of death passed over Israel and passed over every house where there was blood, Satan stands back and growls, but he can't come near the heart where the precious blood of Jesus. Let's make an awful lot of the blood of the lamb.

We're hearing a lot about Christ incarnate now in liberals. We're hearing a lot about God being in Christ. We're hearing a lot in learned religious circles about God coming into history. We're hearing about God manifesting himself in time. All that sounds big and expansive and philosophical, but I still like to sing the dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day and there may I though vile as he wash all my sins away. I still believe in the fountain, still believe in the blood.

Somebody took that song and tore it apart and said it's bad song, it's not a good song, it's not literary song. There is a fountain filled with blood, said that's terrible. But oh, how many people are up there in heaven now that once sang there is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel veins.

How many sang it under their voices when they long ago lost power to vocalize and couldn't sing so they could be heard but sang it in their hearts as they went away to be with God. And how many will yet all around the world there's a fountain filled with blood. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives under the death.

Those people that were left, who are these people that were left down here? Churches gone, who were these people? Well, I think either they're people that are converted during that period or they're people that didn't go when the Lord came. Now that'll

shock some of you, but I don't know. I don't like this automatic idea that automatically everybody goes.

I wish that were so and I'd be happily glad if it was so. I'd be glad if it was true, as one celebrated evangelist said, that when the Lord comes there'll be holes in the roofs of body houses and saloons where the children of God suddenly go zooming through. That isn't the way I heard it, brother. Is it the way you heard it? I didn't hear it like that. Ye have not so learned Christ is what I hear.

No, I don't think God is going to go, I don't think he's going to send anybody combing through the honkytonks and bawdy houses looking for saints. I don't believe the saints will be there, brethren. I don't.

You say, what does that make you, an Armenian? No, it just shows I got some sense is all. It just shows I won't allow a theory to lead me into gross nonsense. Children of God never did inhabit body houses and saloons and gambling dens and places of iniquity. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But the evangelist, and it's not Billy Graham, now don't think I'm mocking good old Billy. He didn't say that he'd know better. This man did. And he said that there'll be holes in the roofs where the angels of God went looking for the saints.

Well, all I can say is if God sent me after the saints, I'd go elsewhere, wouldn't you? Wouldn't you? The Lord said, Knighton, go look for the saints. Where'd you go? Saloon? Gambling houses? Would you? Neither would I. Oh, you know, one might wander in there by mistake.

We had a fellow here one time, he wanted some food. And so, some of the brethren gave him two dollars. He started out. We had a man there, he's not with us now, he lives in Grand Rapids. Brother Valentine, he was one of the practical, down-to-earth, James kind of Christians, you know.

And he suspected that the fellow didn't want food, he wanted liquor, so he followed him down. Sure enough, he went into the saloon, and Brother Valentine went in after him. And when he slapped his dollar bill down on the moist bar and said, I'll have a whiskey, he said, that's what you think. And he took the money away from the fellow and left him there.

And if the Lord had come just at that time, there might have been a hole in that saloon, because Brother Valentine was in there, you know. And the Salvation Army girl selling the war cry in there, you're giving them away, she might go out of there. But in other words, saloons aren't the habitation of the just.

They're bawdy houses and they're gambling dens. All else being equal, the children of God are to be found where good people are. You don't look for sheep down alleys and in dumps. You look for sheep where the shepherd is, and he never leads his sheep into the alleys. He always leads them into the green pastures.

Well, Satan accuses, but Michael the angel archangel stands to fight him. And there was such a battle as never had been before and there never will be again.

I had a book, have a book, that I read years ago called "Fifteen Decisive Battles of History." Great battles, the Battle of Saratoga, the Battle of Waterloo, the Battle of Marathon, the Battle of Hastings, the great battles that have been fought.

But this battle, nothing like it has ever been before, nothing like it will ever be again. The gray dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil, and Satan, which deceived the whole world, he was cast out into the earth and his angels were cast out with him.

And I heard a loud voice saying, in heaven now has come salvation and strength and kingdom, the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ. For the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accuses them before our God, day and night. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth. We imagine the things are just about as bad as they can get, don't we? No.

Suppose electricity went off in your house and you have a deep freeze and a refrigerator. And suppose it went off in August with the temperatures in the nineties and stayed off for a week. Can you conceive of how your house would smell and what kind of house it would be in a matter of twenty-four to thirty-six hours? You couldn't live in it. It takes refrigeration to keep corruption down.

And in this terrible world of ours, there are still restraining influences. There are still children of God. In every neighborhood there are children of God. Every church that stands like this on the corner tells the world as they pass by, there is another world than this. There is a God and a judgment day and a Savior.

Even though not all the Christians going to that church are good Christians, there is still enough salt left in the earth and still enough to change the figure, refrigeration left to keep the world from rotting.

But when Satan is cast down on the earth and the saints of God go away, what will be left but corruption? And there is no imagining how morally corrupt we can get when the restraining influences are taken away.

Jack Mabley writes for the Daily News, and I like to read what he has to say there on the third page of the Daily News. And he told the other day, I think it was he, it was in his column it appeared, of pornographic literature sold to eight-year-old boys. Pornographic literature. The vileness, the corruption, the putridity, the spongy, fetid mass of corruption that is the world.

When I listen to the McClellan committee and find out how many high authorities and how many big men in a community can go rotten, I suspect everybody. But I know not everybody is bad. I know that there are still some decent, good, honest people left in the world in spite of all the corruption. The church is still here. The body of Christ is still in the earth. There will be Antichrist when Satan is cast down.

Don't ask me about Antichrist. I believe Antichrist will be a Jew. I don't think he will be Mussolini, resurrected as some have said. I believe he will be born of a woman as Christ was born of a woman. I don't believe it's Khrushchev or any of the rest of these mafia gang. He knows better. Antichrist knows better than to come into the world like that. It's God that sees him as a great red dragon. But he knows better than to come to the world, flaking his tail and snorting as a great red dragon. He knows better.

So, it comes a learned gentleman with religious words on his lips. He may become one of the most popular preachers of the day, but he'll be Antichrist, nevertheless. And just as Mary bore the Christ, an incarnated God to be the Christ, so someone somewhere will bear an incarnate devil. And he will finally show himself to be what he is after he has brought all the world under his feet. Bloody persecution unto death begins, and the nation of Israel will have to take it.

Israel has always been the punching bag of the nation, always been the whipping boy that has caught the lash of the nation. She's got to take it one time more, at least one time more. Well, this dire event can happen.

Now I'm going to read a passage of Scripture to you that I sometimes do like to read before a congregation. We'd like to get this all fixed out so we know we're safe. But listen, I want to read this to you.

Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness in the cares of this life. And so that day come upon you unawares, for as a snare shall it come on all of them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man.

What is the sensible position for the Christian? The sensible position is to say, O Lord, my brethren tell me that all born-again Christians will go when thou dost return. And I want to believe it, and I hope it's true, Lord. But O Lord, I want to be morally worthy to join that band.

So please make me holy. Please help me to be separated and clean. Please help me, Lord, though by some act of the grace of God in redemption it could be that even if I were stained and even if I were not ready, I'd go. They tell me so. Still, Lord, I'm not trusting in that kind of interpretation. I want to be prepared. Make me worthy to go, Lord, and help me and make me count me worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man.

Let's have an illustration. Two brethren, two men, two Christians, members of the First Baptist Church of Kickapoo, Wisconsin, or Chicago, Illinois. They're Christians, both of them. They love God. One of them is so convinced that there wouldn't be any possibility of any Christian missing the rapture that he gets careless. He's so convinced that all that has to be done has already been taken care of. His insurance is paid up, and he's all ready to go.

The other one says, Brother, I hope that's right. I kind of sneakily believe maybe it is, but you know something, I am going to live every minute as if Christ were coming an hour

from now. I am not going to rest on theories. I'm going to trust the blood of the Lamb and keep the word of my testimony bright. I'm going to sacrifice myself so I love not my life unto the death.

Who's the wise Christian there? If it's true that all the ransom goes soaring away, certainly the man who tried to live so as he was ready, he'll go all right. But about the other one, if there's any doubt, he would be the one on whom the doubt would lie.

So, my urgent suggestion is tonight that you watch always. Be not like the man who said, My Lord, delayeth his coming, but be ready at all times, at all times, be ready. By the blood of the Lamb, by the word of your testimony, by a surrendered life, by the trust in the book, then no matter what comes on the earth or when it comes, it will be all right with you. And the Lord will take you to his Father's house with rejoicing. And you need not be afraid that you will be ashamed at His coming. Let us pray.

O Dear Lord, when we stand outside of ourselves and think as the world thinks, how foolish is a talk like this tonight. How different from politics and philosophy and psychology and sports and entertainment, labor and capital and industry, and the rest. Thou hast called us, O Lord, and enlightened us, called us to thyself and given us information.

And our language sounds strange and remote and unlike the world. Nothing like this is found in newspapers or magazines, for the world doesn't know a thing about it. The world is going on its way, doing the best it can.

O Thou hast called a people for thine own possession, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, peculiar people, a cross-carrying people who love thy holy Son, who call thee Father, who believe the prophets and the apostles, who believe the book of Revelation, believe what John saw in the Spirit.

Oh, that we might be among them. Oh, that we might be counted as that blessed group that would not only be ready in that day, but are ready now and will be ready and continue to be ready and will labor to get others ready and struggle and fight and pray and give and push and carry on the work until the story has been told around the world and the globe is girdled with the gospel, at least one time, so that red and yellow and black and white around this whole world can know that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and that he rose again according to the scriptures.

Help us now, Father, we pray. Now we're going out into a week that promises to be hot and it's going to be busy, noisy, there'll be irritations, hostility and trouble, weakness, physical discomforts and pains. Oh, enable us to rejoice in it all, to be glad and to thank thee and to keep full of praise and to meet every trouble with praise.

Help us to keep praised up and prayed up. Help us to put behind us everything that would hinder us and lay aside every weight and the sin that does so easily beset us and run with patience, the race said before us. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.