

The Foundations of the World are out of Plumb

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You will find the Book of Psalms to be a very revealing book, for the Holy Spirit is in the Book of Psalms, and as has been said, the Spirit of Christ is in the Psalms. And many places in the Book of Psalms you will find the Holy Spirit looking down the centuries and making present tense statements, which were not present tense, but were future prophetic tense.

The "is" is sometimes way down the years, and this 82nd Psalm is that kind of psalm. Certainly, it has its local application to circumstances that gave it birth. But just as certainly there is more here than at first meets the attention, there is the groaning and the yearning of the Spirit of Christ which was in them, to quote Peter, who saw and here foretells conditions that are to be in later times. We have a picture here of God standing among the mighty angels, not sitting because He had risen.

If you are interested in this, you will find many places in the Bible where God stands, but almost always God sits. A judge always sits. It is a subject that stands. So that we find God sitting and men standing in His presence, that is as it should be. The great God sits quietly and calmly in His everlasting rest while men and angels stand before Him. But a few times we see God standing.

When our Lord Jesus Christ went to heaven, the Scripture says that He sat down on the right hand of the Father. We read of that very many places in the Bible, that Jesus Christ sat down on the right hand of God. His position is that of a seated one. Having completed the work on earth, He has now gone to sit down, waiting the time when His enemies shall be made His footstool.

But there was one exception to this, and that was when they were stoning Stephen to death. Stephen looked up, and his death-dimmed eyes became preternaturally bright, and he said, I see Jesus sitting, standing at the right hand of God. He had been sitting, now He is standing, as though he had become suddenly so keenly interested that He rose and was gazing down, in His divine excitement, watching His first martyr die.

Here we find God standing now, and He is standing among the mighty angels. Here is what He sees. He sees injustice, and oppression, and poverty, and ignorance, and darkness, and dying, and He sees it all over the earth. It says here that He judgeth among the gods. That gives some people a notion that there are gods, and that God recognizes these gods. The truth is very much otherwise. God does not recognize any gods.

He says, I am the Lord, and there is none other beside me. But the word "gods" here is elohim in the plural, and it is a reference to leaders and judges of the earth. It is, says Rotherham, God ascribing to those whom He has placed in high position, something of His own name, because they are His ambassadors. He gives them not the sword in vain. They are the judges and rulers of the earth. And God boldly calls them after His own

name, and says, God standeth in the congregation of the mighty, He judgeth among the elohim, the judges, the rulers of the earth.

And what He sees there, I repeat, is injustice, and oppression, and poverty, not the poverty that a reluctant earth might impose upon a people who could not rest a living from her, but rather the poverty that comes from oppression and from injustice. And there was ignorance and darkness and dying. The sad thing about this all, my friends, is that it could be avoided. All of this could have been avoided.

Now, in this dark world in which we live, there are some things that can't very well be avoided. And I suppose that we might as well get used to them and say, there be here; they were here when my grandfather walked the hills of Ohio or Indiana. And they were here when the red Indian roamed and hunted the buffalo there. And they were and will be and always have been, and we may expect them to be.

There will always be accidents, and there will always be diseases, and there will always be bereavement as long as the sun rises and sets. And there will always be the sad leave-taking when friend greets and shakes the hand of friend and tearlessly turns away with an agony that knows no respite in tears. There will always be the lightning that will flash out of the sky and smite the great oak, and the boy that lies sleeping under it. And there will always be the wild beasts and the rampaging river and the tornado and the tempest.

And my friends, you can take all of the accidents of the world and all of the adverse forces of nature and include in it all the diseases that mortal flesh is heir to and combine them together. And you will not have all told and added up as much sheer misery and pain as man imposes upon himself by his wicked deeds.

This is not merely a preacher talking. Let us look at over the last hundred years. There have been floods in Europe, and there have been earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. And there have been in Europe over the last hundred years epidemics and the outbreak of diseases. There have been storms and lightning flashes. Nature has shaken her fallen shoulders, and poor victims have died. No one with an ounce of brains would deny that nor attempt to deny it.

And nobody would dare to close his eyes if he has any regard to his own reputation for sanity, and say that nature is all gentle and tender, and that all is good, and good is all, and all is God, and God is all, and all is all, and none of that. We got to face facts, and we might as well be realistic.

Europe, just to choose one continent, has suffered greatly in the last hundred years, sporadically, now and again. There has been toil, and there have been tears, and there have been bereavements and losses. But ladies and gentlemen, it fell to the lot of one little undersized man, inconsequential in looks and build and weight, education and gifts, it fell to the lot of one little man to bring to the continent of Europe more suffering and agony and pain in four years' time than one hundred years of the combined forces of misfortune was able to visit upon that same continent.

Korea has had her famines, and she has seen her people die. The snows and bitter cold of the winters have taken their toll, and diseases have taken their toll. But in the last two years in Korea, man has visited upon that peninsula more sheer misery and unbearable pain than all the unfortunate circumstances that nature might have visited in the last five hundred years.

God standeth among the mighty. He judges among the elohim, and He's not pleased with what He sees. For He sees injustice and oppression and a poverty that's imposed, and He sees an ignorance that can't be excused and a darkness that shrouds the minds of men, and He sees dying and dying and dying.

Now he says, ye are gods, but you shall die like men, because you will bring down upon you your social structure. You will bring it down on your heads by the natural law of cause and effect. It will not be as the astronomers sometimes dream by a sideswipe from some wandering maverick planet. It will not be as the result of the insects taking over the earth as some naturalists prophesy morbidly.

It will be that man proves himself unfit to live and therefore must die like men, that he proves himself unfit to build and must watch his structure collapse around his ears. Your building, says the Holy Ghost, is worthless. It can't last because all the foundations of humanity are out of plumb. And everybody knows that if you build a building upon a crooked foundation, your building will stand in imminent peril of falling. The higher you go and the heavier your superstructure, the more certain will be the collapse.

Now, the hope of the nations is deceitful. I wish that I might be able to be an optimist one time in my life if God would only allow me. I'd love to do it. I'd love to get up sometime and for 25 minutes or 45 minutes just stand here and spout optimism and tell you that I believe that the world is getting better. But I'd be a liar if I said it. The hope of the nations is deceitful. But the nations of the world, strangely, are seeking to make a sound, free world for themselves. And they're promising it to the people.

I am not as old as I will be if I live ten years more. I'm older than I thought I was because I was in a restaurant tonight with my little girl. She's 13 and looks older. And the waitress came up and wanted to know if that was my granddaughter. Imagine that, she needs glasses.

But I've been around quite a while, and I have seen quite a number of men get elected. I've seen three presidents elected on the promise that there wouldn't be any war. Or if there was any, they'd get over it right away.

When I was just old enough to be interested in such a thing, Woodrow Wilson ran for the presidency on the slogan, he kept us out of war. And we elected him with a great big majority. And he was hardly inaugurated when he had to declare war on Germany. And we had three years of World War I.

There was a silver-voiced gentleman whom I never followed, but whom I can't help but admire because he certainly was a big man. And with his New York accent, he told the trembling mothers of America, I say to you again and again and again that your sons will never fight on foreign soil. Three of mine did. That was World War II.

And in our horror of dying and blood and woe and prison camps, the American electorate last fall turned in fury on the man they thought had put them in Korea and listened to the voice of the man who said, if I'm elected, I'll go over. No, I admire the gentleman that said it. I think he's just a good, honest American, and a good and big American. But he opened his mouth a little too wide when he told us, or gave us to understand that he could bring war to a end. One hundred days he's been in the White House, and they're still dying in Korea. It's not his fault.

The only fault would lie in a man saying they can when the whole world is stacked against them. They can't. Woodrow Wilson meant well, but the foundations of the world are out of joint. Franklin Roosevelt never meant to betray the mothers when he said again and again, they'll not go overseas. They did go. And Ike Eisenhower's honest, Kansas heart meant what he said, that the foundations of the world are out of joint.

How long has it been since they were promising us the four freedoms? How long since they said we'll fight this out and finish it and then we'll never have any more war? We'll have freedom from war. I think at that time they called it war. Freedom, they said, from war, because we hate war. But war we've had, brother. Go and ask those poor Koreans.

My son who fought in Korea said, Dad, it was touching and almost unbelievable a wave of war would sweep over a hillside. And there would be a little hut, and you'd see the old Korean with his tired old wife and a kid or two, and he'd get his belongings on his back and disappear into the woods or cave someplace, and the wave of war would pass over.

As soon as the last retreating soldier's neck was, back of his neck was seen, they'd be right back in where they'd been before. Next week, the wave would come back the other way and out would go the Korean to the hills with his sack full of possessions. And as soon as the backs of the necks of the soldiers seen back, he was in his little hut again.

Go to Korea and say, are you free from war? Go to Indochina and ask that question. Go to Laos, where they're rapidly engaged in the terrible business of losing their nation to the Communists. Ask them, are you free from war? No. It was all big, windy talk, this talk about freedom from war. And they said we were to have freedom of religion.

I'm just reminding us of what they said, freedom of religion. But we have gotten more persecution and had more religious troubles since the war ended than we had for decades before. Go to Columbia and ask our missionaries, is there freedom of religion there? No, of course not. Go to Palestine and inquire. Arab and Jews quarreling. Go to India.

Nehru has lately come out with an edict that nobody dares make converts there. No freedom of religion. Freedom from want, they said. The orators and the silver-tongued boys that yodel down the airways, vote for me and we'll fix up this business. Everybody will have enough. Go into the dark places of the earth and inquire.

Our missionaries say, and all the good people tell us, such a percentage, and it's a large, high percentage, never have enough to eat from the time they're born till they die. No freedom from want.

And then freedom for the masses. No freedom for the masses. We have the greatest freedom in America, and I thank God we do. But there's no freedom in Czechoslovakia. There's no freedom in East Germany. There's no freedom in Yugoslavia, nor in Russia, nor in China, nor in Manchuria, nor in Austria, nor wherever the heel of the Communists has gone, there's no freedom. Freedom is a mirage.

And the relative and conditional freedom which we have in this country has been at the price of everlasting vigilance and eternal warfare to keep ourselves free. But the foundations of the world are out of plumb.

And the temple of freedom rests upon a foundation. It isn't something that simply grows up like a dandelion without planting and without cultivation. There are great foundations that are there, and if those foundations are crooked, the building will be crooked. It's just a question of time till it collapses.

These foundations foretell the future of the temple. Any builder can stand up and look at a foundation and know theoretically what will happen without ever waiting around. We built this building, we had on our board a gentleman who's still with us.

I don't know whether he's here tonight, Mr. Marx, a structural engineer. And he could look at a few marks on a piece of paper and tell you whether the thing was structurally sound or not.

Somebody wrote him all enthusiastically, his daughter Esther, from up in New York State, and she told him about the building that the Alliance district had built at Rome, Delta Lake at Rome, and gave him a description of it. And he made a few marks on a piece of paper and said that building won't stand, that it'll collapse.

And that year, somewhere, I think in December, when the heavy snows came, it collapsed. It went down so flat that even the seats went down with it. It was a big tabernacle. Even the seats flattened out. There wasn't anything around there that wasn't as flat as a hymn book. He never saw the thing; he just heard the description of it.

You don't have to be there if you have any imagination, brother. All you have to do is project what you know into what you don't know, and you have what you know. See what I mean?

So, you don't have to wait around to see whether Democrats or Republicans come out on top. All you have to do to project and foretell the future is to say, look at your foundations. If your foundations are solid, your superstructure will stand. If they're not solid or if they're crooked or out of line, it'll go down, it can't help it. You needn't be a prophet; you only need to be a man with a bit of imagination and information.

Now let's look at the foundations of human society. Sketch them out here a minute as we go along. One of the first is faith in God. It's absolutely essential to the sanity of the human race that men believe rightly concerning God.

Put these down, if you will, for they constitute the foundations of society. And if they're crooked, society will be crooked. And anything built upon crooked foundations is bound to collapse.

The day in which we live, faith in God is a rarity. Somebody will say, no, I know better, Mr. Tozer. There are more Bible schools and more big evangelists and more coast-to-coast broadcasts and more FMs and shortwaves and more Bibles printed and all that. I know that there's more faith in God than there used to be.

Well, maybe, faith of a kind. But what kind of God is it people are believing in now? I ask you. They say that there's a resurgence of religion in America, that more people are buying books about religion and more people are going to church than used to go to church. One man said, greatly encouraged, that there was, I think, sixty-some percent belong to churches now and only ten percent belong to churches in the days of the founding fathers. Therefore, the difference between ten percent and sixty-some percent is the difference in how good we are compared with how good we were then.

My friends, it's impossible to be very much wronger than that. Faith in God doesn't simply mean to have an area of your hide somewhere that's sensitive to religion. That doesn't mean that. You can find more carnal, unborn-again, self-centered old maids than you could bury in Grand Canyon who have religion and they're sensitive toward it.

You can find more stoop-shouldered, weary old beaten-up men like me who have some sensitivity toward religion. You can find it. You can find men that live like the devil but they're sensitive toward religion. And if an evangelist sweeps through and the excitement gets big enough, they'll go to the meeting and swell the crowd and give a dollar and get counted and get photographed and it'll look big.

But the catch is here. After it's all over, the moral standards of the community are right where they were before. And whatever does not raise the moral standard of a church, or the community has not been a revival from God.

We have become too chummy with God altogether. We have dragged God down to our level in place of painstakingly trying to help Him to bring us to His, humanly speaking. And the God we believe in is not the sovereign God who judges men.

And when we believe in that kind of God, we'll change our way of living, and we'll change it for the better. And we'll repent and we'll reform, and we'll turn to God, and we'll cease to do evil and we'll begin to do good. And we'll put away our evil from us and we'll turn from the world and turn hard unto God.

Seek to crucify our flesh and put on the new man which is renewed in holiness. Faith in God is all but gone. When the Son of Man cometh, will he find faith on the earth? So don't you be taken in by statistics that tell you that more people belong to churches now than belonged in the days of our fathers.

In the days of our fathers, everybody except a rare infidel now and then, and he had been taken. But everybody went to church. Grandfather got up. Grandmother got up. Married couple got up. Then they dug their babies and children out of their beds and all fixed them all up. And washed them off and put clothing on them they hated thoroughly. They got into their starched clothes, out of their gingham. And marched off to church and sat together in church through sermons an hour to two hours long. And rode there in a buggy and rode back in a buggy. Hayburners, if you please, took their time about getting there. And almost everybody went to church.

But nowadays almost everybody goes to church Easter and Christmas, and for the rest of the time they don't. That's number one. Faith in God. Any hope for the nations that is not built upon faith in God is a false hope and will collapse.

Then there's love for our fellow men. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God and thy neighbor as thyself, love for our fellow men. But in place of that we have quarreling and lying and exploiting and competing to a shocking degree.

But did you happen to notice this? Since the beginning of the world there never has been more hatred among nations than today. And that hatred doesn't cross the color line always. In fact, rarely does. It's within the race itself. The presence of specific races is not the source of our trouble. Our trouble is the disease of our own hearts.

And the white Russian hates the white American. And twice within 25 years the white German tried to kill and destroy the white Englishman. Occasionally there's race flare-ups between races. But mostly it's within their own racial strain. It's not race, brethren, it's sin. Sin, sin, sin, sin. And the foundations of the world are out of focus, out of plumb, because we hate instead of love.

Then there's a mutual trust, and that's very close to what I've been saying before. Mutual trust among men and nations. Where is there any trust among nations? Do you trust a communist? Does he trust you? No. I wouldn't believe a communist if he stood on the stack of 150 Bibles and swore by the beard of Lenin. I wouldn't believe him. He's a liar. He's a liar from the beginning. He's been taught to lie. Lying has become his religion. And hell has become his heaven. Sin has done all this.

So, there's no trust among nations. And friends, if you can't have trust among nations, you can't have a lasting edifice of any sort. I might mention the relation of parents to children. Children to their parents has gone so badly out of plumb in the last 50 years, under the prodding of John Dewey and the Columbia School, and old maid preachers that wear trousers and shave, but have enough manhood to be able to tell the truth. There's no obedience to parents left anymore. The foundations are upside down and out of joint.

And as soon as the children are able to earn their own money, they turn on their parents, scorned in a great many instances. And until there has been established a proper relationship between the parent and the child, there never can be a foundation that is strong. And until we have a strong and level foundation, we never can have a safe superstructure.

The English couldn't whip us. Some fellow took a ride one time and said, the British are coming. You remember that? One lantern, if they're on, coming in canoes, and another lantern if they're walking. Remember that? That was Paul Revere. The English couldn't beat us. The Indians couldn't beat us, and the Spaniards couldn't beat us, and the Germans couldn't beat us.

And I'm not a jingoist, but I don't believe the Russians can beat us. But I'll tell you what can beat us. Our kids can beat us. They can beat us by grieving God Almighty and outraging divine justice, by violating the right relation between child and parent, and upsetting the normal order. That can beat us, because God will withdraw His defense and we'll be left as helpless as was Samson after his hair was cut, the right relation between men and women in their respective places. The world is sowing a field of thorns.

Now my friend John R. Rice has written a book called *Bossy Wives, Bobbed Hair*, and what was it? I haven't read the book and don't intend to. I think I sketched it when it first came. And I don't follow my friend John on that, but I will just tell you this much.

God made man, and He made woman. In spite of Christine Jorgensen, He made them different from each other. And He not only made them different from each other, He gave them different functions in society. But we have all mixed it up. Mixed it all up now until we don't know one from the other. We say, isn't that funny, Mr. Tozer? He's such a cute fellow.

Yes, our old boy's telling you some things somebody ought to tell you. And the proper relation between the sexes. I'm not talking now about immorality, that's another field. I'm talking now about the right social place for both. We have violated the Scriptures, and we have violated common sense, we have violated the laws of biology. And we're going to reap, and don't you think we're not going to reap? The foundations of the world are out of plumb.

And then I think also of our rapport with nature. Dr. Mason said, and rightly said, and I thought so much of it I wrote it into an editorial right away. Man was born in a garden.

Now why didn't God build a city? He could have done it, made it out of plastic. God could have done that. Let there be a plastic city, and it came to pass there was a plastic city, and the morning and the evening were the ninth day. God could have made a plastic city and trimmed it in chrome. He could have done it, and placed man in it. And said, here you are, get on to that escalator, go up nine stories and come to the stories, and come down the elevator. God could have made a plastic city and put man in it.

He could have gone better; He could have made it out of gold. But He didn't, He made a garden; worms in it, flowers and fruit, and all of it makes a garden. God put man in a garden. I think it was Milton that said, God made the country and man-made the city.

Now, we are losing our rapport. You French speakers please forgive; I don't know whether any other word to use there except that bad French. But we have lost our rapport with nature. We are born in hospitals, laid out in mortuaries, and buried in

memorial parks. If anything goes wrong with it, we are shot full of mold, penicillin or something. People live and die and never get off the sidewalk. We've lost our power.

Mr. Chase tells about some artists from Chicago that went down in Brown County, Indiana, for a little vacation and do a little painting. They were city fellows, and they slept down there in a little house in the woods among the beautiful rolling hills of Brown County.

I suppose they all more or less felt the same way about it, but it was the job of one fellow to shamelessly tell how he felt about it. He said, these birds are driving me crazy. He said, listen to them, I can't stand that. He said, listen to them, birds, birds. And he got on the train and came back and listened to the elevator. He couldn't stand birds. God put man in the garden and man says, I can't stand birds. So, he comes back to listen to the elevator.

Some fellow said, who was it? I believe it was here in Chicago. Somebody said that New York was the dirtiest city in the world and this fella indignantly denied it. He said, New York isn't as dirty as Chicago. He said, let the person that said that New York was dirty in Chicago feel our air between her thumb and fingers. He said, just let her take a little of our air and feel it like that and just see how dirty it is. And yet there are people that love it and look on a whore with a lovely worm with a fur coat or a bird that drives them crazy.

Now, of course, those are extreme. That's not true of many people. A great many people love nature. So, they get a basket full of sardines and pickles and olives and they go out and have themselves a picnic and commune with nature among the sardine can.

But we're as artificial as it's possible to be, nevertheless. We've lost our rapport with the garden or with that best thing after the garden, the field in which God's cast us. So, we're going to pay a price for that? Oh yes.

One of my favorite writers as a younger fellow, he still is when I don't have much time for him anymore, was William Wordsworth. My heart leaps up when I behold a rainbow in the sky. So was it when my life began, so is it now that I'm a man, so let it ever be or let me die.

One of my boys told me that the kids in the college or university where he got his degree referred to Wordsworth as Nature Boy. When they had to study Wordsworth, they scornfully referred to him as Nature Boy.

But his heart leaped up when he beheld a rainbow in the sky. And was he that talked about the cataracts blowing their trumpets from the hills, praising the art that could catch that cloud before it disappeared and put it in on a canvas and hold it there. He loved the world around him.

And our fathers loved the world around us. Strong men, they didn't have any chlorophyll in those days, but they weren't so confined, and the embarrassment was not so great. The big out-of-doors helped them out so that they didn't need the chlorophyll.

Why reeks the goat on yonder hill who seems to dote on chlorophyll. But they sell us chlorophyll nevertheless and all the rest. And we're a bunch of artificial zoo animals.

Emerson said, every once in a while, take off your shoes and go out and walk on the ground. It's good for you. Get in on the floor with the earth. He might have had something there. Try that sometime in your fourth-floor apartment.

And then I got one left and I'm through. Are you glad?

And this is very serious, and it is basic righteousness, justice, and honesty. If the blood of Jesus Christ can't cure a man's dishonesty, it can't guarantee his entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

Our Salvation Army friends sing a song, when I reached the pearly gates, I'll then put in my plea, I was once a guilty sinner, but Jesus died for me. I believe that. I believe it with all my heart. Supposing Jesus Christ came to me and said, son, you've been a sinner, but I'll justify you by my blood. And I said, thank you, Lord Jesus. Thank you.

When it comes time for you to die or I come in the glory, you will enter into the presence of the Father with exceeding joy, all by my blood and righteousness. Thank you, Lord Jesus. Thank you. Another thing, son, my blood is going to cleanse you and make you clean. And my spirit is going to enter you and help you to live a right life. Thank you, Lord Jesus. Thank you.

But I found after 25 years of following Him that His blood didn't cleanse. The Spirit couldn't make you right, that Christianity didn't have the power to make you live right. It didn't. Now this is all hypothesis. I know better, of course. I'm talking from the other side for the moment.

So, I find after 25 years of praying and trying and reading and giving and listening to sermons, I find Christianity doesn't work. And then you expect me to die in peace and say a Lord who lied to me once won't lie to me again. The Savior that was too weak to save me from iniquity will be strong enough to take me boldly through the pearly gates. I wouldn't believe it for a second yet.

A Savior that can't save me from my sins now and here can't have my confidence to save me from judgment in that great day. But he can do both, thank God. He can do both. I want no other argument. I want no other plea. It is enough that Jesus died and that He died for me.

I believe that. And I'm helped to believe it by the fact that that same Lord Jesus Christ can take a sinner and make a Christian out of him down here now, can clean him up and change him, put a new impulse within his heart and a new direction to his life and change him. He's not a phony and he's not selling you a bill of goods.

He's promising you safety in the judgment and He's proving that you'll be safe in the judgment by demonstrating that right down here now He can give you a new heart and renew a right spirit within you. And the things you used to want to do, you don't want to do. And the things you used to be careless about, you're now doing with delight.

You used to hate your brother and now you love him. You used to be stingy and now you give generously to the Lord's work. You used to be dirty-minded and now a dirty thought hurts you so bad you repent before God for it. You used to have sinful tendencies, but God's cured them. God can lay solid foundations, ladies and gentlemen, He can. I don't know whether He ever will for the nation of America or not. I doubt that very much.

I ought to be ashamed to say that. But I don't know in this confused country of ours, the light we've had, the truth we've trampled under our feet, and the insults we've offered to God, the trying of God over the centuries.

Possibly we've sinned away our day and like Pompeii and Babylon and Assyria the future may see us pass from the scene if the Lord tarries. I don't know that. But I do know that wherever righteousness is laid down by faith in God and Christ, there is a solid foundation. I do know that.

And I know that any religious individual, and I'm through in three minutes, less than three, any religious individual, anybody, that wants to be sure that his superstructure will stand in the eternal light of God only needs to build down upon the Rock, Christ Jesus. That's all.

But if he builds on anything else, the foundations of his life are out of plumb. And no matter how high he goes; the collapse will only be the greater. So let us tonight, let us turn to Jesus Christ our Lord.

We're units of society. I can't help Chicago too much, nor the state of Illinois, nor the country, but as a unit of society, as one individual, I can lay my foundation solid down on repentance, down on the Book, down on high conceptions of the sovereign majesty of God, down on strong faith in the power of Jesus Christ to save me now and in the day of judgment. I can lay my foundations down on those, my building down on those foundations. So can you. Starting now, let us pray.

O Lord Jesus, we can feel the breath of hell on our necks. We hear his ugly, ominous growls. He hates us, and he hates our church, and he hates our people, and he hates us for God's sake and Christ's sake. And he hates to see foundations solid. He'll undermine them. He'll get us interested in something else, so we'll lay crooked ones if he can. O God, we're not scared in spite of it. We're not frightened.

Jesus, Thou art our big Brother, our Lord. God has given Thee power in heaven and earth. All power is Thine. Thou hast made a show of principalities and powers and exposed them openly, defeated them and risen from the dead. Thou art seated at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. Thou hast sent Thy Holy Spirit here to the earth, and we thank Thee that He's with us tonight and in us tonight.

Now we beseech thee, Lord Jesus, Thou wilt help us to go out and straighten our lives, straighten them reverently, tearfully if need be, before the throne of grace, with repentance and sorrow of heart and strong yearnings for righteousness and true holiness, so the foundations will be solid.

Lord, here's a church. It isn't a big one, but it's a church. And we're building on solid foundations. Eternity itself can't eat away nor dissolve what we're doing. But Father, look at our foundations. They're crooked. They're out of plumb.

O Lord, we tremble for that day when Thou wilt judge the deeds of every man. We shall stand and say, I wrought, I worked there in that church, I attended there, I went there.

O Lord, we pray that our church may be founded upon the solid foundations, so that all our money won't be wasted, so that our prayers won't be wasted, so that everything like the pieces of broken bread will be gathered up and nothing be lost.

Now we trust Thee to bless this Word spoken. We don't claim anything for it, only that it's true, that's all. Send these friends out, we beseech Thee, to a week of strong faith and holy living and earnest prayer and Bible reading, worship, and faithful testimony, and honesty, and truth-telling, clean thinking, frugality with themselves and generosity with everybody else.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.