

The Prodigal Son

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 July 2007

Preacher: Aaron Hoak

[0:00] Luke's Gospel, chapter 15. I'll begin reading at verse 11. This parable of the prodigal, the lost son. Jesus continued, There was a man who had two sons.

The younger one said to his father, Father, give me my share of the estate. So he divided his property between them. Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country, and there squandered his wealth in wild living.

After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs.

He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. When he came to his senses, he said, How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death.

I will set out and go back to my father and say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.

[1:28] Make me like one of your hired men. So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him.

He ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. The son said to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

I am no longer worthy to be called your son. But the father said to his servants, Quick, bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.

Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again.

He was lost and is found. So they began to celebrate. Meanwhile, the older son was in the field.

[2:32] When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. Your brother has come, he replied.

And your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound. The older brother became angry and refused to go in.

So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, Look, all these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders.

Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him.

My son, the father said, You are always with me and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad.

[3:36] Because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found.

Please turn with me again in your Bibles or keep them open there to the Gospel of Luke in chapter 15.

Gospel of Luke chapter 15. The last two times I preached, the last two Sundays I was sharing the pulpit with someone else.

A translator. And one time it was very literally sharing the pulpit and sharing a very small platform. It was very cozy. And all that goes to say that we're very glad to be back here.

We missed you all. And are glad to be back among you. This message tonight from Luke chapter 15 is a message I preached a couple of years ago at the first Ultimate Summer Challenge.

I didn't anticipate some of the Ultimate Summer Challengers being back tonight. And so my apologies to those of you young people that have heard something of this before.

[4:44] And those of you wondering about Esther, we plan to return to her next week. What would you say about someone that you knew that was destroying their life with sin?

Maybe it's an adult. One of your co-workers perhaps. And that's where you first notice the problem. At work, their performance begins slipping. At work, they begin missing days of work.

And then you begin to find out that things aren't well in the home. And you start to understand why things aren't going so well at work. You find out as your co-worker begins to talk in the break room that their marriage isn't going very well at all.

In fact, the only time that they talk to their spouse is to yell at one another when they're arguing.

Your co-worker begins to spend more and more time away from their home.

More and more time drowning their sorrows in drink. They begin getting way too comfortable and even flirtatious with their co-workers. An affair begins that everyone in the office knows about.

[5:54] And yet, the spouse does not know. You try to find a bright spot and you ask them what's going on with their children's lives and they don't even know because they're never home anymore.

Everything is crashing down around them without any sort of hope. Or maybe it's a young person. Maybe it's one of your classmates at school. And you see their grades begin to slip and they start cutting class.

Their parents are having difficulty at your home. And so your friend has nowhere to take his problems. Nowhere to turn. His parents just throw money at him to keep him happy, they think.

Or to keep him out of their hair. And he begins finding comfort and drinking. He goes to parties and he finds that the more he drinks, the more he forgets. And he likes that. And that's comfortable for him.

He begins turning to his friends to find help and comfort and wisdom and guidance. But finds none. And he begins turning to girls to find love. Sleeping around trying to find that fulfillment and fill the void in his life.

[7:02] He's even begun to dabble in drugs in addition to his alcohol. What do people like that need? What do people like that that seem like they're so far gone that it's almost hopeless?

What is it that they need? Well, we could point to a number of things, but the thing we want to focus on tonight is that someone like that needs repentance. They need to repent. They need to turn from those ways.

And find their problems fixed in another place. It's clearly the message of Scripture for those who are living in their sins. They're called to do this. To repent.

Some of the earliest words in Jesus' public ministry were, Repent. For the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent. And believe the good news.

The kingdom of God is near. What is this repentance then? What is it that those of us who are living in sin need to do? What is repentance? Well, very simply, repentance is turning from our sin and turning to God.

[8:01] It's a turn. It's a change. If your sin is this way and you've been going this way, repentance is turning away from your sin and now turning to God in faith.

The faith that we heard of this morning. From going one direction, turning and going the other direction. That's exactly what your friend needs. To turn from their sin and turn to God.

And you say, well, that's my friend. They really do need repentance. They're in a bad way. But I'm not like that. I don't drink and party and do drugs. And I'm not engaging in sexually promiscuous behavior.

And I'm not outwardly rebellious against my parents. And you're not cheating on your spouse. And I hope that's true. I hope those things don't characterize anyone here tonight. Perhaps they do.

Perhaps someone here tonight is struggling with something as serious as this.

Something as, we think of it as big as this. But repentance isn't for just people with problems like that. It's for everyone that's ever sinned.

[9:07] And we know that all have sinned. And so repentance is for all of us. It doesn't matter if you're a good kid and you go to church every Sunday. You're a faithful employee.

Or a good student. You spend time with your friends. You talk on the phone. You don't do anything that way. You chat online. You listen to your music. You practice hospitality. You play sports. You play music.

You do things with your family. You're kind to your neighbor. Fine. All of those sorts of people are in need of repentance. It's not for just really bad people like we spoke of earlier.

Even if you're not like that at all, you need to repent. You need other things as well. You need that faith that we heard of this morning. But tonight we're going to focus on repentance.

And before we zoom in on repentance for a few moments tonight, let's remember where it fits in the bigger picture. Repentance and faith always go hand in hand. They're twin graces.

[10:03] And when they're taken together, they're called conversion. It's a turn. It's a change. A change of life. In those things, repentance and faith are gifts of God. So that we can't boast and say, look at this great faith I have.

Look at how I've repented. Look at how wonderful I am. There are things that we must do.

Remember, you have to let go of the ledge and fall into the arms of Jesus.

You must have faith. You must turn from your sin, but yet they're gifts from God. And without the previous work of regeneration, the Holy Spirit giving you a new heart, you won't repent and believe.

And so God the Spirit comes and regenerates us. He gives us new life, a new heart. And then there's conversion, repentance and faith that always go hand in hand. And we're going to zoom in on that repentance tonight.

And for a challenge to repentance, we're going to look at the very familiar story of the prodigal son. Or the lost son that was read earlier here in Luke chapter 15.

[11:03] There's very simply five things that we want to see about the prodigal son tonight. And just for the record, anybody here know what the word prodigal means? What's that?

Wasted? Wasted? Yes. Wastefully extravagant. Or extravagantly wasteful. I used to think it meant wandering or lost. And looked it up one day and found that it meant extravagantly wasteful, which is the sort of life this young man will find out leads.

And so five things about the prodigal son. The prodigal son, first of all, loved his sin. And so he pursued it. The prodigal son loved his sin.

And so he pursued it. He went after it with everything that he has. Perhaps it began with questioning his father's goodness to him. Maybe he thought, I don't think my father really has my best interest at our...

He's a cruel taskmaster. He makes me work and he doesn't give me a very big allowance. This young man doesn't like his father's rules, his heavy hand perhaps.

[12:14] And he begins to buck against what he perceives to be that heavy burden placed on him by his father. Sound like any of you young people here tonight? Anyone here that doesn't like your parents' rules and what they require of you?

Ready to make your own rules? Strike out on your own? Get out from under that heavy hand of your parents or the way you perceive it anyway? I want you to pay attention tonight and see where such a rebellious heart will lead.

See what happens to the prodigal son. Well, he does. He decides he wants to make a go of it on his own. And he demands his share of the inheritance. Give me my portion now.

Something that he would normally receive later in life. Probably, presumably, at his father's death.

And for whatever reason, the father gives it to him. We're not told why. Maybe he's afraid of driving his son even further away and alienating him further.

He gives him his portion of the inheritance. And the son takes his newfound fortune and he heads off to a far country. As far as he can get away from his house.

[13:20] To pursue the sins that he's probably been cherishing in his heart all along. To do the things that he was forbidden to do when he was back in his father's house. Now he's free. Now he can do whatever he wants.

No one to say no. No one to say you have to be in by this hour. No one to tell him this and this and this. Oh, free from all of that. Out from under the heavy hand. And so he can pursue the sin that's been growing in his heart.

And he loved his sinning. He pursued it with reckless abandon. Wild, riotous, loose living we could translate it. It was a carefree life with no regard for the fact that his money would eventually run out. It was a prodigal life. Excessively, extravagantly wasteful. A life of excess involving women as we find out later in verse 30.

Probably an excess of food and drink as well. And he was a popular man. He was well liked. Had a lot of friends to party with. To enjoy himself with.

[14:27] Until he ran out of money. But he loved his lifestyle of sin. And he pursued it passionately. And it was enjoyable for him. And maybe that's where you are right now.

In your sin. You're at the stage where there's still a little bit of pleasure. And sin does that. There's a little bit of pleasure in it. There's that bit of enjoyment at the first.

That bit of satisfaction that comes from it. And some people at that moment get so engrossed in their sin. Thinking that that's all there is.

That they're so deep that they never come back. But they soon find out what the prodigal son finds out. Maybe you're there right now where that sin is still just a little bit pleasurable.

And so it's got its hook in you. But you don't feel the hook yet. You're still enjoying the good juicy worm. That's possible. Fish can do that I guess. But you haven't hit the hook yet.

[15 : 23] It's there. You just don't realize it. If you're there. You're dabbling with some sin. And you're finding it pleasurable. You're thinking about dabbling a little bit more.

You listen and see what happens. You listen and see where it will land you. It won't always be pleasurable. The pleasure that comes with it, as we'll see, is fleeting. Learn from this young man what's about to come.

And of course, Solomon was right when he said a companion of prostitutes squanders his well. And isn't it true? The prodigal son soon finds himself without any money.

His money is gone. And by the time that happens, a famine is beginning in this far distant land where he's away from dad. Dad can't bail him out here. And he's without any help.

There's little food or work to be found anywhere. And so he takes the only job he can find feeding pigs for a farmer. A job that would be repulsive to any good Jew.

[16 : 25] Even though he had strayed from his upbringing, certainly some things probably stuck with him. So here he is in the pigsty. Feeding the pigs. Because that's all he can find to do.

The only way he can keep himself even barely alive. And so he's pursued his sin. And now secondly, he loved his sin and he pursued it. Secondly, the prodigal son realizes that his sin has consequences.

It's not all pleasure. It's not all fun and games. It's not all enjoyment. That's what Satan wants you to think. That it's all good. That only pleasurable things will come.

Well, he finds out otherwise. There are consequences for his sin. The consequences of being in need. Of having to just work. To just get by. Extreme hunger and discomfort.

The awful realization that it was his own fault. That he was in such great need with no family, no friends, no one to help. And he had no one to blame but himself.

[17 : 28] Had he remained in his father's home, he would have plenty at this very moment. Had he not wasted his inheritance. Even if he had taken the inheritance and left his father's house.

And hadn't been so foolish with it. He would have had plenty to get by during the famine. But he's wasted it. It's gone. And so his problem is his own problem.

It's his own fault. And sin will do this to you as well. It will leave you empty and unfulfilled. It will leave you without hope in this world.

It will bring you to an end of yourself. And unrepented of it will destroy you. Sin has consequences.

It looks so good at the beginning. But once it has you hooked, it makes you miserable.

Maybe some of you are at this point in your sin. You've enjoyed the pleasure. But now you feel the hook. You feel the pain. You feel the suffering that it's brought.

[18 : 25] You feel the miserableness of it. There's one of two ways you can go from here. The prodigal son comes to a census. And repents.

But some do not. This is not the case for everyone. Some continue on in their sin even though it makes them miserable. They lie to themselves and tell themselves that they still enjoy it. Or they're so stubborn that they don't want to admit that they were wrong.

They don't want to go back to mom and dad and say, you know what, you were right. You know, some people will continue in their sin just because they're stubborn. And don't want to admit that they were wrong. And so they continue down the road to hell.

This young man though begins to come to his senses. He begins to realize that these things are consequences of his own actions. He had left the place of abundance and provision where even the servants were in far better circumstances than he was now.

And that's part of repentance and awareness of your sin. And what it's doing to you and where it will eventually land you. Don't wait until you're in the midst of experiencing the consequences of your sin to realize this.

[19 : 35] Stop and look now. Learn from the prodigal son. Learn from other examples in Scripture. Look at your friends around you that have already gone so far and you see that they're miserable. You don't have to experience this for yourself where you get so far gone.

Where you're so far away from home and so without hope in the world that you're miserable. That you're feeding pigs. And that's all that you can do. You don't have to get to that point in your sin. You don't have to go that far. You can learn from others and repent before you get to that point. But here the prodigal son is. He's realized the consequences of his sin.

And now, thirdly, he begins to hate his sin. And he does come to his senses. He began by loving his sin and pursuing it.

And then he saw the consequences of his sin. What it's doing to his life. And so now he begins to hate his sin. And the consequences that it's brought. Can you imagine being so bad off that you wanted to eat pig food?

[20 : 40] No one wants to be in a situation like that. And he sees that this is where his sin lands him. And so, the light bulb comes on. God opens his eyes. He comes to his senses. He begins to see his sin for what it is.

It doesn't look so attractive now as it did when he was back in his father's household. Dreaming of being out from under his father's rules. It doesn't look so good now. He sees the ugly reality of it now. And he hates it.

It's left him in a position now lower than the servants. But he comes to hate his sin so much that he commits now to repenting. He plans out his repentance.

I'm going to go back. I'm going to go back to my dad. And I'm going to say, I don't even deserve to be a son. Make me one of your servants. But please, receive me back into your household. Even if only as a servant.

I'm going to go back to my father. He plans it out in his mind. He sees that his father was not so evil and harsh as he had thought previously. And now he hopes his father is gracious.

[21 : 42] And he knows that he will be. He knows that he had misjudged his father previously in his sin. And he plans to go back and acknowledge his sin before God.

But it can't stop here. Some people might even stop here. J.C. Ryle warns against this. You might understand that your sin is wrong. And you see its consequences. And you begin to dislike your sin. But you can't stop there. You might even think, I need to repent. And I'm going to repent. But you can't stop there by saying, I'm going to repent. The way Ryle puts it, he says, conviction isn't conversion.

You know, you can be convicted of your sin and never repent of it. You can be convinced that it's wrong and still continue on in it. You have to actually then go and repent. And that's the fourth thing we see.

The prodigal son turned from his sin and went to his father. I love verse 20. We'll just notice the first part at the moment.

[22 : 44] So he got up and went to his father. Sweet words. There are sweeter ones that follow, but sweet words that he did repent. You see how his trajectory, his path changes?

From the beginning. It started in his heart. He's pursuing his sin. He longs to sin. And then he gets out from under his father's household. Out from under his father's roof. And he actually chases down his sin. He lives it.

And now he's in an end of himself. And he turns. And instead of running away from his father's home, he's now going back towards it. He's returning. He's been reaping the consequences of his sin.

And now he turns from those sins. It's that 180 degree turn that we spoke of earlier. It's what Scripture expects of us.

It's what is required of us. Ezekiel 14 and verse 6 says, Therefore, say to the house of Israel, This is what the Sovereign Lord says.

[23 : 43] Repent. Turn from your idols and renounce all your detestable practices. You notice it doesn't just say, Say you're sorry. It says, turn from them. Repent.

And then in Ezekiel 18, Therefore, O house of Israel, I will judge each one of you according to his ways, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent. Turn away from all your offenses. Then sin will not be your downfall.

For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent and live. God wants you to repent so that you might have life.

And life is what follows repentance. Repent and live. And we'll see that's the case for the prodigal son. We've seen that it was what Jesus commanded.

Repent and believe, for the kingdom of God is at hand. The apostles commanded this. Peter says in Acts 2.38, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins.

[24 : 40] And in Acts 3 and verse 19, listen to the language of turning again. Repent then and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out. That times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

Turn. Turn. Turn from your sin. Repent and live. Turn. That times of refreshing may come. Go from living in the pigsty to your father's house and find forgiveness of sins there.

And so in the last place, we see that the Father forgave and received His Son. The rest of verse 20, But while He was still a long way off, His Father saw Him and was filled with compassion for Him, He ran to His Son, threw His arms around Him, and kissed Him.

You see, the Father was looking for Him. He was watching. He saw Him while He was still a long way off. There's a man in the church in Grand Rapids. His name is Carl Quakel.

And he's an artist. He's got a marvelous picture of the Father looking for His Son. He's an older man. He's got wrinkles. He's got crow's feet.

[25 : 53] He's squinting into the distance looking for His Son. Longing for Him to come back. He's waiting. The Son didn't know perhaps what to expect upon repenting and returning, but He had no need for fear.

The Father was waiting for Him. And while He was yet a long way off, the Father saw Him, He felt compassion for Him, and He runs to Him and welcomes Him home.

And the Son doesn't even get to finish His speech. And it's clear that the Father has forgiven Him. He treats Him not as a servant, but as a son. He welcomes Him back into His home.

And you have nothing to fear when you come in repentance to your God. God isn't a cruel tyrant just looking for the opportunity to punish someone.

He desires your repentance so that He can grant you life. Remember what we saw in Ezekiel that I take no pleasure in the death of anyone.

[26 : 56] Repent and live. And then Peter tells us in 2 Peter 3.9, The Lord is not slow in keeping His promises. Some understand slowness. He's patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

That's what God wants. He wants you to come to Him. And when you come, He'll receive you with open arms. He's waiting patiently, watching for you to come, like the Father in the story, eager to receive you.

But make no mistake, should you not repent, He will punish. He will judge. And so when the Son comes and confesses His sin, which is part of our repentance, confessing our sin to God, clearly the Father forgives Him.

It's clear by His actions towards Him. And so will our Heavenly Father forgive us when we repent and confess our sins. 1 John 1.9, if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Amen. And so you need not fear. Come. Come to your loving Heavenly Father and find that He'll accept your repentance, forgive your sins, forgive your sins for Jesus' sake.

[28 : 15] And so the repentance brings rejoicing. There's a celebration in the house. And everyone except the sullen older brother joins in rejoicing at the return of the lost son.

And so there's rejoicing on earth. And I can assure you that were you to come and repent for the first time tonight, come to Christ, turn from your sin, there would be rejoicing here in this place tonight.

How glad we would be. How glad your family would be. We would rejoice at the forgiveness of sins, at your repentance. And that's the case in heaven. Look up at verse 10 in the parable of the lost coin.

The conclusion Jesus draws in verse 10, in the same way, I tell you there's rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents. We wouldn't just be rejoicing alone here on the earth.

You know, the angels in heaven would be rejoicing if you would come to Christ tonight. Repentance and faith. We would rejoice and the angels would join with us.

[29 : 17] In heaven. But the lack of repentance brings sorrow. 2 Corinthians 12.21 Paul says, I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual sin, and debauchery in which they have indulged.

And you know that this father's heart would have been broken had he watched and watched and watched for his son only to never see him come back. Only to never see him repent. It would have broken his heart.

But there's joy over true repentance. And so the challenge for us tonight is will you repent? Will you see your sin for what it is?

The things you may think of as little sins, especially compared to the world around you, those things are still sin. Will you see that your sin is a pig's thigh of disgustingness disgustingness that will lead you further and further into more sin and further into despair?

Even if it's not that openly wicked sort of sin we spoke of earlier. Pray that God would open your eyes to this truth. Open your eyes to those little sins.

[30 : 28] The sins of gossip. The sin of lusting after the opposite sex is in your heart. You don't act on it. It's just via the computer screen or things that you see.

It's in your heart. It's no big deal. No. These are sins that must be repented of. Your love of the favor of men. This is a sin that must be repented of.

You're compromising at the world so that they won't make fun of you. You're being ashamed of Jesus. These are things that we must be done with.

Your short temper. Your pride that shows in so many ways your worry. Your disrespecting of your parents. Your discontentment. Your impatience. Your idolatry that you harbor in your heart.

You're not keeping the Sabbath day holy. All of these things that are not big in the eyes of the world perhaps, but all sin is heinous in the eyes of God and wicked in His sight.

[31 : 26] He's a holy God. He can't tolerate even just a little bit of sin. These must be repented of. They must be left behind. God wants you to repent. He is patient with you.

Not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. This is what He wants. And Jesus welcomes sinners. You know, that's what the Pharisees accused Jesus of at the very beginning of this chapter.

Go back to verses 1 and 2. They accused Jesus of receiving sinners and Jesus tells three parables and says, you're exactly right. I receive repentant sinners.

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Him, but the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, this man welcomes sinners and eats with them. And so it seems almost to make their point.

Jesus tells these parables, yes, He received sinners. And He will receive you this night. Would you come to Him in repentance and faith? He welcomes sinners.

[32 : 25] You'll find that He's ready, welcome to receive you into His arms. And remember that repentance won't be a one-time thing.

There is that initial repentance, that conversion, that turning from your sin. But even when you're living a life of faith, following Christ, any Christian here that's been such for any period of time can tell you that they continue to struggle with sin.

They continue to stumble and to fall. Every day we sin. And so every day we need fresh repentance. Every day to confess our sins and to turn from that sin again and to renew our faith in Christ and to follow after Him again.

And so don't think tonight that this message is not for you. It's for everyone here. It's for those that have never repented and turned from their sins and need that conversion, that salvation, full and free from our God who is faithful.

And it's for those that have been walking with Christ longer than anyone else here. We need repentance every day to turn from our sin again and again.

[33 : 35] If you've never repented of your sins, do it this night. You may not be as bad as your friends, outwardly wicked, and you think, I'm okay. Surely God can't be upset with me.

I mean, look at everybody else and how bad they are. No. No. I hope you see the folly of that. Even your being a good kid, a good person, more or less, better than the average person isn't good enough.

The least sin requires God's punishment. And so the least sin, you must repent of and turn to Jesus. Do it tonight. And praise God tonight that He changes hearts and that He gives the gifts of repentance and faith.

Without that, we'd have no hope. And so thank God tonight. If you have repented, you praise Him for what He's done in your heart. And if you haven't, you pray that He would come and give you that new heart, that He would give you that repentance and faith, and you turn from your sin and you run to Christ right now.

You can do it right here where you sit. You can repent of your sin and be done. Be done with it and you can walk with your Savior. You can see the foolishness of your ways. You know your sin is nothing more than a pigsty.

[34 : 42] And if you haven't realized it yet, one day you will. All you're doing is feeding the pigs. Miserable. Empty. But you can have a life of fullness. Richness.

Wealth beyond imagination. Maybe not all the money you want, but a far greater wealth. A far greater inheritance than anything the world has to offer. Instead of living in the pigsty, you can live with your Father.

You can go to be with Him in Heaven in glory. You need but repent and believe. And Jesus will receive you. Amen. Father, we thank You for Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who did lay down His life for us.

Who did suffer in our place. So that when we come in repentance and confession, we can have forgiveness of sins because of His perfect work. And so we give You thanks and praise this night for our glorious Savior.

We thank You that You are patient with us. We thank You that You've been patient with so many of us here. Not wishing for us to perish, but longing for us to come to repentance.

[35 : 47] And we thank You for drawing us to Yourself. Give us grace each day then to be repenting of our sin as we sin anew. We thank You that we can find forgiveness anew.

We pray that You would yet be patient with others in our midst that have not repented and trusted in Christ. We pray that You would draw them to Yourself. Do that great work of regeneration in their hearts and grant them the gifts of repentance and faith.

Give them grace to come running to You even this night. That they might find that sweet forgiveness. That they might leave the emptiness and the foolishness of their sin. the misery that their sin brings and find joy and fulfillment and satisfaction and peace in the arms of the glorious God of heaven and earth.

We thank You that there is such a place of peace and solace and rest and protection and comfort for Your people. We thank You that You are a faithful God. We pray that You would give us grace to be a faithful people.

And so bring honor and glory to Your name. Give us help then, we pray. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen.