

# The Truth of God

By Paris Reidhead\*

Before us this morning is that portion that I have read from Matthew 21. Last Lord's Day, from the 13th Chapter, we considered another from parable from Nature, from Farming. Our Lord spoke of the different kinds of soil and the effect of the seed, the good seed, upon that soil. This that we considered last Lord's Day was the first of the Parables, the first of the parables. Today, we have one of many. This was given to a company of people that were there, Chief Priests and Elders, Rabbis, Scribes, and the Pharisees who came to Him saying, "By what authority dost Thou do these things?" (Mat. 21:23) And so, He began to speak to them in parables.

Now, we found last Lord's Day the reason for the Parable was this. He spoke to them plainly. He set forth the demands that He made. He asked them to bow and bend, and break before Him and receive life. He invited them to come and find rest, and they refused. And thus, truth, not walked in, not obeyed, become a barrier to all further spiritual progress. He had nothing for them then but parables, nothing but stories. I trust you have read the editorial in this current issue of the Alliance Witness. Dr. Tozer<sup>1</sup> has developed the theme from a little different angle, but parallel to what we considered last Lord's Day, that Truth does not become yours until you obey it. It is in the step of obedience that the Truth changes from words into reality, and if you do not obey then it remains words, and that which you have had is taken from you, for the impulse and the motivation, the warm drawing of that truth to your heart rejected caused it to become words and really nothing more. And this is the point of progress. This is the end of the road, so to speak, the dead end street of spiritual development. That is, when you know Truth, and do not walk in it, then you have come to the place where there is nothing further for you but stories, in the hopes that those stories may somehow bring you back to that point where you are prepared to obey.

Now, our Lord is telling a story, a parable. A Parable concerning a man, who has planted a vineyard, hedged it about, dug a winepress, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country. From Isaiah, from our first Scripture reading, we saw that this was Israel, His people that He had purchased with His Grace, that He delivered with His stretched out arm, that He redeemed with His Power. He had a lovely purpose for this Nation. He said, "Ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar, a pecuniary, and a purchased people" (I Pet. 2:9). In other words, God wanted a witness to the Nations about, these nations that worshipped Baal and Ashtoreth, and Moloch, these people that served Satan through these various fronts that Satan gave them, for he was behind them all, and the spirit that animated all of them, he and the demons of darkness that served with him. And our Lord, our wonderful God of Grace had mercy upon these Canaanitish nations, and He wanted a people. He said, "Ye shall know Me, and understand Me, and obey Me, and be My witnesses." We have seen in previous studies that that generation that came out from Egypt came to the point where they could be the means of blessing, and they refused. They came up to Kadesh-barnea. They came to the point where they would have to head directly for the Jordan River, but being in flood, and the land filled with giants, their hearts failed them in unbelief, and they refused to go through. There was a great deal of fighting in the Wilderness, oh, no end of fighting. But they were fighting with God, and they were fighting with themselves, and they were fighting with each other, but they were not fighting the battle of the Lord, nor were they being used of God for His purpose. That generation that came up to Kadesh-barnea, led by the princes, the famous men in Israel, the next day you recall, they came to Moses and said, You and Aaron take too much to yourselves. We are holy men, and we have a right to worship. And the very men that had come under the sentence of death, doomed to die in the wilderness because of their stubborn refusal to obey God, now protested their holiness, and insisted upon their rights, and God had to judge them with a plague, destroying as you know the great company of them, and the princes and famous men in the Camp. That whole generation that murmured against God, complained against Him, found fault with His leadership, found fault, and they just wandered around for those 40 years until the last of them expired, and their graves lined the march of Israel as they went about in futility, waiting for death because they would not obey God. The people came up, as you recall, to the Jordan River and went through. There was a testimony left in the

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<sup>1</sup> Aiden Wilson Tozer (1897-1963) Pastor and Author. Christian and Missionary Alliance

bottom of the River. There were twelve stones representing the Twelve Tribes. When the water was released and would flow again, there was the testimony of the Twelve Tribes, that they were dead. For they had gone into the place of death, and they were buried, and there is no usefulness for God on your part and mine until we have entered into union with Him in death. And Israel could not begin to serve God's purpose and fight His battles, and stand for that which He had called them to do until they had come to the place of death to themselves spoken of by the Jordan River. Nor could Paul. Paul, I am sure, thought that he was quite competent to serve the Lord in the training that he had gotten at the feet of Gamaliel, and the skill he had gotten in his forensics in Jerusalem, and in the great intelligence with which he had been endowed. So the day after he was healed, or shortly thereafter, he began to preach in Damascus, but he was not ready. He was not ready. They took him down, did Barnabas, to Jerusalem and these in Jerusalem, Peter and James and John, and knew he was not ready. And so he had to spend three years unlearning out there in the wilderness, a place of death, until he could come to that place where he said, "The things I counted gain I count loss to Christ" (Php. 3:7). "In me and my flesh there is no good thing" (Rom. 7:18). I have nothing to offer, nothing to present. A brilliant mind. Probably one of the greatest minds of the ages. And yet he said, When I came to you I came not in the excellency of men's speech, lest your faith should stand in the wisdom of men. I came to you simply preaching the Cross, foolishness to the Greeks, and a stumbling stone to the Jews. I have just come to you in the simplicity of my helplessness. "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:2). There had been a Jordan back there in the peninsula. There had been a place of death, a place of abandonment, a place where he recognized his utter helplessness, and then he was able to be used of the Lord.

Now, Canaan, by some of our Song Writers, is pictured as Heaven. No. No. It is not Heaven. I hope when we get to Heaven there will not be any battles to be fought. I trust that will all be left behind us. Canaan speaks of the life that has been brought to that place that God designed for it, to the end of itself, that place where one can with Paul testify, "I am crucified with Christ. Never the less, I live. Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." It is a life of identification, a life of union, or as F. B. Meyer<sup>2</sup> so beautifully put it years ago in a lovely little book, one chapter of which was entitled, The Reciprocal Indwelling, where you dwell in union with Christ, crucified to yourself and He dwells in you, living His life of resurrection power through you. And this is what you had there, Israel wandering around in futility and powerlessness, in weakness just waiting to die until that generation that did obey the Lord came, and there the testimony was left in the bottom of the River, and then on the other side were twelve stones testifying to resurrection with Christ. Then they were prepared to serve the Lord.

You would say, "Isn't it wonderful. Now, God has a witness. Now, God has a testimony. Now, God has that for which He has yearned." Yes. And He said, I am asking you to leave here this pillar of stone so that you can bring your children down and explain to them what it stands for, so that it will be a perpetual monument. But they did not do it. It was too far to go, and their children really were not interested, so they just did not do it. And it was not long until the children had lost all interest in what Jordan had stood for. They took it for granted. And so, we find that there was a generation that came through with Joshua. Then there was a second generation that was the children that came through with Joshua, but the children of this company, or the third generation that arose in Israel had this testimony made concerning them. There arose up a generation that knew not Joshua, and they served Baal and Ashtoreth. They have gone right back into the crimes of the people around them. They had thought that, because their fathers died, the children could live without it. That their fathers had come to the place of death, and it was not necessary for the children. Perhaps there is nothing so dangerous to the cause of truth and right as third generation religion or Christianity. And this is what we have back there. This is what we have. They rose up a generation that knew not Joshua, and they served Baal and Ashtoreth. They had gone down, and the pile of stones had fallen down, and the testimony of death and burial, and resurrection, was forgotten. Oh they all believed it, but they had not experienced it. And it became just a tradition. It became just some lovely sound that fell upon the ears of the children, and the children loved to hear the sound, but they had not gone into death. They had not come out in resurrection life. They simply had tradition, and having only a tradition there was no release of divine power in their lives. And so they were enticed by Baal and Ashtoreth and Moloch. And they came in the place of Judgment. And within three generations, God had to judge Israel and His wrath was sore against them was what the testimony was. And God was angry with His people. Why? When salt loses its saving power, it is good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. And this was the pattern from that

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<sup>2</sup> Frederick Brotherton Meyer (1847-1929) A Baptist Pastor

time on. They would go into captivity, and then there would be the anguish and the grief, and the heartache and the burden, until someone would find the Scripture, and the Testimony of better days, would call out to God in anguish of spirit and hunger of heart. God heard and answered, for He is a Covenant-keeping God, and whenever He can get His people to obey Him He will bless.

Someone asked me this past week. They said, "Brother Reidhead, do you think in the light of prophecy there is any reason to expect a revival in America?" No, in the light of prophecy, I see no reason to expect a revival. But in the light of the fact that our God is a Covenant-keeping God, I see no reason not to expect God to honor His Covenant. And He said, "If My people which are called by My Name will humble themselves, and seek My face and pray, and turn from their wicked way, then will I hear, then will I forgive and then will I heal their land" (2 Chr. 7:14). I believe we live under the same Covenant canopy as did John Wesley<sup>3</sup>. We have every prophetic reason to believe God to bless us that he had, for we live on the same side of the Cross, and in the same general period of history, and I firmly believe as I stand before you today that when Israel in captivity remembered their former estate and saw their sins and cried to God, God heard them and God delivered them. And the same is true today. But I believe there is an inevitable principle here. When the vine that has been planted, that has been dug, and that has been nourished, and guarded and protected fails to bring forth fruit, good fruit, and brings forth bitter, wild fruit, God inevitably does as He has done in the past. The pattern of history seems irrevocable, that He knocks down the walls, and He takes away the protection, and He allows it to be wiped out. He has stated it clearly in Luke 14:34-35: "When the salt loses its saving power, it is good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men." Now this is a principle, an irrevocable principle. It is true in your life.

You have had truth. You have had light. You have had God deal graciously with you. There have been times of great warmth and delight and joy in prayer and fellowship, and in witness. But the years have come, and something has happened, and your heart has grown cold, and you have become more interested in business, and more interested in recreation, and more interested in other avocations than you are in the Lord. Look out. Look out. "To whom much is given, much is required" (Luk. 12:48). If God cannot by the entreaties of His Word, and the drawing of His Spirit, bring you back, He has other means. He has other means. It is so easy for Him to break down the wall, and into your body, and into your business, and into your home, and into your family come all of these things that He allows to come. The principle is established irrevocably back there in Deuteronomy 28. He said, "If you will obey Me, and walk in the light of My Word, walk in fellowship with Me, I will bless you." But if you do not, then what I will do is send to you a sample of the kind of judgment you are going to experience. The curse of the law was not the penalty. The penalty of the Law is Death. The curse of the Law was a foretaste of the penalty, in order to get you to lose your appetite for sin, and thus to avoid the penalty. And so we find there in Deuteronomy 28, He described the curse that is going to come. He is going to curse basket and store. He is going to curse body and business. He is going to curse family and fowl. He is going to curse the beast of the field. He is going to curse every interest of the life. In other words, He is going to give a sample of the ultimate, eternal consequences of sin. He is going to take the hedge down, and let something come in and trample it down, so that the person that has been protected and blest and enjoyed all that He can give will have some incentive, some reason, some moral drive to come back to the Lord. And this is the pattern of history. And this is what has happened with all these many centuries. They would go down in defeat and failure, and idolatry and worldliness, and the lust of the eye and the flesh, and the pride of life, and into bondage, and then God would deliver them. And then they would go into bondage, and God would deliver them. Until Isaiah 43 when He said, Now I am finished. That is as far as I am going to go.

Do not remember the former days any more. I am going to do a new thing. I am going to go to another people. You say these people are heathen. You say that they are owls and lizards, are unclean. All right. THIS is what I am going to do. I am going to send the stream of My Truth, and of My Grace and of My Life, out to these people that you of Israel properly call owls and lizards, unclean. I am going to set streams in the wilderness and in the desert, and these people, these heathen people are going to drink of the Water in that River of Life, and drink from the springs of My Grace, and when they drink something glorious is going to take place, and they, are going to be changed, and I am going to get a people for Myself. This people have I

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<sup>3</sup> John Wesley (1703-1791) Anglican cleric, Christian theologian, and founding the Methodist movement

formed for Myself — they shall show forth My Praise. And so in due course the Lord Jesus Christ became that River of God's Grace that had flowed out of eternity past from His broken heart, and He became that Spring of Eternal Life that flowed from the wounded side of the Son of God. And then the Truth went out to Cornelius. You remember how that the sheet had to be put down from Heaven, and Peter saw it. The Lord said, "Slay and eat" (Act. 11:7). He said, "I've never eaten anything unclean" (Act 11:8). He said, "Slay and eat. Never call anything unclean that I have called clean" (Act 11:9). And so Peter was willing to go to the house of Cornelius because God had shown him that it was going to be the owls and the lizards upon whom He would come. And then Peter stood up when they were questioning the Gentiles in the Church, and he said, Listen brethren, I was there that day. I was there. There was a man that fasted and prayed, and gave alms, and he hungered. And God heard his cry, and God knew his need, and though he was not of Israel at all, he was of the Romans, that hated people that held us in bondage, yet God looked upon his heart, and he said, I was there, and I saw God come down upon him. And that was opening it up to the Gentiles, and then it went out until finally it came to your country. There are some of Israel here this morning. Always we have some Hebrew Christians with us. There are some of Israel. But by and large, they here are not. You are of the lizards. You are the owls, and the Cormorants, and that which was unclean. I am a British Isles mongrel, through no fault of my own, Scotch, Irish, and English, and a dash of Welsh, and my people up until the 6th Century were savages that worshipped evil spirits and sacrificed human sacrifices on altars of stone, wearing nothing but skins, even though the Gospel had come in the time of the Roman occupation of Britain, yet they had still been held in the priesthood of the Druids so long that it was not until Pope Gregory sent Clement to England that the Gospel came with its saving effect to my ancestors.

I submit to you, dear heart, today that God's purpose in opening that spring in your land, in your native land, opening that fountain in your culture and country was that He could get a people who would show forth His praise.

Now, what is his testimony? There you will find it over in 1st Peter, the second Chapter, where he speaks again of the stone that would set at naught of the builders, but now has become the headstone of the corner. "Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect and precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. Unto you, therefore, which believe is the preciousness, but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner. A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them that stumble at the Word, being disobedient whereunto also they were appointed" (I Pet. 2:6-8). But, these are the very same words that God spoke to Israel at the foot of Mt. Sinai. I am now reading to you, as near as I can. It isn't exactly, but it is the substance of that Word that He gave when they met Him at the foot of Sinai. He has now taken that Word that He gave to Israel, and He has applied it to others.

Listen to it now: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light, which in time past were not a people but are now the people of God, which hath not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy" (I Pet. 2:9-10).

Now, I ask you, if this people Israel that God loves go greatly that He gave nations for her, that He loved her as is spoken of with terms of such endearment and such affection as are used of none other, if God was willing to break out that branch in the olive tree to make way for the engrafting of the branch from the wild olive tree, what will He do when the wild olive tree and these branches do as did Israel and fail of His purpose. I am bringing it to you this way this morning. If He took this vine of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and planted it in a very fruitful hill, and nurtured it, and built a wall about it, and protected it, and put a tower in it so that none could ravage it, and expected fruit; and finding none finally said, There is nothing I can do but take the walls down and let the vine be destroyed. If He did that to Israel, how much more will He do it to others.

Do you realize that across North Africa in the 3rd Century there was a Church? It was not Jewish. It was Roman. It was Gentile. It went on to the 4th Century, the 5th Century, the 6th Century, the 7th, the 8th Century, and by this time it had become so corrupt, it had lost all of its virginal purity, it had lost all of its purpose, it was a stench on the face of the earth instead of a blessing, and I verily believe that when that prophet sat there in the Sinai Peninsula in a cave and, deluded as he was undoubtedly, for this thing of the Koran as we have seen it and known it is a masterpiece of strategy in seeking to counter the effectiveness of the Scripture. It cannot be lightly passed over. But as he sat there and devised this thing, he was answering a corrupt Christianity. And when his sword was unsheathed and he rode with his hoards across North Africa, he was God's

avenger to come against the Church that had lost its holiness, a Church that had lost its purity, a Church that had lost its reason for being, and God used Mohammed the same way that He used Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus. And I submit to you when you have seen the devastating effect of another thing raised up — I was saying at the close of the Sunday School hour that international Communism has answered a corrupt, humanistic, Christianity, and it has taken dedication, it has taken commitment, it has taken benevolence; it has taken these things which the Church lost, and it has incorporated them into an A-Theology, and a no-God Theology, and it has made it a religion. And Communism is today a religion, a no-God religion and God is in the center of it by His absence. And I submit to you that what Sennacherib was to Jerusalem, an army of avenger, so we can see, transpiring today that God has allowed a philosophic system, a totalitarian system, and a total system to come, that is by cause of the fact it is has incorporated total dedication, and total abandonment, and total commitment to its purpose, and is making a religious crusade out of it atheism; it has in it the power to destroy a sensual, materialistic culture. And when you find a man just at the other end of this street that has the temerity and the rashness to take off his shoe and beat the desk in contempt of all the world, you know that man knows that he has the power to back up his affront. And what is he doing when he does it; he is showing his total and complete contempt for a culture that has lost its sinews, its muscles, its reason, its purpose, its dedication, its commitment.

And we live in the day when the Church as we know it in America has become so anemic and so powerless, and so void of spiritual and social significance that it does not even figure as a sector in deterring conquest. What is the answer? Acquiescence? No. A Southern Methodist Professor, listening to Fred Schwartz speak down in Dallas, Texas, said, when Mr. Schwartz was speaking about the nature, of this conflict, he said, "Well, it is better that we be Red than dead." No. It is better to be dead than Red. But I do not believe the alternative has come to that yet. I believe that the world is waiting to see the release of the dynamic of Christianity. It has not failed. In living memory, it has not been tried. We are not just sure what it means. You are not just sure what the implications are, what the economic implications are, what the social implications are. But we know that the message that Christ preached was a total message. We know that it laid an obligation people. We know that when Peter heard Christ he sold his business, he sold everything, and he came and followed Christ, and we know that He has never changed these conditions. He has never changed His invitation. And I submit to you that American Protestantism, and American Evangelicalism has become peripheral, and in our land today we are using God as a tool, and as a means and as an instrument, rather than, as He has ever said that He must be, The Glorious Center of our beings. And when we come to that place again where we are willing to meet Christ on His terms, then, and not until then can we expect Him to erect the walls and set the tower. But He has given to us the pattern of History, and the pressure of the times, and the tempo of the day, and He has left us absolutely nothing in which we can hope, except a return to Him. He is speaking to His day. He is saying to this people. I sent to you prophets, and you stoned them. I have sent you to you prophets, and you killed them. Now God has sent you His Son, and you are going to kill Him. There is no alternative. You are rejecting the Message. You are rejecting the Hope. There is nothing that can happen except destruction. But oh, ever and always, and inescapably, and gloriously whenever God brings a message of judgment and a message of inditement, He brings with it the message of hope, and deliverance.

And He said to Jeremiah, I want you to go. I want you to pull down; I want you to throw down. I want you to destroy. I want you to uproot, but I want you to build and to plant. I have spoken from my heart this morning, but I am not finished.

I want you to notice these last words. Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken. And He left it. He said, "Come unto Me all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of me and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mat. 11:28-29). They would not come. Now, He said, The prophets have come and you have stoned them, the prophets have come and you have killed them, and God sent His Son and you are going to kill Him, but oh, still, still, I am holding out hands to you. There is a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, and if you fall on that rock you will be broken. You will be broken.

My friend, the hope of this generation is not in organization and ecclesiastical counsel in the Catholic Church. Some say, Well we are glad. The Catholic Church is anti-communist. There is no hope there. Some say, We are so glad that the various political parties are anti-communist. There is no hope there. Some say, Well we are so glad that the Protestant Church... There is no hope there. Do you know where the hope is? It is in that small group that have never found each other, but recognize one another when they see each other. It is in that little company of people that have seen a stone cut out of the mountain without

hands, and they have fallen upon that Rock, and they have been broken. And they are a people, I say, small in number, but the whole purpose and passion of their entire being is to live for the glory of Jesus Christ in every area of their life. In their business, in their home, in their family, in their recreation, in their prayer, in their work, in their witness, they have been brought into that unity which alone marks a Christian, a total abandonment to Christ. And the hope of the world lies there. For this is His seed, and this is His Church. He said, I will build My Church upon this Rock, that He is the Christ. We made a mistake. We thought that anyone that believed that He was the Christ could be put into the Rock, and built into the Church. No. The only one that can be built into that Church is the one that has denied himself, that has fallen upon the Rock, and has been broken. The only one that can be built into that Church is the one that has taken up his cross to his own pleasure and purpose, and rule and government, and aim and ambition, and vanity and desire.

Now, He said, "If you fall on the Rock, you will be broken; you will have no right to choose where you go, You will have no right to choose what you do; no right to choose how to use your time or your money; You'll have no right to choose how to use your strength, or your body. You have been broken." Have you been broken? Have you fallen on the Rock?

I am going to go so far as to say, My dear, I do not any longer believe that a person deserves, the name Christian at all, unless he has fallen on the Rock and been broken. I believe this is the basic, minimal requirement, This is the essence of repentance. And this is the foundation of His Church. Oh I know that religious incorporation will undoubtedly continue to include many different brands and varieties, but we see no hope there, no hope there. I see no hope for revival in the corporation. I will even go so far as to say, I see no hope for revival in this corporation. I only see individuals who, moved upon by the Spirit of God, will break upon the Rock.

I trust that in due time those individuals will come to such numerical influence and spiritual blessing that every heart here will want what God has. But, beloved, I am saying to you today that you are either part of the problem, or part of the answer. If you name the Name of Christ and have not fallen on the Rock and been broken, then there is in you that moral, spiritual corruption upon which the mold can build upon, which communism feeds, for it can only feed on decayed religion. But if you are prepared to fall upon the Rock in total, utter, absolute abandonment to Jesus Christ, to His Sovereignty in every area of your life, in every day of your life, in every department of your life, bringing to Him all you have, and all you are in a day by day outworking of His plans through the Power of His Spirit, then you have become part of that which is the only hope for our day and generation. And the issue is yours. But, lest you should say, it is going to cost me too much to break and to bend, may I remind you that He said, If you do not fall willingly upon the Rock, even though you know you are going to be broken, the Rock will fall upon you, and you will be ground to powder.

And so today, I just plead with you in the Name of Jesus Christ to break. The great Welsh Revival began when Seth Joshua had a little girl stand up in Prayer Meeting, and she said, Oh, God, bend me. And Seth Joshua, that giant of a man of intellect and of heart, bowed himself over the pulpit until he lay broken across it. And the great cry of the Welsh Revival was this, Oh, God, bend us. Bend us. Bend us until we break. Bend us until we break. And this is His people that have bent until they break.

Oh, my dear heart, God's arm has not lost its power. God's ear is not deaf. He is mighty to save, and strong to deliver, and to turn back wrath at the end of the age if we are prepared to bend until we break.

Bend us, Lord. Bend us. Bend us until we break, or we perish. Shall we bend before the Lord. Let me ask you this morning. What is it that keeps you from falling upon the Rock? Your business? Have you calculated how much business you are going to have when the enemies of our faith and system take over? Your pleasure? There is not much pleasure behind barbed wire. Your family? What is it that is keeping you from bending and breaking in a total abandonment of all you are and have to the Sovereignty of God's Son? What is it that is keeping you, if anything, from falling on the Rock, bringing your life into total conformity to His absolute rule? Is there something? Whatever it is, because of the greater light and great threat, your choice is infinitely more foolish than was Esau's who sold his heritage for a mess of pottage. You are a Christian. By virtue of this, and this alone, you are under sentence. Now if you are a Christian, and you are going to pay the penalty for it, why can we not, why must we not bend and bow, and break before the Lord? Can you not look into His eyes today and find that the place of rest is, total brokenness? When in the matter of your health, and your business, and your family, and your friends, you look into His

face and say, Thy will be done. I have no will of my own, no purpose of, my own, no plan of my own, and no aim of my own. I want nothing from you, Lord. I only want to glorify Thee. I am breaking today. Will you? Oh break, bend us, Lord, until we break.

Father of our Lord Jesus, look upon us here, a company of people that have sat before Thy Book and heard it applied to our day in the challenge of our hour, and the responsibility we face in this century. We know we cannot play Church. We know we cannot go on living as though someone were going to pipe for us while we dance indefinitely. We have got to come to grips with the stern reality of whether we are going to be Christian in fact, and in deed, as well as in name and in word. We have got together to bow ourselves before Thee, and let Thee teach us by Thy Spirit not only the Theology of the Book, but the methods and the implications and the outworking of it. And so, Father, this morning if there could come by Thy Spirit through this people a great bending until we realize the only wisdom is a total abandonment to Thy Sovereignty and a total commitment to Thy Glory, until every energy of our being is brought into this one focus, to fulfil Thy purpose and to glorify Thy Son. This constitutes the breaking upon the Rock. We have no other end. We hold no possessions. We have no plans, but to glorify Him. Might it characterize this people this morning. For Jesus sake. Amen.

Let us stand for the Benediction. "Now may the God of Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be the glory now and forever. Amen" (Heb. 13:20-21).

\* Reference such as: Delivered at The Gospel Tabernacle Church, New York City on Sunday Morning, August 20, 1961 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.

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