

The Doctrine of Christ or the Life of Christ

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: Philippians 2:5

Henry T. Mahan Tape Library

Zebulon Baptist Church

6088 Zebulon Highway

Pikeville, KY 41501

Website: <http://www.sovereign-grace.com/13thstbap.htm>

Online Sermons: <http://mahan.sermonaudio.com>

I'd like for you to open your Bibles now to the book of Philippians chapter two, verse five. This is my text.

Now, the message...I make no apology for the fact that it is going to be quite personal and I hope that it is taken that way. I hope that I can take this message to my own heart and that each of you will...will feel that I am preaching directly to you as if no one else was present in this congregation. This is a message that if God has a word for us, this is a message for you individually.

You know it is foolish for us to defend our righteousness and miss Christ. It is quite foolish for us to, in our pride and self love, to miss Christ holding on to an empty profession of religion, claiming the upper most seat in the synagogue and the higher places and the knowledge of theology and just flat miss Christ and hear him say, "I never knew you. Depart from me."

I don't want that and I don't want to be responsible for your going along in this condition supposing that Christ is in your heart if he is not. If he is we praise him. If he is not we want him there.

Now, in Philippians two, verse five it says, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." The Amplified Version reads this way. "Let this same attitude and purpose and humble mind or spirit be in you which was in Christ."

Now we are in the habit of saying there are really just two classes of people in the world anyway, those who are saved and those who are lost. We are in the habit of saying, "When all is said and done there are only two classes of people: those who know the Lord and those who do not know the Lord; those who believe in salvation by grace and those who believe in salvation by works; those who believe in Christ and those who do not believe in Christ."

Now, actually, this is really true. It is really true. There are just two classes of people in this world in regard to spiritual matters, those who are alive and those who are dead, those who know Christ and those who do not know him because the Bible says in that last day, in that great day that God shall separate them, the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. And he shall say to those on his right hand, "Enter ye blessed into the

kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world.” And he shall say to those on his life, “Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire.”

But this is oversimplifying the grace of God. And this is oversimplifying the great work of regeneration. And this is oversimplifying this thing of redemption. And this oversimplification of the grace of God has led to some terrible errors. And the following errors have been born out of this oversimplifying the grace of God, the work of God, the work of the Holy Spirit and the merits of Christ. It has led to the terrible error of easy believism and the day of decision.

We are inviting men to walk an aisle and make a decision and we are calling it salvation. “Now I am among the saved. I am no longer among the lost. The world is just divided into two classes of people, the saved and the lost. And this morning, under the preaching of a certain preacher I made a decision to leave this group and join this group. And that’s all there is to it. I believed. I made a decision. I made a commitment. I united myself with Christ’s Church and therefore I am no longer on the left. I am now on the right.”

And this matter of soul winning today is going about saying to people, “You don’t want to go to hell, do you? You don’t want to be a goat in the day of judgment, do you? Wouldn’t you like to go to heaven? Wouldn’t you like to be a sheep?”

“Well, how can I do that? How can I switch sides?”

“Just by making a profession of faith, just by believing that Jesus Christ died on the cross, just by making a personal commitment.”

And this is an error. It is not that simple. This thing of salvation in the Word of God is called a new birth, not a switching sides. It’s called a new creation. It is called a new nature. It is called a new heart.

And then another error that has been born of this oversimplification of the grace of God is the carnal Christian theory. You know what that is. You accept Jesus as your Savior and he saves you from your sins and saves you from hell and takes you to heaven when you die and if later on, if it is convenient and if you care to and if you feel so impressed then you can make him your Lord. But it’s really not necessary. He can be your Savior and not be your Lord. He can be your Savior from sin and your Savior from hell, but you can be the servant of materialism, you can be the servant of sensualism, you can be the servant of possessions, you can be the servant of human praise and pride. Anything can be your Lord. Let Jesus be your Savior.

Well, I’m here to tell you this. The one who is your Lord is your Master and the one who is your Master is the one with whom you will spend eternity. Now, that’s so. Christ is not Lord at all if he is not Lord of all. And he will be no man’s Savior if he is not that man’s Lord. He is not called our Savior Jesus Christ. He is called our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

And this is an error. And this so called over simplifying the message. “This is nothing...it’s just the simple gospel.” That’s what I hear. “There is nothing to it. There is nothing to this thing. Just if you want to be saved, be saved.”

This oversimplification has led to a false—watch this, thirdly—a false doctrine of eternal security. Now, I regret to say that the modern Baptist Church is built not on Christ in particular, but it is built on this doctrine right here: the false doctrine of eternal security.

In other words, accept Jesus as your Savior and you are sure for heaven no matter how you live, no matter what your works are, no matter what your attitude is, no matter what your life is. Once you make that profession—and this is the reason it is much pressure is put on children to make their decision. Parents pray for their children and they talk to their children and witness to their children and take their children to Sunday school and one day the child walks down the aisle at about nine or 10 or 11 or 12 years of age, takes the preacher’s hand, says, “I believe in Jesus.” And the parent folds his arms and sighs a sigh of relief and says, “Well, I’ll meet him in heaven.”

I hope so. I hope so. But I’ll tell you the truth. I see these Baptist Churches with 1200 members and 200 in church and I don’t know whether you are going to meet them in heaven or not.

Carnal security, false eternal security, “I made my...”

And let me tell you something. Salvation is not and faith is not and repentance not an isolated experience. Brethren, we are saved, we are being saved and we are not saved yet. The Scripture says, “Our salvation is nearer than when we believed.”

“Preacher, what in the world are you preaching?”

I’m preaching that Christ saves. I’m preaching that salvation is a work of grace and a work of God. But I am saying that that work is completed when I stand conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. And I believe in security, not of this empty, easy believer. I believe in the security of the redeemed. I believe in the perseverance of the saints. I believe that a man who has come to Christ will keep coming to Christ. A person who has believed on the Lord will keep believing on the Lord. A person who has repented will keep repenting. And if he ever quits believing and quits coming to Christ and quits trusting Christ and quits repenting he never did. He had a false profession. He had an empty, emotional, sentimental experience that was not founded upon Christ at all.

John said that. John said, “They went out from us. If they had been of us they no doubt would have continued with us.”

The mark of regeneration is perseverance. The characteristic of real faith is continuing in that faith. I’m telling you the truth.

This so called oversimplifying the grace of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ has led to just plain indifference, just plain indifference, indifference to worship, total indifference. The people of God are meeting. The Spirit of God is speaking. The pastor is teaching. The people are praying. They are seeking God's presence.

“But I've got other things to do. I've got more important things to take care of. I've got things I'm more interested in. I've got people I am more interested in.”

My brother, you have missed Christ because there is nothing as important to a believer as worshiping God. There is nothing more important to a believer than fellowshipping with the family of God. There is nothing more important to a believer than praying. There is nothing more important to a believer than his identification with Christ.

But we are saved. That's what has led to this indifference in worship and indifference in prayer. Have you prayed this week? Indifference to study, indifference to identification with his people.

“But I'm saved. I got fixed up. I've been baptized.”

That's what this oversimplification of saved and lost and sheep and goats and the so called gospel of decisionism has led people to flat indifference.

David said, “As that thirsty deer, his throat parched and burning, as he pants for water, the flowing, rippling stream, as he thirsts for water, so panteth, thirsteth my soul for the living God.”

Oh, we got fixed up. We got fixed up in revival meeting back in 1954. So and so was preaching and singing “Just as I am” and I just felt like now was the time for me to become a Christian and I joined the Church and Sunday morning comes and it is a chore for me, you know, to get up and get down there, but I make an effort when it is convenient, when I don't have something else to do or maybe someone is not visiting with me. I don't have any place to go. And I read the Bible occasionally, you know. That is after I finish reading everything else.

Panting? Thirsting?

“Blessed are they that hunger and thirst for righteousness. They shall be filled.”

“Blessed are they that mourn. They shall be comforted.”

“Blessed are the poor in spirit. Theirs is the kingdom of...”

Is that...is that me?

“No, my getting fixed up has led me to a state of indifference. If somebody asked me, ‘Are you saved?’ the answer comes quickly. ‘Sure I’m saved.’ There are not many evidences of that fact, but I’m saved. I’ve been told that.”

I’ll tell you something else it has led to. This oversimplification of getting religion, it’s led to a self righteous religious exhibitionism. That’s what it has led to. All these bumper stickers of today are nothing in the world but religious exhibitionism.

“I have found it.” I’m implying that you haven’t.

“I’m saved, are you?”

I don’t know anything that turns me off as far as spiritual things are concerned any more than this showing off my religion by carrying signs and wearing signs, letting people know where I stand.

“I know God, do you?”

Now, listen to me. Listen carefully. There is a difference in a humble faith in God’s mercy toward me in Christ. There is a difference in that humble feeling and faith in God’s mercy and grace to me in Christ and a religious show of outward piety. There is a lot of difference in a humble witness of the Spirit and proselyting men to a religious profession.

God help us if we don’t know the difference.

You know, sinners were comfortable in the presence of our Lord. They certainly were. The religious, the overly pious, the self righteous religious were never comfortable around him. But sinners were. They congregated where he spoke, where he ate, where he walked. He was called a friend of sinners. But today’s outward show of false piety and religious exhibitionism has made people uncomfortable in some of our presence because we make a vain, empty show of our religion. We show it off. We make sure everybody knows about it.

And there is a way to witness. I don’t know how to word this. I wish I had the vocabulary. I wish I had the ability to word this like I know it ought to be worded, but I don’t. There is a humility in the presence of God and men, something Paul knew something about when he said, “I am less than the least of all the sinners.”

Do we give that impression that we believe that, that we even feel that way? I’m less than all the least of all the sinners. He said, “I’m not worthy to be called an apostle.”

Do you give the impression that you believe you are the chief of sinners? You wouldn’t dare give that impression, would you, because you don’t want anybody to feel that way. But Paul felt that way. And he gave that impression. He said, “This is a faithful saying. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief.”

But we want people around us to know that we know the Bible. We want them to know that we pray. We want them to know that we know God. We want them to know that we are saved. We are fixed up. We want to be sure and get that across. We want people to understand that we live a holy life, that we are above average.

In other words, we sound like that old Pharisee in the temple that said, “Lord, I thank you I am not an adulterer. I’m not an extortioner. I’m not unjust. I paid my tithes.”

But the justification and mercy of God were down there where a man was beating on his breast and wouldn’t even lift his eyes to heaven but Christ, “God, God, be merciful to me, a sinner.”

And this so called getting fixed up, getting all straightened out, getting my religion down pat, you know, get [?], getting right with God. I don’t know who invented that term, getting right with God.

Now think about it: It has led to a religious exhibitionism and it has led us...we are peculiar people. The Bible says that, a special people, peculiar. But our peculiarity does not lie in this direction, that we are so strange that people don’t like us.

And I’ll tell you another place it had led. It has led—and this is, perhaps, the most disappointing position of all—it has led to people knowing the doctrine of Christ in their heads and missing the life of Christ in their hearts. And let me tell you this. I don’t think that we’ll stray in the direction of easy believism and decisionism because we don’t promote it, not here. I don’t think we will stray in the direction of carnal Christian theory. I don’t believe we will fail there, nor this eternal security theory where a man is secure if he makes a profession of religion regardless of his lifestyle. I don’t think that there is any danger of this congregation being caught up in that terrible trap. But if we fail, if you and I fail of the grace of God, if you and I miss Christ, right here is where it is going to be. If Henry Mahan misses Christ and if Cecil Roach and Bob Kauffman and Charlie Payne and Don Fitzer and Ronnie Louie, if we miss Christ...and I’ll tell you this: That old song says, “And I hope by thy good pleasure safely to arrive at home.” If we miss Christ this is where it will be right here: knowing the theology and the doctrine of substitution. Yes, sir. A man can know the doctrine of substitution and miss the substitute, Charlie. A man can know the doctrine of irresistible grace and never be called by God’s Spirit. A man can know the doctrine of redemption by the cross, by the blood and miss Christ, to know the doctrine of Christ and miss the Spirit of Christ.

The Bible is full of warnings to folks like you and me. I’m a fool to ignore them.

“If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his,” whatever else he has, whatever else he knows if he doesn’t have the Spirit of Christ.

Our Lord said, “Except a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” It doesn’t matter what else he knows or has or professes or accomplishes if he is not born

again. “Except ye be converted and become as little children, except ye be broken. The sacrifices of God are not bloody altars, but a contrite heart.”

The one sacrifice of blood has been made. That’s Christ’s sacrifice. That’s sufficient. The sacrifices of God are a broken heart, a broken and a contrite spirit. God saveth such as be of a broken heart.

We are so proud. We are so rebellious. We are so easily offended.

If any man say, “I love God,” and men say that, most men say that. In fact, all men claim that. Very few people would claim that they hate God. But if any man say, “I love God” and hate his brother, he is a liar. And furthermore the truth is not in him.

Faith, James says, faith, you say you have faith? Show me your faith. How in the world can you show faith? Faith is intangible. How do you show faith? Faith without works is dead.

Turn to Luke if you will, chapter 14, and listen to our Lord. In Luke chapter 14, verse 26, verse 25 reminds me of 1978. Luke 14:25: “And there went great multitudes with him, great multitudes, thousands.” We like to talk about our numbers.

“How many did you have today?”

“I had 2000, largest Sunday school in town.”

“Great multitudes followed him and he turned and said to them, ‘Just make your decision, just believe.’”

No, sir. He said, “If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters and yea his own life also he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”

Verse 33, he finished with these words: “So likewise, whosoever he be of you—preacher, deacon, profession Christian—whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.”

Brethren, this is what Paul’s talking about in Philippians three. Paul, the mightiest preacher, Paul the sufferer for Christ, Paul, the apostle he said, “Oh that I may win Christ, that I may win Christ and be found in him. Oh that I may know him and the power of his resurrection.” Not just his doctrine, but him. “And the power of his resurrected life. Oh that I might be conformed to his image, that I might attain unto this resurrection from dead flesh and the dead world and dead materialism. I count not myself to have arrived,” he said. “I count not myself to have laid hold. But,” he said, “forgetting those things which are behind I press forward. I seek to lay hold upon that for which I have been laid hold in Christ.”

Actually, listen to me now, actually and I wouldn't be offensive if I could help it because it is no joy to be offensive. A warning ministry is no pleasure, but necessary. And I warn myself.

Actually, Calvinism, as a system of theology—now think about this for a moment—what we call Calvinism as a system of theology, Bruce, is no harder to accept than any other system of theology. No it's not. What we call Calvinism, God's covenant of grace, God's purpose, God's eternal promise of redemption, God's sending a substitute, God's holy Spirit in an irresistible fashion calling out a certain people for his name whom he will enthrone with Christ and make joint heirs with Christ, that, as a system of theology—and I'm talking about a system of theology that 300 years...200 years ago was in the majority—every great evangelical denomination today is built on Calvinism. That's right. The Presbyterians, their confession of faith, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechism, I can accept and believe and preach 98% accept for Church government and baptism. The rest of it is beautiful and clear as a bell. The Episcopalian Church the Church of England with its 39 Articles, those 39 Articles are as strong and as pure and as clear and ring a bell on the Word of God and believe and teach everything, right here, what the Scripture says.

Oh, these congregations and denominations no longer preach these doctrines. But go into their libraries and dust off the books and pull down the Confession of Faith and you will find that the Baptists and the Presbyterians and the Church of England and the Dutch Reformed, the old Heidelberg Catechism or Confession of Faith is as solid as a rock, just almost identical to the London Baptist Confession faith of 1620...1689, very little different.

Back in those days that's about all there were. The Church of England, the Presbyterians, the Baptists and the Dutch. That was it. The independents, they called them, or dissenters, and they were mainly Baptists, but all these people: Newton, Huss, Knox, Spurgeon, Gill, Keech, Ripon, Isaac Watts, William Cowper, Joseph Hart, all of these men were different denominations, but they all believed the same thing. They varied on sprinkling a baby. Some of them did and some of them didn't. They varied on Church government. Some of them believed that elders ought to rule the Church. Some believed that pastors ought to rule and some believed the people ought to rule. They differed in that. They differed sometimes in where they met and how they met. But on their doctrine, no difference.

Old King Henry VIII was a Calvinist. Yes he was, a strong Calvinist. So Calvinism as a theology, that's no problem. It's in the Bible. It's logical. It requires nothing from the sinner. It promises great reward.

But, my friends, listen to me. To believe the doctrines of grace and to have the life of grace is a different thing. Now, all who have the life of grace believe the doctrines of grace, but all who believe the doctrines of grace do not have the life of grace.

There are thousands of people in this world who do not claim to believe the gospel, but who act like they do. And there are thousands of people in this world who claim to believe the gospel who act like they don't. You think about that. There are thousands of people in this world who do not...they say they do not believe in Christ, but they act like they do. Their attitude and their spirit is good. And there are thousands of people, God help us, unfortunately, who claim to believe the doctrines of grace and the Word of God who act like they don't. And both of them are in jeopardy.

I want you to look at Philippians two a moment. There are four or five words I'm going to give you briefly. Paul said, "I travail till Christ be formed in you," not till you learn the doctrines of grace, but till Christ be formed in you. That ought to be the pastor's heart cry for himself and for his people.

"I travail. I labor in pain till Christ be formed in you."

My friends, I know, I am confident, I know the doctrines of grace. I have spent years studying them. I know them in my head. I know the doctrine of Christ and I know the law of Christ. And I know the work of Christ. I know those things. But this is my concern: Do I have the life of Christ? Do I have the Spirit of Christ? That's my concern. Do I have the fruit of Christ? And I should entertain every suspicion if these fruits and this Spirit and this attitude is not present, that maybe I have missed Christ.

Paul said...he uses some words here in Philippians two. He says...he uses the word "If, if." Our Lord used that word. He said, "If you love me you will keep my commandments."

John used that word. He said, "If they had been of us they would have continued with us."

And here Paul uses it. He says, "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ." In other words, if there be any comfort in Christ, if you have a genuine reason for hope in Christ, founded upon his person, his righteousness and his death and his intercession, if you do." And then he said, "If there be any comfort and strength in your love," the love of God for you and your love for him and your love for one another and if there be any fellowship of the Spirit, if there is any such thing as oneness of heart," is there? Is there? That's what he is asking, if there is. If there is any comfort in Christ, if you can have any hope in Christ, if there is any comfort and strength and confidence in Christ, if there is any comfort and strength in your love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if there is any oneness of heart, is there? Well, if there is and if there is any bowels of mercy.

Do you know what that is saying? Bowels in mercy? It is saying, "If there is any real depth to your affection, if there is any real depth to your claim, if there is any real depth to your emotions, if there is, if there is any real depth to your concern for the glory of God." That is the point of determination. That's where we have to start.

All right. Look at the second word. It is in verse two. He says, "Fulfill." If there is, if there is any comfort in Christ, if there is any strength in love, if there is any such thing as a unity of hearts, then you fulfill my joy.

Paul is saying here, "I rejoice in your showing and giving evidence of the presence of Christ in your life. Fulfill that. Quit talking about love and start loving. Quit talking about prayer and start praying. Quit talking about unity and be united. Quit talking about humility and show it. Quit talking about grace and be gracious. Quit talking about mercy and be merciful. Quit talking about forgiving and start forgiving." That's what he is saying. "Fulfill these things. If you have any foundation, if there is any comfort and strength in Christ or hope, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, then you fulfill these things."

And then the next word in verse three. "Let, let," verse three. "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory." In other words, "Let not your works and service in the kingdom of God be done to seek recognition, reward, personal praise.

Somebody says, "We're all working for the same place."

Is that our motive?

And this leads to strife and division and contention when our works and our service and our efforts in the kingdom of heaven are given to seek recognition and the praise of men. But he says in verse three, "In lowliness of mind let each esteem the other better than themselves." Let every brother regard the other brother as spiritually superior, superior, more excellent, spiritually better."

Paul, you say, "Paul, you are writing that. Was that true of you?"

Listen to him. He said, "I am not one whit behind the chief apostle. I am nothing. I am nothing."

They were talking about, "I am of Apollos. I am of Paul. I am of Cephas."

He said, "Who is Apollos? Who is Paul? Who is Cephas? We are just voices by whom you heard the gospel of Christ. We are nothing. He that planteth, he that watereth, he that soweth, they are nothing."

All this effort to be somebody.

"Pride goeth before destruction, a haughty spirit before the fall."

"He that exalteth himself shall be abased. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Fulfill this. Paul said, "If...if your claim..." There is nothing to memorizing doctrine. There is nothing to holding to a system. It may be as right, it may be as straight as an

arrow, but holding to the doctrines of Christ and experiencing the life of Christ, sometimes it is different.

I don't want to miss Christ.

The fourth word, "Look," verse four, "Look." "Look not every man on his own interests, but every man also on the things of others."

This is right the place where I thought about that little statement. There are thousands who say they don't believe God but who act like they do, and thousands who say they do believe God and act like they don't.

Let me give us a little quiz right here, five questions.

We have learned the word "conviction." We can talk about Holy Spirit conviction, conversion. How well have we learned words like compassion, concern and care? We can't handle those too well. We can handle that conviction, Cecil. We can work that over real good. But how well do we handle compassion?

We have learned the word "unconditional election." How about words like "unselfishness?" How about words like "unpretentious?" How about words like "unfeigned love?"

We have learned the word "perseverance." How about the word "pity?" How about the word "patience?" How about the word "prayer?"

You see, we put our emphasis on the easiest part. We spend our time studying the easy part: conviction, election, perseverance. And we ignore this place where God tells us to do something about it: compassion, concern, unselfishness, reaching out. That's where we leave that.

And then how about this? We learn the word "total depravity." How about words like "tenderness," "time for others," "true love?"

We have learned the doctrine. How about devotion? The attitude.

That's what he is saying here in verse five. "Let this mind, this spirit, this humble attitude be in you which was in Christ." And here is the thing about that attitude and I've got to quit. But he said, "The Lord Jesus Christ," verse six," thought it not robbery to be equal with God. He thought it not too—there are two interpretations of that—he thought it not taking something to himself which he did not deserve. He did deserve it. And the other is, he didn't reach for it like Adam did in the garden and like Satan did in Isaiah 14.

But he made himself, he who is God made himself of no reputation. He took upon himself the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of men and humbled himself even to the death of the cross. Now, this is my example. Our Lord looked not on his own

interest, but on your interest and my interest. He looked not on his own welfare, but on your welfare and my welfare. He gave himself to redeem us. He loved us. And we ought to so love one another, this spirit, this attitude, this mind of Christ.

My friends, and I sum it up with this. And I hope you will go away thinking about this. I don't want to learn the doctrine of Christ, the doctrine of substitution, even the doctrine of redemption and miss the Spirit of Christ and the life of Christ.

There is an old chorus we used to sing: "Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me, all his wonderful passion and purity. Oh thy Spirit divine, all my nature refine and let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me."

He had time for us. We don't have time for other people. He sought not his own comforts and we seek ours. He was not selfish, we are. He was tender and kind and compassionate and forgiving and slow to anger.

We're not like our Lord and that bothers me, extremely bothers me. That I know they are coming down the aisles by the thousands, they are joining up by the thousands. But oh to see and hear and in others the mind and spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our homes, it embarrasses me when our homes are divided and there are husbands and wives who quarrel and children quarrel and neighbors quarrel and folks give business people a piece of their mind because things don't go like they think it ought to go. That embarrasses me because I just know that something is wrong.

I know I taught you doctrine. I hope you learned it because it is the foundation. But we haven't learned anything as we ought to learn it until we learn Christ. That's it. Learn Christ.

I don't mean to go out and show folks your religion, see if they can match it. It will leak out on you after a while. I believe it will if it is there.

Our Father in heaven, we pray. How concerned we are, ought to be, lest we miss Christ, the Spirit, the life, the attitude of our master. Grant, Lord, that we may grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ. Give us that hunger and thirst for righteousness which you promised to fill, that real genuine mourning over sin which you promised to comfort and that real poverty of spirit. We don't know anything. We don't have anything. That poverty of spirit which you promised to supply according to your riches in glory, the riches of your grace.

Lord, make this congregation a congregation of people who walk with God, who know the living God, who look not on their own interest and their own interest and their own things, but on the interest and welfare of others, whose hearts beat like the heart of our Lord because they love each other. "By this shall all men know you are my disciples if you love one another." For Christ's glory and sake we pray. Amen.