

# My Sin and His Grace

By Henry Mahan

**Bible Text:** Isaiah 64:6

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All right. I am going to do something a little different this morning. I am going to read the 64<sup>th</sup> chapter of Isaiah again. But I am going to read it from another translation. I love the King James translation of the Word. It is the one that I have used all of my life, the one that most of you have used. And it is excellent, but if you have an Amplified Bible it is helpful in your study of the Word and if you want to follow along in your Bible. If you don't, just listen. But this...this chapter has a special application to us and you are going to see it as I read it from the Amplified. This is a confession of sin. This is a plea for mercy. This is a cry unto God from a wilderness, from a famine, from a dry and thirsty land, for a revelation of himself, for a revival, for a revelation of his mercy and grace, for God to act, to do something. And I want you to listen to it.

Old Isaiah said, "That you would rend the heavens just like the clouds splitting apart and you would come down, God. Come down. That the mountains might quake and flow down at your presence, like this, like when fire kindles the brushwood. God, you come down in power, in a revelation of yourself, just like fire to the brush wood. It just consumes it. And that fire that causes water to boil, oh, to make your name known among your enemies. 'Where is the Lord?' they say. 'Where is the promise of his coming?' You Christians talk about the Lord reigns, the Lord rules. Just where is the Lord? That the nations may tremble again at your presence. When you did terrible things which we did not expect."

Moses was 80 years old. He never expected to find a bush burning on top of that mountain. He never expected it. Old Simeon had been standing in that temple until his hair had grown whit and his beard long. And one morning that young Jewish maiden came in with that boy. He didn't expect it. Or he was looking for him, but it had been a long time.

Did you know God has been silent as far as a...his revealing his power a long time? That is right. To talk about revival we have to go back to Wales or somewhere. And that is what he is talking about here.

"You did terrible things which we didn't expect. You came down and the mountains quaked at your presence." We didn't have to drum it up. We didn't have to whip it up with music like I was talking about this morning. Oh, I see the big football stadiums packed. But I guarantee you this. They have got a band and a drummer and a musician

and a film star and a cowboy and a rodeo star and they are going to get it...and they got all the churches primed and planned and positioned and the aisle walkers already ready. They are going to whip it up. But God came down when we didn't expect it and did mighty things and the mountains trembled at his presence. Nobody drummed this up. Nobody organized this. Nobody advertised this. You have got to advertise it in the paper and on television, the great stars coming to town and all the folks that are going to come hear him. That is not God.

“For,” verse four, “from of old men have not heard, not in our generation. They haven't heard nor perceived by the ear nor has the eye seen a God like you.” No, they haven't seen that in this day, a God like you who works and shows himself active on behalf of him who earnestly waits for him. Wait on the Lord. We can do one or the other. We can go out and drum it up or we can wait on him. Or we can wait on him and what you have is a consequence of what you do. You do it or wait on him.

Verse five, “You meet,” and we know this, “You meet and spare him who joyfully works righteousness.” Now, you know what that means. That doesn't mean we are righteous in ourselves. Whether we are interested in God's righteousness and uprightness and justice and the man who earnestly remembers you in your ways, the man who will wait on you, the man who will be true to your Word, the man who will preach your gospel, a people that will not compromise. They earnestly, the remember righteousness, justice and truth. And the yare not going to give it up. They are not going to compromise with this world. God is going to remember them. He may work in their day and he may not. He may work in another day. But that is his prerogative.

“Behold, you were angry. We deserve your anger for we have sinned and we long continued in our sins. Shall we be saved? Shall we be saved? What gives us the right to hope for his mercy? What gives us the right to hope for his grace? We have sinned, too.”

Verse six says, “For we all, we have all become as one who is unclean, ceremonially unclean like the leper of old. And even our righteousnesses, our best deeds of rightness and justice are nothing but filthy rags, polluted garments. We all fade as a leaf. Our iniquities like the wind, like the leaves on the tree and the wind blows and just...the leaves are without life and dry and dead and it just blows them off. And our iniquities like the wind take us down, take us away, down to the...far from God's favor.”

And verse seven, here is... “And in this condition no one calls on your name,” verse seven. “Who is calling on the name of the Lord? No one awakens and bestirs himself to take and keep hold of God. And you have hid your face from us and delivered us into the power of our iniquities. Now then,” verse eight, “yet oh Lord, you are our Father and we are the clay and you are the potter and we are the work of your hand. Oh Lord, do not be exceedingly angry or remember our iniquity forever. Behold, consider, we beseech you, we are your people.”

Then is this not true? “Your holy city has become a wilderness, a wilderness of superstition, a wilderness of pagan, heathen idolatry. Zion has become a wilderness, the church a wilderness.”

Somebody said yesterday that the darkest mission field on earth is not Africa, it is the Church. That is the mission field. That is where the folks are floundering around preaching another Jesus and another gospel and another spirit. Zion is become a wilderness. Jerusalem is a desolation.

“Our holy and our beautiful house, the temple where our Fathers praised you,” that is our traditions, our ancestry. They...back yonder we can talk about Whitefield and Isaac Watts and John Newton, William Cowper, our fathers. But that is all we have got left is the tradition. I just came from a country where the tradition reigns, where the buildings are still standing where those men preached. Newton, Spurgeon, Whitefield, Edwards, Knox, those buildings are still there.

“Our pleasant and desirable place is in ruins.”

Now, verse 12, “Consider these calamities. Will you restrain yourself, oh Lord? Or will you keep silence? Oh, my, my, my. Will you, oh Lord, keep silence and not command our deliverance but go on humbling and afflicting us exceedingly?”

Now, it is easy, it is easy to sin. It is easy to sin. It is hard to own it. It is easy to get in the mess that we are in. It is hard to own it. This is what preachers won't do today. They won't own the mess we are in. This is what individuals won't do. They won't own the mess we are in. We want...this...this man, this prophet here recognizes, Charlie, the mess they are in. He recognizes the corruption and iniquity and sin in the name of God and in the name of religion. But we keep on stirring up the excitement and the emotion and the entertainment and we go to great lengths to deny sin and to cover it and to excuse it. The Bible is full of examples.

We try to hide our sin like Achan. Do you remember when Achan stole the wedge of gold? And he thought because others didn't know he had it that God didn't know he had it. So he hid it carefully in his tent. That is...we hide our sins and cover our sins and assume because no one else knows of our iniquities and deadness and spiritual impotence that God doesn't know. But God looks on the heart.

Or another illustration, we make excuses for our sins like Aaron of old. Aaron said, “Well...” And, you know, I call them foolish excuses because that is what they are. Aaron said, “I just put the gold in the fir and the calf came out.” That is amazing that a man so brilliant could come up with such a stupid excuse. Do you know it looks like if he had thought just that long he would have come up...we are just as dumb. Our spiritual deadness and impotence and corruption of heart...we make excuses for it or we blame someone else like Adam and Eve. Adam blamed the woman. Eve blamed the serpent and finally wound up blaming God.

Don't blame God for our deadness. Don't blame God for our iniquities. Let's don't blame God for our cold hearts and dry eyes. Let's don't blame God. Let's don't blame God for our indifference to this Word and indifference to the things that are before us. Let's don't blame God. Let's don't blame God for our bad understandings and poor relationships and divided homes and broken hearts. Let's don't blame God for that mess. That is our mess. That is our mess.

Or some people just flat out deny their sins like old Ananias. Peter said to him, he said, "Did you sell it for so much?"

He said, "You are right." He had the money in his hand and just flat out denied it. And God killed him.

Well, he ought to have been killed. I mean a man just stands flat footed before a holy God and deny his sins ought to be killed. Well, that is us, too.

Or, another illustration is we cover our sins with religion. We just really dress it up like the Pharisee of old who stood in the temple. He made his way to the temple. Went down to the altar and stood there and talked with himself. He called it prayer, but he spake with himself the Bible says. And he said, "God, I sure thank you I am not like other people. I tithe and I fast and I give alms. And I am not like that publican."

Well, let me boldly say in regard to individuals, in regard to this church, in regard to churches today, in regard to religion as a whole, in regard to that mess that calls itself Christianity, I boldly declare that we cannot have what this man is praying for. We cannot have it. We cannot enjoy it. We cannot partake of the mercies of God unless we come before God owning our sins. That is where it starts.

He said...John wrote, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we say we have not sinned we make God a liar and his Word is not in us. But if we confess our sins, if we own our need, if we own our state, if we own our emptiness, if we own our guilt, then he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us."

Our Lord said, "The well do not need the physician and the physician is not coming to them." He said, "I didn't come to call the righteous. I didn't come to call those who are satisfied and content. I came to call sinners. Go learn what this means."

An old hymn writer...some of you who are familiar with this statement will be glad to get the full statement. I have been, for years, quoting, "A sinner is a sacred thing the Holy Ghost hath made him so." Have you heard that before?

You say, "Yeah, 10,000 times."

All right. But the first part of it I discovered. Listen. "What comfort can a Savior bring to those who never felt their woe? A sinner is a sacred thing and a participator in sacred

blessings because the Holy Ghost has made him so.” The Holy Ghost showed him he was a sinner and he can rejoice in the mercies that God has for sinners.

You see, now listen carefully to this. I wish I could shout this to the world. Our Lord Jesus Christ came down here and honored the law. He honored God’s law. How did he honor it? By obeying it. He honored the law by obeying it. If we come to Christ we must first honor the law. That’s right. We must first recognize and honor the law by confessing that we haven’t obeyed it. Do you see what I am saying? We dishonor the law when we claim to keep it. Do you see what I am saying? We dishonor...

Here are two men who went to the temple to pray, a Pharisee and a publican. The Pharisee stood there and dishonored God’s law, discredited God’s law. He said, “I am not unjust. I am not an adulterer. I am not an extortioner. I have not broken the law.” He discredited God’s law and dishonored God’s law. The publican stood over here and smote upon his breast and said, “Oh, God, I am the sinner. I am the chief sinner. I am the chief offender. Show mercy to me. Let your blood be propitiation on the mercy seat.”

This was Saul of Tarsus’ whole trouble. He said in Romans seven, “I was blameless. I was alive without the law,” discrediting, dishonoring the law. But when the law came in its true spiritual meaning and content, I died. It slew me. It stripped me. It absolutely took everything away from me and put me in the dust.

Now, that is honoring God’s law. Christ honored it by obeying it and you and I are going to honor it by confessing that we haven’t obeyed it. And to offend in one point is to be guilty of all of it.

And then let me show you this is awful important, too. The Savior died under the wrath of God for sins. It was our sins that sent him to the tree. It was our sins that nailed him to the tree. It was our sins that he bore on Calvary’s cross. Our sins. You look at Calvary and see the seriousness of sin, the exceeding sinfulness of sin. And to deny our sins and to disown our sins is to declare that Christ died in vain. Is it not? Is that not true? Paul said, “I am not going to confuse and frustrate the grace of God. If righteousness come by the law, Christ died in vain.”

For me to assume or presume or claim to be without sin is to say Christ died in vain. It is said that a man is, indeed, a theologian who has learned two things, two things. And that is the title of my message today, two things: my sin and his grace.

I mean, if a man or a woman has learned the depth of sin, the depth of sin, the depth of our sins and the very height and breadth and length of his grace, that man or woman is a theologian. A man will grow in grace and the knowledge of Christ as he grows in two things: the knowledge of his own sin and inability and the knowledge of God’s grace and power. Isn’t that right? And Calvary, listen to this. Calvary’s cross will remain a mystery until we are overwhelmed with a sense of our guilt and of our sins and get a good view of the glory of his grace. That is when Calvary, that is when, as Charlie was singing, that’s Calvary...and mean it. At Calvary. That is when the mystery of Calvary

will be unfolded and revealed when a man really sees, when he is overwhelmed literally overwhelmed with a sense of sin and gets a view of God's grace.

The hymn writer put it this way. "Plenteous grace with thee is found, grace to cover all my sins. Oh, Lord, let the healing stream abound. Make and keep me pure with in. Just and holy is thy name. I am all unrighteousness, vile and full of sin I am." Can you say that?

Do you know that in some of the hymn books now they changed the words of this song? "At the cross where he died for a worm like me." Do you remember that verse? "Would he devote that sacred head for such a worm as I?" Do you know they changed that? And they say, "Would he devote that sacred head for sinners such as I." A little more delicate, isn't it? Not quite as...but you know our Savior when he bore our sin...when he took our place he called himself a worm. That is what he thinks of our sins. When he took our place he said, "I am a stinking worm and no man." But we are refined in this day. This is 1988 and we are refined and we are no longer worms. We are sinners. It won't be long until we won't even be sinners anymore. We will be those who have made a mistake, misunderstood. That is us. We are misunderstood. It is not our fault anyway. It is our mother's and daddy's fault. They didn't take us to the circus.

I want you to look at the text again. Isaiah 64:6. Here it is. Whitefield used to say, "Here is when I will receive mercy, when God shows me myself and shows me himself." Or just turn it around and show me thyself and show me myself. I don't know which comes first. Show me thyself and show me myself or show me myself and show me thyself. But that is what I have got to do business with and I have got to face and own, confess my sin and his grace.

And here is my sin. Now look at verse six. This is shocking. Listen. But we are all as an unclean thing. Here is the root of our sin. Here is the root of our problem. It is not our outward acts. And this is what all the preachers are hammering and hitting. It is our outward acts, our outward acts. If you could just quit drinking and smoking and watching television and playing cards and gambling and all these things, wearing shorts and so forth. It is our outward act. But that is not our chief problem. Our chief problem is at the root. It is not the fruit, it is the root. The fruit is determined by the root.

And he says we are unclean. We are defiled. We are unclean. As the fruit is bad because the root is bad and the water is polluted because the fountain is polluted. In this we are all unclean. Do you know where it comes from? The metaphor here, unclean, comes from the leper of Israel. Now, leprosy back then totally, totally incurable, totally incurable and, evidently a type of sin. And the leper who was unclean, the leper was unclean. Anybody who was found with leprosy was unclean. He couldn't go to the temple. He was an outcast. If he sat on a couch they had to burn it. If he drank from a vessel they had to break it. If he came in contact with any living human being that didn't have leprosy he was to put his hand up over his face and mouth and cry, "Unclean, run from me." He was literally an outcast, unclean.

And this is our condition according to the Word of God. We are unclean. We can't approach God. We can bring nothing that God will accept. If we touch anything we pollute it. If we touch anything it has to be burned or broken. God cannot receive it.

Actually, the only reason that the high priest could go into the holy of holies, into the presence of the shekinah glory of God is because of the blood he had in one hand and the incense he had in the other. That is the only way he...once a year the high priest went into the holy of holies, but not without blood and not without incense. And that blood of the animal is the blood of Christ and the incense of the prayers of Christ. And let's...this is what he says here. We are unclean. We are as an unclean thing, an unclean thing.

And then the extent of...that is the root of our sin. It is inside. It is...the disease is in the bone and the blood and the nature. And that makes everything we touch...like I said, the leper sat on a couch, they had to burn it. He defiled it. If he drank from a vessel, they had to break it. It was defiled. And that is...as far as God is concerned and the kingdom and the holiness of God, anything that is identified with us and associated with us, it is defiled because of us. God cannot have it. He cannot receive our persons nor our gifts.

And the extent of the sin and watch this... "And all our righteousnesses are filthy rags." Now, look at this. It doesn't say our unrighteousness. We would like to read it that way. It says our righteousnesses are polluted garments in God's sight. And what is the prophet saying? He is saying just what you think he is saying. That our righteousnesses are filthy rags. In other words, even our best deeds are polluted with sin. There is unbelief in our faith. There is selfishness in our generosity. That's right. There is envy in our charity. There is self love in our prayers. Even my prayers are contaminated. There is self righteousness in our worship. Even our good deeds in God's sight are filthy rags.

George Whitefield once said this. He said, "A man has not repented before God," now he may repent before men. He may put on a religious show. He may get religion. He may walk an aisle. He may claim to turn over a new leaf. He may try to impress people. But he hasn't repented before God until he repents of three things. Number one, he repents of what he is, his sin. Oh, God, what I am. Secondly, he repents for what he has done and what he is doing and what he will do, his S-I-N-S sins. And then, constantly, before God he repents of his righteousness. That's right, of his good deeds, knowing, knowing that in himself is no good thing, in his flesh he can't please God. Knowing that the shortcoming and failure and selfishness and sin and a bad motive that contaminates everything we do.

I would love to preach the gospel of Christ with clear, unmistakable power. I would like to preach it as my Lord preached it. But I can't. I don't... I can't do it. There is no way that I, a human being, can clearly, unpolluted, without error, declare God's glory. I wish I could. I wish I could give sacrificially, give of myself like the widow's mite, everything I have. I wish I had faith. I wish I believed God...I would like to believe God like my Lord Jesus believed. Wouldn't you? Not a glimmer of a taint of a doubt. I don't

have it. And therefore my faith is polluted. For God to accept it it has to be perfect. That is the reason Christ makes us whole. He absolutely was perfect.

My representative was perfect. He was perfect in his love, perfect in his faith, perfect in he gave himself, perfect in his submission, perfect in his obedience. And that is the reason the Father raised him from the grave and exalted him to his right hand because he is the only human being God-man who walked this earth in perfection.

But now if I am in him and of him and by faith in him, what little faith I have, then I am accepted in the beloved. See that?

But now you just face it. And I am weary of people talking about what they did and what they are going to do and how they serve God.

“I have been faithful to the Lord”

Oh, hogwash. I am tired of that. I just wish nobody would say that to me again.

“Well, I have spent my time on my knees.”

I bet you have, shooting craps or something like that.

Let's quit bragging. There is nothing to us. I'll just write it out. There is nothing to us, not before God, not before God. And the sooner we realize it the better off we are going to be. We are as an unclean thing by nature and our righteousnesses are filthy rags, just plain filthy rags.

All right. Watch this. Here is the permanence of this mess. We are saddled with it till death. Did you know that? You say, “Don't it get any better?” You will have to ask somebody older than me. I don't know. It hasn't so far.

Here is the permanence. He said, “And we all do fade as a leaf and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away.” We have promised to do better. We resolve to improve. Well, we are continually doing that. We fully intend to do so. But do you know what we are like? He compares us here and our intentions in this flesh are like a leaf on a tree in the winter without life. It continues to hang around, but it is going to fall. That's right. It may be the last leaf. It may be the last one to hold on, but dried by sin and blown by the wind of iniquity it will soon join the others rotting on the ground. Isn't that so? There is none good, no not one.

That's right. That is an awful picture. Oh...somebody wrote this about it about this person right here. We are all...brother Mahan is talking about the more wicked people in the world. Yeah, that's who I am talking about. I happen to have my all with me this morning. “We are all as an unclean thing.” The old leper, that is us, unclean, unclean. Stay away from me. Don't follow me. I am unclean. And even my good deeds, even my righteousness, even my prayers are filthy rags in God's sight. Man at his best state is



vanity. And my trouble is I am not getting any better in the flesh. I fade as a leaf. I may hang on to the last one, be the last one, but I will join the rest of them because there is none righteous, none that understandeth, none that seeketh after God, none that doeth good, no not even that last leaf.

Oh, what a dismal state is this, what horrors shake my feeble frame? I discovered with all my religion the charge was still the same: Unclean. Did you hear it? Oh, what a dismal state is this, what horrors shake my feeble frame? I discovered with all my religion the charge is still the same: Unclean.

Well, is there hope? Oh, yeah, verse eight. Let's look at it. That's my sin. But I can't stay there, can I? His grace. His grace. "But now, oh Lord, thou art our Father." And our Father said this, "I will be merciful."

Moses said, "Lord, show me your glory."

He said, "I'll make my goodness pass before you. I am going to be gracious. I am going to be merciful. I am going to be merciful to whom I will be merciful, but I am going to be merciful and I am going to be gracious."

You know, David said...this is one of my favorite psalms. "Oh, Lord, if thou shouldest mark iniquity who shall stand? Who shall stand?" We got some strange ideas.

"Well, the pope would, of course."

No, he is the chief of sinners.

"Well, surely a man like Billy Graham, surely a man like, you know, Saint Francis of Assisi or something like that, surely..."

"Lord if thou shouldest mark iniquity..." This is David now talking. "Who shall stand?"

But...but...and here is our plea. There is forgiveness with thee. There is forgiveness with thee. And here is what he is saying in verse eight. "Thou art our Father."

Isn't this what the Canaanite woman said when she came and our Lord said to her...first he was silent and then he said, "I am only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And then he said it is not meet to give children's bread to dogs and she said, "That's right. But you are my master and I am your dog." And this is what the prophet is saying. In the mess we are in we turn to him who is our Father, him who is our master."

Is this not what the thief on the cross said out of his calamity and distress? He said, "You are the Lord. You are the Lord and you are not going to stay dead. You are coming into the kingdom. Would you remember me?" You are my hope.

Is this not what the prodigal son said when he came back? He came back and he said...do you know what he said when he started off? "Father, my father, I have sinned, it is true. Under heaven and in your sight. I am not worthy to be called your son. That is right. But you are my father. You are my father and that is how I am coming. I am coming as an unclean thing. I am coming like the leper when Christ came down from the mountain and he fell at his feet and said, "Lord, you are my Lord. If you will, you can make me whole."

Why can't we do that? I just don't understand. What can a sinner plead? He can't plead merit. He can't plead ignorance. He can't plead probation. He can't plead another chance because he will be the same. Well, what can he plead? He can plead the sovereignty of God, the right of God to do what he will God to do what he will with whom he will. Can you plead that?

He can plead, secondly, the love of God, not his love for God, but God's love...you are my Father. You are my Father. He is like a little child. He has broken a window and he comes in and he doesn't pack his bag and leave home. He comes up and says to his dad, "I have broken the window. But you are my father. You can fix things up for me. Huh? You are my father. This is a special relationship. You are my father. Sure I am undeserving. Sure I have made a mess. Sure I am in trouble, but you are my father."

Is that not what fathers are for? Is that not what fathers do?

Plead the love of God. Plead the mercy of God. You don't have anything else to plead. Plead the Word of God. Abraham believed God. Look to the righteousness of Christ. We don't have any, let's look where some is. Well, go work it out. Join a church and get in a soul winning club and read your daily Bible readings and give your tithes, you know, and come to prayer meeting and be a five star Christian, make it every day. That is not going to help the mess we are in.

We used to be out there spinning our wheels in the dung hill. That's all.

Well, I will tell you what you can do. You are my Father. You are my Father. You are my God. You are my strong arm in time of trouble.

All right, if you can't...if that's too hard, try this one. Look at verse eight. "But now, oh Lord, after all this confession, thou art our Father." Now try this. If that other is too heavy for you, "We are the clay and you are the potter."

Now, you can do that one, can't you? What is clay? Well, clay is dirty. Clay is from the dust, is it not? Right out of the ground. I am clay. Secondly, clay is helpless. Clay never jumped. Clay never made itself a pitcher yet. Clay never made itself a vase yet. Clay is just clay and is going to stay clay unless some strong hand gets a hold of clay. Can you say that? I am clay. I am dirty. I am of the earth. I am helpless. I can't change. Clay is not going to change. Clay has got possibilities, but not in itself, huh? That's right. And clay has no beauty. Clay has no form. It is just old dirty clay.

But now wait a minute. You are the potter. And oh what that potter can do with a mess like you. Oh, what the hand of the...the touch of the master's hand, what his hands...

I have always been fascinated and I haven't seen many of them, but some when these guys take that old messy clay and mix water with it and ball it up in a ball and put it on a spinning thing, you know, and it starts that thing moving and work their hands and so forth and so on and they work a long time and then they get that paint brush and paint it and bake it and set it out there and I pay a hundred dollars for it. It wasn't worth two cents. Now it's worth a hundred dollars, a thousand dollars. If it exists for 10 or 15 years or 100 years or 200 years it is worth more than that. Its worth increases.

And you think if a man can do that with earthly clay, think what he can do with you and me. Now you can do...can you handle that? Well, I tell you, that's where it is. Now go on and walk in the aisles and go on and getting dipped and sprinkle your babies. You aren't going to help them. You're not going to throw sand in their face. That is a joke. Dress them up in all the silk and satin. You still got a little rattle snake in your hand. Sprinkle water in its face and say all that over it and dress the preacher up and all that silly looking stuff he wears. Let's burn it with all your stain glassed windows and the organist over there playing softly, all that atmosphere and you try to make that kid holy. He is a rotten leper. He is clay and only God can do anything for him.

Oh, having these big services and the preacher gives the invitation, raise your hand and now raise your other one and now if you want to go to heaven come down the aisle. Pray this prayer after me. And they can cry. They can do anything they want to. But that old rotten dirty clay is still rotten dirty clay unless the potter gets a hold of it. That is just so.

Now, that is mean, but it is so. But our generation, the signs are wilderness. The churches are wilderness. Jerusalem is a desolation and a so called holy meeting and solemn assemblies are a wilderness before God because God is not there. He is not in it. He is not of it. He is not with it. And he is not identified by it.

Here he is. "Lord, you are my Father. I am the prodigal and I don't deserve nothing but here I am or I am the clay, the worthless, dirty, helpless clay with no form or beauty. But you are the potter. And oh what you can do."

"For by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourself. It is the gift of God. It is not of works lest any man should boast for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works."

I have got a jewel here. Listen to it. This is my song. I didn't write it, but I claim it. "A beggar poor at mercy's door lies such a wretch as I. You know my need is great indeed, Lord, hear me when I cry. With guilt beset and deep in debt for pardon, Lord, I pray. Oh Lord, let thy blood sufficient prove and take my sins away. My darkened mind I daily find is prone to go astray. Lord, own its shine with your light divine and guide it in your way. My stubborn will opposes still your wise and holy hand. Thy Spirit send to make it bend to your supreme command. My affections, by sin defiled, often turn me away.

Lord, bring me home, no more let me roam from Christ the living way. My memory is bad, but what is sad, folly I can retain. Fill it, Lord, with your sweet Word and let your Word there remain. Before thy face, my Father, I rest my case. Lord help and mercy send. Pity my soul and make it whole and love me to the end.”

Can you handle that? Well, that is where it is. That is where it is. That is...this chapter I find to be a confession not only for the soul, personally, but for our whole religious nation, our whole situation before God. We are going to have to come down. We are too...we have got to come down. We have got to come down, down, down, down, down.