

Psalms

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Date: 24 April 1973

Preacher: Collier, Gilbert (1900-1984)

[0 : 0 0] Psalm 145th Psalm, and the words that are found in the 16th verse. Thou openest thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

Psalm 145, the 16th verse. Thou openest thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

If we were to look at this word simply in its primary connection it would be an extremely wonderful word because every creature that God hath made is dependent upon the maker for the satisfaction and the very existence of its life.

Last Wednesday I was taking my grandson through a wood and we were entirely alone and we were surrounded with all the sounds that is usual in a place like that.

Songs of the birds and the noise of the insects and as I walked along I felt what a wonderful God what a glorious maker how everything is orderly.

[2 : 1 3] orderly. It is only where man comes in that we find disorder and chaos but in God's world in the creation that he has made how wonderful it is and everything is supplied from the hand of God and as we walked there were a few insects darting up and down in the light of the sun things that we might never or seldom notice or even if we did notice it would scarcely give a thought for a moment and yet every one of those creatures insignificant their lives may not their existence may not be longer than a few hours or a few days and yet everyone is supplied by God.

the reflection brought home to me these words and led me into a line of meditation which I hope was profitable I hope it will be profitable to you tonight we are not dealing of course with that aspect of this word we are looking into a far greater more even more wonderful aspect of the word the spiritual aspect and how wonderfully true this is thou openest thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing I'm going to depart from the usual method of dealing with the text tonight and so I'm going to commence at the end of the text and work our way backward to the beginning you may see the reason for this as we go on in our meditation first thing therefore is the last part of the text every living thing what a wonderful thing it is to be a living thing to have life spiritual life to come under this description of being a living thing to have a living faith in our hearts and a living experience religion is a very empty thing unless there is at the very heart of it life spiritual life a great many as we undoubtedly realize a great many who profess religion they have a religion which satisfies them they are pleased enough with it they think that it will be sufficient for them through life and at the end of life but unless there is in the very heart of that religion this great principle the principle of life spiritual life it is a deadly empty unworthy thing it has only an outward form it has no reality but what a wonderful thing it is to be alive you will be concerned if there is anything in you and in me we shall be concerned daily concerned sometimes with great intensity sometimes with perhaps less intensity but we shall be concerned to know whether we are alive looking around about within our own hearts and examining our cases in order that we might see the marks of divine life nothing is more profound more wonderful than the existence of the life of

God in a sinner's heart we're not born with it we cannot acquire it by any methods of our own it must come from the hand that is divine it must come from God it is his own sovereign work and gift if there's a spark of light within our hearts and if there is not all our services and all our endeavors and all that we may call good and great comes to nothing and indeed is an offense in the eyes of him with whom we have to do as Paul says in the Thessalonians I think it is all things are opened and naked unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do what is this life how is life manifested how is natural life manifested

I think one of the most wonderful moments in parents life is to hear the first cry of their child so much seems to hang upon that first cry the parent knows that the child is not still born when they hear that first most wonderful cry the best cry of all the lifetime is that first cry of obey so it is in the life of a babe in Christ the first cry that goes out from a poor sinner's heart to the Lord is a wonderful cry indeed there may be no volume certainly there will be very little body as it were to it words will not very much have a place in it but it will be a cry cry for mercy a cry for God one of the secular poets

Tennyson as a matter of fact he had he wrote a great deal and much of it is not worthy to be considered perhaps but in the midst like many others he touches upon something which is near akin to the truth and in his in memoriam he says this and what am I an infant crying in the night an infant crying for the light and with no language but a cry there may be those here tonight who feel that their religion is constituted by just these kind of things crying unto the Lord hardly be able to say much more of yourself than that you haven't reached some of the places that you would want to reach can a babe reach anything a babe is utterly dependent upon its mother's arms its mother's care it cannot walk it cannot talk cannot plan for itself the very existence is one of dependence so with a babe in Christ may not be a lengthy time of experience but it will be one when there is utter and complete dependence upon the

[11 : 43] Lord we cannot move without him we cannot plan anything or even aim at anything all we can do is to cry and beg and plead the Lord for his mercy God be merciful to me a sinner hunger and then another illustration which marks life is this hunger there's one thing certain with a babe that is really healthy and alive it will be hungry soon will want to be fanned and must be fanned and knows well how to express the need the parent knows well when that need is there present does not need the babe to use any words or language to tell the parent that it needs feeding if your soul is alive unto the things of God you'll be hungry you cannot live without the right food the real food cannot be put off this is a wonderful mercy really a living soul cannot be put off with substitutes something that may appear to be food but really is not the mere professor of religion can be put off with almost anything they can hear anything whether it's truth or whether it is not they can hear it and receive it because they have no real hunger if you've got real hunger in your soul you'll want the pure truth you'll want that which comes most clearly and manifestly from God a living thing will you therefore do you therefore ask this question tonight in the as before a holy

God am I a living thing there may be very many things that appear to be death in you strange and wonderful as it is that the living thing is more conscious of death than any other thing you see a dead person or a dead thing has no sense of danger or death a dead body has no sensibility consciousness it's a living person that is conscious of things around them and within them and a living soul is mightily conscious of death within the plague of it the reality of it and they often feel as if they're more dead than alive there seems to be far greater weight upon those things that seem to be against them than there is upon those things that they hope is for them they feel that their heart is full of iniquity they feel that their poor minds are incapable of comprehending they wonder however the

Lord could take notice of such worthless such unholy things you see all this though it may seem just the very contrary to the truth it's a fact that it's an evidence of life an evidence of life if you've never felt your wretched need and case you'd never seek for the healing remedy of the gospel you'd never felt your woe you'd never value the precious atoning blood of a precious redeemer if you felt you knew everything you would never hang upon the word of truth and seek that the Lord might open it up and manifest it and apply it to your heart you may feel tonight that you are lacking in a great many things it's a wonderful sign of life to feel it a wonderful sign of life to feel your emptiness and your poverty every living thing but we must not continue too long on these points let us go to the next one the desire of every living thing here therefore the text gives us a very wonderful and important evidence of life and that is the desire of those who are living things every living thing has a desire desire to live a desire for the means of life a desire for the source of life and you know this comes very much home to those who truly seek after the

Lord because they find that their religion is largely made up of desire and they can look back some of them to the time when they never had a single desire for the things of God they did not even have a desire to enter into his cause there was no such thing as desire in the heart to find the favour and mercy of God and then something took place they may not always know what but something strange has taken place in the heart of these people and now they find their life is largely contained with desire when they rise in the morning they desire that the Lord might be with them when they come to the Lord's house they desire that he might speak to them and when they lay their head in bed at night they desire that the

Lord might keep them and bless them and pardon what a wonderful thing in religion in real religion is the desire of the heart it will keep a person you see look in the world for a moment look at the worldling the worldling desires the pleasures of the world and what do they do go out after them they count that their lives are empty things unless they have a good abundance of the pleasures that they seek after they desire these and where a person desires a thing that person will be aiming for it pursuing it with all the power that they can command and so it is with the spiritual soul if you've got a real and a right desire in your heart you'll be after

[20 : 04] Christ you'll be waiting at his gates knocking at the posts of his doors begging for a crumb and you'll be satisfied with a crumb if you've got a real desire a feast will be wonderful but you'll be thankful for a crumb of mercy if you can only receive it from the hand of the Lord when you've got a real desire because the desire will make these things preeminently needful and suitable and blessed desire of every living thing then let us come further back in our text and this is an important word too it satisfies the desire now we're not saved by merely desiring a thing we could not have divine life in our hearts without a desire but we're not saved by our desires they're not the end the lord plants them in the heart but he plants them in a sinner's heart for a wonderful purpose and that is this to satisfy them he makes the poor sinner long for the mercy and the blessing of the lord he gives them that blessing there's nothing there's one thing that is and will be impossible

I'm convinced of this among the children of God and that is simply to have a desire and then to be lost never to have those desires fulfilled it's an impossibility it would be it would be totally against the promises of God it would be against his character it would violate his love it would be something altogether out of keeping with the whole concord and concept of divine salvation if you've got a real desire then sinner be sure of this the time will come when the lord will satisfy it and satisfy it with his mercy no we cannot rest on our desires in fact we can rest on nothing less than christ and it is the satisfaction of the desire of the heart when christ is made precious known when he is revealed and when he comes oh how wonderful that moment is when the lord comes comes himself he sent isaiah to hezekiah with a word but it was the word of the lord and it was such a wonderful word that when hezekiah received it he felt he could say this thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption for thou hast taken all my sins and cast them behind thy back if the lord comes with his word to your heart and to satisfy a desire and a longing in your heart it will be tendermount to his own coming his own sweet presence and you'll feel that the lord is near to you with you if he speaks a word of his grace to your heart but

I would lay emphasis on this that we are not saved or secured by merely desiring these things I know a lot of people speak like this they are quite satisfied so long as they say to others well I desire these things I desire to be right and so on and there they rest and leave the matter quite content to go on in that nebulous kind of way but the desire of the godly is such that it has life it has power in it that can only be satisfied by the lord and by his blessing the desire then you see Isaiah says oh thou afflicted tossed with tempest and not comforted these desires may be raised up in our hearts by many kinds of things sometimes by troubles afflictions tossings in tempest conditions so that the poor sinner is driven to the very ends of the earth in their feelings and they begin to desire to find a haven and to find refuge and to find deliverance but it's the satisfying of those desires and he satisfies the desire of every living thing let us come to points tonight what are we satisfied with is mere form or mere custom sufficient to satisfy you are you satisfied merely because you've been associated with the people of

God for many years perhaps from your very childhood are you satisfied with the form and round of religion are you satisfied simply because you keep a respectable appearance among your fellow men you pay your way you do your duty you're honest no man can come and point a finger of contempt or condemnation at you are you satisfied merely with this great many people when they come to their end they say well we've never done anyone any harm we've always discharged our our requirements but you know these things will never really satisfy a living soul oh what a mercy it is that these cannot satisfy none but

Christ can satisfy a living soul and when I say that I mean it with all its wonder and its reality its preciousness and its power none but Christ we must have him we need him none but the Lord can ever satisfy the hunger the desire the longing of a living soul what a wonderful thing he is willing to satisfy it when you look at yourself and you feel what a poor unworthy sinner you are you know more about your life than anyone else the Lord knows everything about it when you come to close quarters with your own heart you must come to this conclusion that if ever your poor soul is saved it will be

[28 : 31] Christ Christ all the way Christ in his infinite goodness Christ in his wondrous power Christ in his infinite grace and his mercy and his love because only he can satisfy the desire of every living soul and then thou openest thine hand come now to the hand the source the fountain from whence all these wonderful things come thou openest thine hand thine hand oh what a mighty hand is the hand of God holds everything in it all our times are in this hand every detail every moment things that we overlook and pass by are all held and appointed in the hand of our God there's not a thing can fly nor move nor have its being but what has been directed and even created by the hand of God and oh what a mighty hand that is the

Lord's dear people see it and find their confidence in seeing it they want to see it more they want to see the hand of the Lord going before them they want to see the hand of the Lord directing and making a way a pointing a way a pathway he says to his people I lead the blind in a way that they know not and in paths that they have not known I lead them how does he do it by his hand and when they are assailed by their enemies attacked by their foes oh what wonderful mercy it is to find the hand of God are raised in our defense this tried almighty hand is raised in their defense where is the foe that can harm them there or what can force them there my dear friend we've often feared and trembled we thought that man would have mastery over us we've looked sometimes at trifles and we thought that these trifles will be for our undoing it'll bring an end to us dear David once although God had wonderfully directed him his hand was over him in so many wonderful ways and yet he came to a time when he looked at

Saul he thought of Saul's plans and spite and enmity and all the devices that he had conceived against him and poor David sunk down deep in his own heart he said I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul but did he perish was not that blessed soul David in the hand of God who is omnipotent was his defense not in the hand of the Lord but this word here in our text has a very sweet and special meaning it means this the hand signifies the man of God's right hand man that God made strong for himself that is the hand of

God it's Christ we are brought back you see to this glorious center this source Christ Jesus in our nature born of a woman made under the law God's eternal son there God stretched out his mighty hand to poor sinners in Christ he who was made unto sin once but who liveth unto God he who sunk so low and received such shame and ignominy upon his own sacred person all for the sake of sinners it's through him God stretches out a hand of salvation and it's this hand that satisfies the desire of every living thing you'll never get a crumb you'll never get anything really good or real but what comes from

Jesus Christ every grace and every favor comes to us through Jesus Christ do you love him do you want him do you need him do you say Lord lay thy hands upon me he laid his hands upon poor sinners when he was here and he healed them he opened the eyes of the blind he touched the blind man he touched the leper the leper as Luke tells us was full of leprosy that was in advanced stage of that terrible disease contagious to a degree he touched the leper uncontaminated but communicated to the leper healing restoration life life hand thine hand then there's the final word here thou openest thou openest thine hand you see this is an important part of the text really because you may say

[35 : 20] I do believe what you say about the Lord and about his power sovereignty I believe all this I believe it with all my heart that God is a sovereign that everything is in his hand that nothing can fly or move without his sovereign will I believe it it's one of the great foundations of my hope and belief and I would earnestly contend against any who doubted it or denied it it's the truth of God God is a sovereign he does supply all things he is the creator he is the upholder of all things but what you want what I want is this the opening of that hand I want that blessed God to make sure to my soul his mercy

I want him to supply my need I want him to reveal his grace and his love with power I want in other words I want this hand to be open you see a parent may hold something very special in its hand and speak to the child about it the child becomes very eager interested anticipates some special gift but it's not till the parent opens the hand and gives the thing that the child is really satisfied and enters into the wonderful nature of the gift so it is with the Lord you can hold the truth you can believe in the truth but what you need and what you want is the

Lord to come and open his hand and grant you a sweet portion of his truth in your soul to live in your soul to be your own his gift his grace to open your hand by his revealings of his love this is how God opens his hand by opening up to a poor sinner knowledge understanding comprehension of his condescending mercy and love you feel the Lord is with you he's toward you he has not cast you away he has not denied your petition he hasn't forbidden you to come spread your wants at his feet but on the contrary he's opened your hand he's given you an encouragement perhaps he's given you a word perhaps he's shown you in providence his wonderful provision and protection perhaps some of you have been very near death's door in providential ways and you've seen how wonderful intervention by the hand of

God has saved you what do you say when you look upon these things surely the Lord is pleased to give me this extension of his mercy that's what a Hezekiah realized the Lord came to him he said I've seen your I've heard your prayers I've seen your tears the Lord doesn't often take notice of people's tears but he did Hezekiah's and I believe he did it for this reason they were real tears they were tears of repentance they were tears of godly sorrow he said I will add to thy days fifteen years and the Lord and Hezekiah saw the dispensation was outstanding he could see this if God will do this for me he must be my God he cannot cast me out now and turn his back on me he has favoured me so wonderfully surely he will take me and accept receive me and be with me even unto the end thou openness oh my dear friend this is what you and I want and need the opening of the hand of God ask for it seek it wait earnestly and long for it the time of love will come surely as your poor heart has sought and longed and desired for the

Lord's blessing the time of love will come the day will come when you will see clearly not only that Christ has died but Christ has died for you your sins were all numbered in his pains and his sorrows Amen