

JONAH 2:1-9

PRAYING UNDER WATER

“Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish, saying

“I called out to the LORD, out of my distress,
and he answered me;
out of the belly of Sheol I cried,
and you heard my voice.
For you cast me into the deep,
into the heart of the seas,
and the flood surrounded me;
all your waves and your billows
passed over me.
Then I said, “I am driven away
from your sight;
yet I shall again look
upon your holy temple.”
The waters closed in over me to take my life;
the deep surrounded me;
weeds were wrapped about my head
at the roots of the mountains.
I went down to the land
whose bars closed upon me forever;
yet you brought up my life from the pit,
O LORD my God.
When my life was fainting away,
I remembered the LORD,
and my prayer came to you,
into your holy temple.
Those who pay regard to vain idols
forsake their hope of steadfast love.
But I with the voice of thanksgiving
will sacrifice to you;
what I have vowed I will pay.
Salvation belongs to the LORD!”¹

You’re driving down the highway when a front tire blows out just as you are rounding into a curve. At that precise moment, you hit black ice, losing control of your vehicle. Barreling toward you, you see a semi moving at high speed that has drifted into your lane. There is little time to think, but you do offer one of the most effective prayers ever presented. You cry out, “Help!” How effective is that! You’re still here.

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from **The Holy Bible: English Standard Version**. Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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It is commonly said that there are no atheists in a foxhole. Perhaps the corollary to this old saw is that all Christians become pray-ers when threatened. Threats abound in this world, and threats to peace because we are children of God are manifold. Times of extreme pressure impel us to pray. In a former congregation was an aged man who had been a sergeant in the Dutch Army when the Nazis invaded Holland. During the German occupation of his homeland, Gerry served in the Dutch underground, opposing the Nazis. Gerry spoke several times of transitions he observed after the Germans invaded Holland. He said the churches had been empty prior to the occupation by enemy troops. The Sunday following the invasion, all the churches were full and people suddenly found time to weep and pray, asking God for relief.

Each follower of Christ Jesus has received a divine charge to serve His cause. Because He is Master, He has the right to expect our obedience. Certainly, because we are Christians, we have received His Divine Commission to carry the message of life to all people throughout the entire world. However, I would argue that at one time or another, the Spirit of God has spoken to each of us, directing us to fulfil some specific responsibility. Perhaps it was to tell some unlovable individual of God's love, and we failed to speak as we knew we should. Perhaps it was to comfort some individual whom we felt undeserving of mercy. Time passed, and the opportunity to comfort passed as the days fled. Perhaps we were charged to stand firm against some particular evil, and we remained silent, though we knew we should speak up. I believe that each of us can recall a time when the Spirit of God commanded us to act and we resisted Him. What is worse, there will be other times in the future when God speaks, and we will fail to obey.

It is the knowledge that we do fail and that we will fail our responsibility to fulfil specific commands given by our Master that drives me to prepare and present this message. For any who refuse to obey, persisting in their refusal and growing ever more recalcitrant, nothing remains but God's severe mercy. Discipline is reserved for His own child when that child refuses to obey. God does discipline His own child. We are encouraged in the Letter to Hebrew Christians, "Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?"

‘My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,
nor be weary when reproved by him.
For the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and chastises every son whom he receives.’

“It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it” [HEBREWS 12:3-11]. However, should we turn from our persistent wicked refusal and seek again to fulfil the will of the Master, how shall we return? That is the essence of the study before us this day. When we are deserted to our own devices and we are sinking beneath the waves, what shall we do to allow us to again serve the Master?

GOD TALKS TO JONAH — “The word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, ‘Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me’” [JONAH 1:1, 2]. There may be a “Jonah” listening to this message. I know that your name isn’t necessarily “Jonah,” but you know that the Lord God has called you to some great task. Yet, your flesh recoils at the thought that you must fill that position to which God is calling. Though I may speak the words that you will hear in the message of this hour, it is well-nigh impossible to allow them to control our lives; nevertheless, I am compelled to remind each one, “The Living God does not call you to any task greater than His power to equip you for that task.”

I would be astonished if any among us have received a call to go to Nineveh. I suppose it is possible that someone who hears me at this time has heard the voice of God calling him or her to deliver a message to Iraq, to Pakistan or to Indonesia, though I’m not aware of that being the case. It is possible for some who hear me to learn that God is calling that individual to carry the message of life to a distant land that is not known to be hostile to the Faith—a nation such as the Philippines or even Great Britain. I would not be in the least surprised should someone listening at this time inform me that they have heard the voice of God telling them to carry the message of Christ to another province or to one of the territories. What I am quite confident in saying is that God has spoken to you who now listen, calling you to carry His offer of life to neighbours, to co-workers, or even to family members.

If you never experienced the strong impulse from the Spirit of God to tell another person of Christ and His salvation, you still received the command of the Risen Son of God who has commanded all disciples, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” [MATTHEW 28:19, 20].

You were commissioned to disciple others when Jesus commanded all who follow Him, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation” [MARK 16:15].

If you are a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, His command given toward the end of Luke’s Gospel is incumbent upon you. Jesus commanded His followers, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things” [LUKE 24:46-48].

As one who follows the Christ, the command given to His disciples following His resurrection has now become your command. Jesus ordered His disciples, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you” [JOHN 20:21].

Surely, it is apparent that His final command to those who followed Him applies to us! “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” [ACTS 1:8].

If I never had the desire to speak to another individual concerning the Saviour, if I never received the Spirit’s urgent plea to tell another person of Christ and His salvation, if I never knew what it is to be impelled to testify of God’s goodness, I nevertheless know the will of God, for He has revealed His will through His Word. I can be assured that God does not expect us to practise a silent Faith. I know that God wants me to speak to fellow believers, encouraging them in the Faith, and I know that the Master wants me to speak to the lost, telling them of His great salvation. Among those to whom I will be sent will be some who are unlovely, some who are unlovable, some who appear in my eyes to be repulsive. Though I may recoil at the thought of telling some about my love of the Saviour and His love for me, I am convinced that this is His command. Responsibility for telling the world of Christ and His salvation rests on each of us!

What should be apparent to any serious student of the Word is that God expects His people to magnify His Name, to tell others of His grace and the salvation that He offers to all. As I read again the prayer Solomon offered at the dedication of the Temple, I was startled by the emphasis on letting others know of God and His greatness. Listen to one portion of his prayer. “Likewise, when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a far country for your name’s sake (for they shall hear of your great name and your mighty hand, and of your outstretched arm), when he comes and prays toward this house, hear in heaven your dwelling place and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and that they may know that this house that I have built is called by your name” [1 KINGS 8:41-43]. Foreigners hearing of God’s great name and His mighty hand and His outstretched arm will fear Him. Worshipers of the Living God will fear God for His mighty power as foreigners come to worship!

If I was able to convince you of one truth in this particular message, it would be to convince each of you that a priceless treasure has been entrusted to your oversight. Each of us is moving inexorably toward an end of this life. One day, your tongue will be stilled, your ability to communicate will cease, all opportunity to speak of God’s wondrous grace will have ended. What legacy will you leave your family? How will your neighbours remember you? When those with whom you shared worship think of you, what will they remember about you? Years ago, when I had only come into the Faith, I would hear the older saints recite a couplet:

Just one life, ‘twill soon be past;
What’s done for Christ, is all that will last.

They were correct! And I fear that contemporary Christians have forgotten that truth.

God’s voice directs us as we listen for Him to guide our steps. The Prophet Isaiah has written, “Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way, walk in it,’ when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left” [ISAIAH 30:21]. Isaiah’s words anticipated Jeremiah when he revealed the coming New Covenant, “This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people” [JEREMIAH 31:33].

Isaiah’s words and Jeremiah’s words point forward to the Spirit of God as He works directing the child of God in his walk before the Lord. Remember that we are urged in Scripture, “If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit” [GALATIANS 5:25].

Throughout the Acts of the Apostles, we witness the Lord speaking to those who are sensitive to His presence. I know that the world ridicules the idea that God speaks to His people. One washed up comedienne, a host of a women’s talk show, brashly suggested that Christians who claim the Lord speaks to them were suffering mental illness. Though few Christians would ever claim to have heard an audible voice, each of us who know the Master and who read His Word can say with confidence that the Lord does speak to us as we read this Word. His Spirit guides us, revealing the mind of the Lord as we see His will revealed in the written Word.

I wonder if the voice of God has spoken to you in recent days. I wonder if God has told you to speak with a young woman who is drifting aimlessly through life, encouraging her that she is precious in the sight of the Lord? Is it possible that God has sent you to speak with a neighbour who is not connected to the Faith and needs the encouragement that you can bring? Perhaps there is a colleague struggling at work, and it is obvious that they need to hear a word of hope. Has God dispatched you to speak with that one?

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Throughout my immediate world are men and women, young people and elderly, who are dying without knowledge of God's love. Has God not spoken to me to be His means of hope, His voice of cheer, His gentle touch? Who in your world is dying and in need of a word from the Lord? Who is in your world that suffers from acute loneliness and to whom you can be as an angel of God? To whom has the Lord sent you? *I know* there is someone in your world to whom God has sent you. Many Christians are looking for an organised programme into which they can plug themselves. I will not speak ill of programming; however, as God directs us and speaks to our heart we are called to obedience. That obedience is a thousand times more effective, a thousand times more meaningful, than any programme that man has ever developed.

JONAH TALKS TO GOD — “Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish” [JONAH 2:1]. When God has spoken to us after we have run from Him, we may be certain that He will arrest us in our madness. When He finally gets our attention, it is time for us to talk to God. You have heard me assert on multiple occasions that we are not to “say prayers,” we are to pray! I don't want anyone to imagine that I am condoning waiting to pray until matters grow desperate; however, when matters have grown desperate—*pray!* Prayer is without doubt the most neglected discipline within the assemblies of our Lord.

Jesus taught those who follow Him, “[People] ought always to pray and not lose heart” [LUKE 18:1]. Prayer should mark the life of each Christian as surely as breathing marks life in this present world. Tragically, among the professed people of God, most are capable of reciting prayers, but few pray. This is especially true if we are speaking of ongoing, persistent petitions to the Living God. I've always admired those saints who have learned the secret of, as the saying was down in the Holy Land, “reaching out and grabbing the door latch of Heaven.”

From the text, it is obvious that Jonah hadn't done what God had commanded. Moreover, rather than pray, seeking clarification of God's will or guidance to do what the LORD willed, Jonah had determined his own course of action. Jonah did not want to see God bless Israel's enemy. Rather than participate in spreading the message of God's grace to Nineveh, Jonah fled in the opposite direction. We know, of course, how that worked out. God won't allow His child to ignore His will. We are cautioned in the Letter to Hebrew Christians, “Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?”

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Jonah thought he was secure in the hold of the vessel in which he had hitched a ride. Despite a violent storm that threatened to sink the little barque, Jonah was sound asleep. This wasn't any storm, it was a divine storm. In fact, the Word of God states, "The LORD hurled a great wind upon the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship threatened to break up" [JONAH 1:4]. Panic stricken, the sailors had exhausted their trove of tricks in an effort to lighten the ship, ensuring that it would stay afloat. Now, they were praying, trying to name every god or goddess of whom they were aware. The captain of the vessel made his way into the hold where he roughly awakened Jonah. "What do you mean, you sleeper? Arise, call out to your god! Perhaps the god will give a thought to us, that we may not perish" [JONAH 1:6].

I find it intriguing to observe that Jonah never prayed even when urged to do so by the captain; not even once do we read that he prayed! Jonah knew what was happening, and he knew why it was happening. In a similar manner, when you try to run from God and He stands against you, you will know what is happening. You won't have to guess. Whenever people ask, "Why is God doing this?" it is a pretty good evidence that God is not doing whatever it is that disturbs them. If God opposes you, there will be no question about what is happening. Despite Jonah's apparent outward calm, the sailors had reached the end of their rope. They devised a desperate, final plan to try to avert what was by now certain disaster. "Come, let us cast lots, that we may know on whose account this evil has come upon us" [JONAH 1:7].

The lot fell to Jonah—all eyes now turned to him. Their gaze fixed on him, the crew was wary as they asked, "Tell us on whose account this evil has come upon us. What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you" [JONAH 1:8]? They were just full of questions; and Jonah had the answers they needed. "I am a Hebrew, and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land" [JONAH 1:9]. Jonah's answer frightened these men. When they asked what he had done to cause the LORD God to send such terror, Jonah confessed that he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD. Do not imagine that when you attempt to run from God that He will let you get away with your rebellion. You can depend on a storm, and you may even get a supernatural ride back to the place from which you were running. That was what happened to Jonah.

The crew realised Jonah was the cause of their misery and their peril. They knew that Jonah somehow had the key that would end the danger. Though they may not have known the Living God, they now feared Him, for the storm raged even more ferociously than before. They were desperate and wanted the storm to stop. At last, having exhausted every option, they asked Jonah, "What shall we do to you, that the sea may quiet down for us" [JONAH 1:11]?

God's prophet knew what needed to be done. Jonah said, "Pick me up and hurl me into the sea; then the sea will quiet down for you, for I know it is because of me that this great tempest has come upon you" [JONAH 1:12]. The confession of every penitent individual who tries to run away from the LORD is, "I brought this trouble on you; I am the reason for your trouble." Jonah, at last, owns up to his responsibility for the disaster looming over these seafarers. Similarly, your disobedience imperils not only you, but those about you. The most dangerous person to society is a disobedient child of the King. God holds that one accountable, and when that one is judged, the judgement may well endanger all those about the miscreant.

I've always been impressed by the ethics of these pagans. As an aside of some significance, sometimes, the pagans are more righteous than the professed people of God. That appears to be the case here. Reluctant to become murderers, "Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to get back to dry land, but they could not, for the sea grew more and more tempestuous against them" [JONAH 1:13].

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At last, they were forced to admit that they were powerless before the LORD's anger, so they confessed, "O LORD, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not on us innocent blood, for you, O LORD, have done as it pleased you" [JONAH 1:14].

The sailors, admitting defeat, "picked up Jonah and hurled him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging" [JONAH 1:15].

Witnessing these things, "The men feared the LORD exceedingly, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows" [JONAH 1:16]. Though he hadn't meant for things to end this way, Jonah made a start on the evangelism that God had called him to do. The sailors now knew the Name of the LORD. They knew His power and they knew that He did not play around with the issue of obedience. Though we can't know what they sacrificed, they did worship and made a vow to the Living God. When God judges His child, many times that judgement results in the lost being awed by God and by His might. If you will not glorify God through obedience, be aware that you may honour Him in judgement, even if that honour follows your discipline.

However, God was not finished with Jonah. Normally, someone tossed overboard during a storm would be lost at sea because they drowned. The final verse of the first chapter informs us that, "The LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights" [JONAH 1:17]. Since Jonah attempted to flee from the presence of the LORD, God prepared transportation for Jonah to ensure that he would keep his appointment. God appointed a great fish, giving that fish one great task—swallow Jonah and deliver him to Nineveh.

I don't know how long the trip required for Jonah as he travelled in his strange conveyance. No one ever said that God was compelled to make the trip comfortable for a reluctant prophet. Jonah had no right to expect to be kept alive, but the mercies of the LORD are new every morning. That is one truth we would do well to remember. Jeremiah said it this way,

"The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases;
his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness."

[LAMENTATIONS 3:22, 23]

Even in judgement, God remembered mercy to his rebellious servant. I wonder what Jonah thought. When first swallowed by the fish, I suspect that Jonah began to hum, "Nearer My God, to Thee." Then, as time passed, uncertain where he was or what time it was, in total darkness without any light, Jonah began to marvel—he was alive. God had not taken his life. Though he could not know it at that time, he still had an appointment to keep. However, for the duration, Jonah did what any follower of the Living God should do, he prayed. It was not just any prayer. Jonah was praying under water; and when you're under water, I advise you to pray.

PRAYING UNDER WATER — I don't know where you are at this moment, but I do know that some of you have been under water and some of you are under water—you know what it is to be under water. Perhaps you were directed by God to some great task and you ran, or you may even be running now. Tarshish looks mighty attractive when you're trying to run from God. Nevertheless, you know that the LORD has commanded, "Go to Nineveh." Little woman, don't you know that you can't run from God? Little man, your arms are too short to box with God! You call yourself by His Name. Do what He tells you to do!

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When he was under water, Jonah prayed; and what a prayer it was. This was a great prayer if for no other reason than God heard Jonah. Notice how he begins.

“I called out to the LORD, out of my distress,
and he answered me;
out of the belly of Sheol I cried,
and you heard my voice.”

[JONAH 2:2]

God answered Jonah; and God will answer you when you cry out to Him even though you are under water. Jonah had now learned the truth that no one can run from God. The Psalmist has testified,

“Where shall I go from your Spirit?
Or where shall I flee from your presence?
If I ascend to heaven, you are there!
If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!
If I take the wings of the morning
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me.
If I say, “Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light about me be night,”
even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is bright as the day,
for darkness is as light with you.”

[PSALM 139:7-12]

Jonah confessed that he was where he was because God had brought him to that place. He acknowledged,

“For you cast me into the deep,
into the heart of the seas,
and the flood surrounded me;
all your waves and your billows
passed over me.”

[JONAH 2:3]

Jonah confessed that he was receiving what he deserved for daring to think that he could run from the presence of the Lord. However, even as he confessed his own evil action, he asked for mercy so that he could again see God’s Holy Temple. When God gave the answer to this request, Jonah promised he would worship the LORD and again enjoy sweet fellowship with God. He confessed that if he was to be delivered and again made effective in service to God, it would be because the LORD rescued him. He praised God and pledged that he would confess His Name.

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Here is the heart of Jonah's prayer; this is what we do well to learn for that day when we are compelled to pray under water.

“When my life was fainting away,
I remembered the LORD,
and my prayer came to you,
into your holy temple.”

[JONAH 2:7]

You might be tempted to say that Jonah should have remembered the LORD before he was in such desperate straits—but he did remember the LORD! When we are running from the Lord, we are not looking at Him; we are trying to shove the knowledge of God from our mind, until He seizes our attention and we are under water. When everything is moving at a blur and disaster looms on every side, one prayer will always prove to be effective—“Help!”

This was no foxhole conversion! This was the real thing. Jonah hadn't changed his estimate of the Assyrians. What had changed was Jonah's willingness to obey. Detestable though it was for him to relent and go to Nineveh, Jonah would obey the command of the Lord; he would go as the LORD directed. At last, Jonah would fulfil the command of the LORD. That is the purpose of discipline. Our obedience to the Master is the reason He disciplines us.

This is the message we are given in the Letter written to Hebrew Christians. “It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

“Therefore, lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed”
[HEBREWS 12:7-13].

Jonah's final confession was one that needs to be made by every follower of the Christ, “Salvation belongs to the LORD!” This was his admission that his responsibility was to evangelise and it was God's responsibility to save or to judge. Jonah was to declare the grace of God.

I urge all who hear the message this day to acknowledge that obedience is more important than your comfort level. Never forget the rebuke Samuel delivered to Saul:

“Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
as in obeying the voice of the LORD?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
and to listen than the fat of rams.
For rebellion is as the sin of divination,
and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry.”

[1 SAMUEL 15:22, 23a]

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More immediately, when you are under water, *pray*. You are facing pressures at work; the demands are piling up and you are struggling to find the energy to meet the demands. Among those for whom we work will always be found bosses that cause us to wonder how they got where they are, managers who shouldn't manage anything, much less a business. They are thoughtless and petty. They hire us to perform a task and then they want to micromanage what we are doing. We are frustrated and worn out from trying to make things work. We have colleagues who wear us down with their constant solicitations to do evil. Pray for strength and pray for grace to stand firm for the Lord's sake. Pray for those for whom you work, asking that the Lord Christ will give you wisdom in your service. Pray, asking God to remind you that "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men" [COLOSSIANS 3:23]. Pray for those with whom you work, asking the Master to make you a good witness and to temper their bitterness. He is "Able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us" [EPHESIANS 3:20].

You face pressures in your home. Your spouse is not honouring God. Your children are acting like, well, children. Everyone knows that between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one, a child knows everything and is more than happy to tell mom or to tell dad how much she knows. Pray for grace to respond in a godly fashion to the challenges you face and pray for the one who is acting rebelliously that the Lord will remember mercy as He holds her to account. You may have to release your spouse to God, but you can trust Him to direct you when you have to make that choice. You will never cease loving your child, but you can't love her in your own strength! You need the Lord to supply you with love and with grace so your love reflects His divine love. Pray for Him to speak to her heart.

You face pressures in your friendships. There will always be some difficult friends that seemingly exist only to test the limits of friendship. Pray for grace to speak the truth in love. Pray for that friend, asking that God will either transform his bitter spirit or remove him from your life. That friend who dishonours the Master through unrighteous decisions will need you to be a real friend, a friend who warns of the consequences of sin, even when they don't want to hear it. Pray for mercy for your friend and pray for grace for yourself to say the hard things.

I'm speaking to some people who say prayers. You learned to say, "Now I lay me down to sleep; I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep." That was fine when you were five-years-old. You're an adult now. You're responsible to the Lord. It's time to seek the Lord. It's time to seek Him, to find mercy. We're promised, "We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" [HEBREWS 4:15, 16].

The Wise Man counseled, "Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near of which you will say, 'I have no pleasure in them'" [ECCLESIASTES 12:1]. And that is my counsel for you. Find someone who will pray with you and begin to pray now, before you are under water. The Lord will hear; He will answer. Amen.