

- Watch how this thing right here flickers, when you talk and you can know by that, that it's recording. (bright worship music) Thing to remember is it's just this button here. It's all you have to do. Then to stop it, just.

- Horizons incorporated. A contradiction in terms, some of you will say, for that was my own first reaction. Horizons have a set of stereo type adjectives, boundless, illimitable, vast, sweeping (indistinct). In the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Amen. How do you, in your more imaginative moments, picture your life? Many artists and poets have depicted life for example, as a voyage. And that's a very apt picture of human life, because then you can see the frail vessel setting out upon life's very stormy and hazardous sea. And we know that life sometimes is like a voyage on a very perilous ocean. Or again, poets and artists have depicted life as a march. And indeed life is like a march, because if you put your ear to the ground as it were, you can hear the tram, tram, tram of a million marching feet. The pilgrim hosts of humanity on their higher road through life. But I believe the most dramatic and the most realistic picture of human life among all pictures, is of life as a battle. Because only this picture gets into the inward depth of our personal existence. William James once said, "I don't know whether life is a battle or no, but it certainly feels likewise." And indeed through all the centuries, men in thinking profoundly about the meaning and nature of man's existence and man's destiny, have talked about the battle in the human soul. For instance, the Jews of Jesus time used to say that in man's heart, there were two inclinations. A good inclination and an evil inclination, and both as it were, were war with each other. Then Jesus of course, very frequently spoke about the tension in the human soul. He had his own way of looking upon life as a battle, for he spoke frequently, about man's possibility of losing life or of finding it. He spoke to this theme of the battle in the human heart. And in the New Testament again, the apostle Paul very frequently does the same thing. He speaks about the war within his member as though his heart were a battleground itself. John Bunyan, in describing a particular character of his, said of him, that God and the devil are waging a tug of war for his soul. And when you come right down to modern times, this is the note which is struck by a good deal of existentialist theology today. This note of the battle in the human heart. Martin Heidegger, the European existentialist for instance, speaks about the struggling man, between what he calls authentic existence, and on the other hand, inauthentic existence. Well, you can describe it how you like. You can use the modern language of the existentialist, you can use the language of the New Testament, but what is important is that every one of us who has any sensitivity of conscience at all is aware deep within us this morning, that in reality, life is a battle. That there is a struggle going on in the human heart, between conflicting forces of good and evil, and it is quite dramatic in its intensity, and it's utterly inescapable for this is every man's life from infancy to the grave, that he's struggling in his soul. Well, what I want to try to get across to you this morning, is simply this, that the Bible, which is one of the foundation pillars of the Christian Church, addresses itself directly to this situation, in which man is placed, in which he is forever fighting this warfare in the soul. We too often misunderstand and mistake the biblical message. We too often tend to think that the Bible, which is the foundation pillar of the church's life is a book about piety and divinity and heavenly things. Whereas in all reality, the Bible is a book addressed most specifically to the concrete earthly

situation where we live. Speaking to us as we fight this lonely battle in our own individual and personal hearts. And we can never comprehend what the Bible is about until we cease to think, as we have so often done that the geographical frontiers of the Bible are the Palestine of long ago and far away. The true frontiers of the biblical message are your heart and my heart this very morning in this very of June in this very year of 1960. The Bible in other words is as Skeapti Doug once said, a letter with your address of pony. In this way, the Bible speaks again very realistically to certain phases of human existence. It shows men engaged in this battle in the soul. And what I want to do, is to select some of these phases of human existence from the Old Testament first of all, in order that you might see how closely they are related to man's situation today, where he fights this battle of the heart. The first phase of human existence about which I want to speak, taking it from the Old Testament, is the phase at which men fondly believe that in this battle of the heart, they can win the victory for themselves. That they can deliver themselves from evil, by their own strength, their own cleverness and their own ingenuity. Throughout the long story of man, this phase has been labeled humanism. We find it spoken to most directly in that very vivid story, which I read to you from the book of Genesis this morning, the story of the Tower of Babel. What is the profound and searching meaning of this story? Here it is very dramatically interestingly told. Here are men, and they're saying to each other, "Come on boys, come on. We are so clever. We can build a tower reaching up to heaven, by our own skill and by our own strengths, we know how to do it, we'll erect the kingdom of God. We can do it by the skill of our own hands, and the cleverness of our own minds." And so you see them there concretely pictured in the biblical mythological story. You see them group together in a little huddle and say, "How clever we are." How clever man is, that he himself can take it upon himself to build the kingdom of heaven. This is the deep meaning of the Tower of Babel story, and of course the sequel is, that whenever man defies himself and believes that on his own animal strength and cleverness, he can erect the kingdom of heaven, there follows only chaos and confusion and suffering and tragedy. And man's desperate fight in all the ages ever since, has been his readiness to make himself a god. You don't need to look far across this stricken earth today, to see that this is still our darkest predicament, that men in places are still trusting in their proud imperialistic path, they are still thinking that they are gods. This is what is wrong with the world of our time. As it always has been wrong with man's world. This is humanism at its works. In a fascinating novel called "The Forerunner," Merejkowski, bases his story on the notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci. And it's a wonderful story this, because it shows that man's plight and the battle in man's heart is really this. It's the struggle between God become man in Jesus Christ, and on the other hand, man become God through his own fight. And that is always man's situation. This battle that goes on in the souls of men is the battle between God's attempt to break through to him in Christ, and on the other hand, man's desire to make himself a god and say, "I am stronger than Christ. I am stronger than God. I can build a tower myself reaching unto heaven." There are particular epochs in human history, in which this kind of proud pretentiousness on man's part has led to untold suffering. There are times too, when man has fondly dreamed that he has it in his own power to win victory in the battle of the heart. You remember the kind of naive optimism of the late Victorian era about which you possibly have read, when men were feeling that the human race was standing on an escalator, and it was simply a matter of bidding time, until we moved up and up to the perfect day of God and everything would be peace and a dreamland of wonder and glory and love. Tennyson said, in those days, "Yet I doubt not through the ages, one increasing purpose runs and the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns." Or it was just a matter of waiting, and everything in the garden of the world would be lovely. Swinburne said at this time, "Glory to man in the

highest, for man is the master of thing." And again in our day, there has appeared in human life what we call scientific humanism, in which man again is trusting in his technological skill to win the battle of the soul, to erect the kingdom of God. Do you think that any good thing can come out of Cape Canaveral? Men do. Men fondly believe still that what we need to save the world is greater technological skill, greater scientific progress than ever before. This is scientific humanism at its most sinister. The notion then is still with us that we can erect the kingdom of heaven, by defying ourselves, by usurping the place of the creator God, we can do it. We have the cleverness, we have the skill, we have the knowledge. And this is at the root of every predicament across the world today. Now specifically, the sad thing about this phase of human existence in which man put so much pride in himself and in his own achievement, you know it finds its way even into the Christian church. There where most of all man should recognize his utter dependence upon the great creator God. There where he should be praying to God for the power to make men free and to make the world a lovely and a better place, there man is still trusting in himself. Isn't it true that the church is often today so secularized in places that it has become competitive big business? Isn't it true that there are so many in the church who think that the church is to be measured by its numerical strength or by its financial statistics? Isn't it true that the church is pushing on at a humanistic level, seeking to make itself great as an earthly institution, when in fact by this kind of humanistic pushing, it is more and more cutting itself off from the inflow of the divine energy of the Almighty God, and is more and more seeking to be truly the church of Christ. We better pause a while when we worship in the church these days, and recognize who's we are, and whom we seek to serve. And any church which has gone overboard, or any denomination of the church, which has gone overboard for sheer bigness, and numerical strength, and financial power, had better take stalk of its position. For woe unto us, if humanism is found even in the church of Christ. That is one phase of man's existence then, as he seeks to win this battle of the heart, he fondly thinks he can do it on his own strength. Another phase of man's existence, which is very eloquently spoken to in the Old Testament, is the phase at which he thinks he can win the victory of life by seeking to please the deity. At this stage, he believes that there is an omnipotent God, and he thinks he can become virtuous, by seeking to please this God. You know that in the Old Testament, there is a great elaborate ritual of sacrifice. Now at its best, the ritual of sacrifice among the Hebrew people, was a genuine attempt to equate themselves with the rams and the bullocks that they offered. They were seeking to say, "We are offering with these rams, our own hearts and surrender to God and to his path." But in reality at its worst, the ritual of sacrifice in the Hebrew temple, very often became a merely external thing. And when men made an outward gift to God, they very often said to themselves, "Oh, well, I've pleased him now. I've pleased the omnipotent power, I can feel good. How victorious I am beginning to feel in the battle of my soul." There are maybe some offers here, in fact all of us here, probably this morning, who at some time have felt this with a little parcel of the good works we have done in our hand, or making some financial offering to the church, we say to ourselves, we please God, we've sent up a sweet scent in his nostrils and he's happy with us. And I feel this day that he's giving me victory in the battle of life. The sacrificial cultures of the Old Testament has its counter part again, in the modern church. I was minister of a church in the city of Glasgow in one of the loveliest suburbs in Scotland, And in my church were many of the wealthy merchants of the city. It was always a tremendous trouble to my conscience that a fairly large proportion of these merchant men of the city of Glasgow never darkened the church door. But from some of them at least, every six months, there would come a fairly fat cheque as a donation to the church. What to do in this situation? One had the feeling that these men had some superstitious regard for the church, that they made this donation every six months out of this

superstitious regard for the church. Now one never knows utterly another man's motives. They may have been perfectly sincere. They may have believed with all their heart in God, and in his church. And with this cheque, they may have genuinely been making an offering of themselves to God. But one still has the lingering suspicion, that they were simply buying themselves a kind of insurance policy with the church and with God. Is that too frank a statement? I put it simply to you to ask it of yourself. There is always the danger ever present in the church, that as we fight this battle in our hearts, we think we can win release and victory, by pleasing God with an external gift. And of course, you know, you cannot win victory in this way, for the sacrifices God wants are the sacrifices of a broken spirit and a contrite heart, which is filled with love for the Almighty and for all men. There is another phase of human existence spoken to very dramatically again in the Old Testament, which was part of the ritual of sacrifice, and it too certainly has its modern counterpart in the battle of our life. There was the ancient device of the scape goat. Once a year in the Hebrew temple, the Old Testament people came to worship and the high priest was present and a goat was brought into the sanctuary and the high priest ceremonially took the sins of the people and he put them on the head of this goat, and then the animal was led away ritually into the wilderness, bearing the sins of the people with it. And you can imagine how the congregation then felt a sense of virtue within. Our sins have been carried away by the scape goat. They felt a sense no doubt, momentarily of victory. Now this too has its modern counterpart in the battle of our heart. I'm willing to bet that there is no more familiar practice we use than this, this device of the scape goat. In other words, what we do is this. We take our own failures in the battle of life. We take our own moral weaknesses, we take our own lack of love, we take our own lack of redemptive concern for our fellow men and women, and we blame somebody else for it. We put it onto somebody else's head. We say, it's the age in which we live. It's the environment in which we've been brought up. It's hereditary. We blame one thing and another, we make somebody the scape goat for our own weakness as we fight this battle of life. Is that not true? And we do this, not only as individuals, we do it on the national level as well, because you know, in Britain, in 1914 to 1918, they were shouting, "Hang the Kaiser." And the British people many of them, fondly believed that when the Kaiser was hang, evil would be broken forever, and the kingdom of good would prevail. And in the second world war, we said again in Britain, "Shoot Hitler." And we finally believed that if we were rid of Hitler, the perfect day would have come. We blame everybody on the national level, we disclaim responsibility for ourselves. And as Reinhold Niebuhr has pointed out very vividly, there is a tendency in American life today to believe that if communism were rooted out of the world, everything would be good and blessed and healthy. Stand upon nine feet or son of man, and search your own heart. For we too, are responsible for the world's guilt and suffering and evil and sorrow. We cannot entirely make other people, another nation a scape goat, for what we make of the battle of life. There is no release and no victory in this way. No more at the individual level, none at the national level. I have two boys, aged 12 and 13, Gordon and Kenneth. When Gordon commits some misdemeanor, the inevitable thing for him to say is, "Kenneth did it, dad." When Kenneth commits some misdemeanor, the inevitable thing for him to say, because he's human is, "Gordon did it, dad." They make each other a kind of scapegoat. They disclaim responsibility when things go wrong, puts the father in a predicament. The only way out perhaps, is in every occasion to punish both, I don't know. It may be. But in all events, this device of the scapegoat is with us from early youth through all the days of our life. We like to blame somebody else. In the slums of Glasgow, I've heard a man say, because he was living a debauched life, I've heard him say, "I never had a chance. My father before me was a drunkard. It's just heredity. I can't help what I've made of my life." I don't believe that's true. I reckon that what James Daniel, Scottish theologian said is correct. "No

man ever with a clear conscience, set his own failure down to his father's account." I've heard man say equally, "I've never had a chance in life. It's the system, it's the day in which I live." Oh, but on the other hand too, that isn't true, for I've seen people born and raised in the slum districts of Glasgow, and these are among west slums in Europe. I've seen them brought up raised in such a place living good and gallant and noble and Christ like lives. So the other fellow can't blame his failure on his environment. We live in an age in which psychologically speaking, there are many who are trying to tell us that our life is predetermined. There may be some truth in it, but I don't think it is. I think we fight our battle in the heart alone, that we are directly responsible in our freedom for what we are, for as the poet puts it, "When the soul arms for battle, she goes forward alone." And in our heart of hearts, we know this morning, that if we have had failures in our life, it's been our responsibility. If we've had weaknesses, then it's been our doing. Don't make a scapegoat of anyone or anything else. You cannot win victory in the battle of a soul in that way. Then there is this last phase of human existence spoken to in the Old Testament, about which I want to tell you briefly, it's a higher one than all these. And it's relevant to our time too. The greatest thinkers and the greatest minds of the Old Testament, are of course the prophets of Israel, these men of God who believed in God with all their heart, who stood in the inner council of God and knew his secret. And these men proclaim a great hope. They study this battle in the human soul, and they proclaim with all other and enthusiasm, on God's great day in the future, he will break into save men. To give them victory in this battle, which everyone has to fight. Now the prophet are wonderful, because they are filled with this glowing expectation that someday God will send his servant to cleanse men from their sin, to make them good and victorious in the battle of life. But I want you to notice, that for all the greatness of the Old Testament, for all its beauty, it is still a hope that man will win victory in the battle of the heart. It's still just a lovely hope. It's in the future. The future tense is used. I want to say now, that if the Old Testament, which describes so vividly these certain phases of human existence in every age, if the Old Testament were all we had, life would look like a losing battle. We'd have hoped certainly, we'd have some secrets as to how to proceed, but the Hosannas of victory have not yet sounded in the air. Oh, but praise be to God, praise be to go God. The Old Testament isn't all that the Christian Church has. The Old Testament is superseded and surpassed by God's declaration of himself in Christ, recorded in the New Testament. And in the New Testament, it isn't the past or future tense that's used, it's the glowing vivid present, of present victory in men's hearts and in the battle of their lives. If anything stands out above anything else in the New Testament is simply this, that these men who had experience God in Jesus Christ, these men who had handled with their own hands the word of life in Christ, were conscious, were profoundly aware of an amazing, an unbelievable power in their hearts, that made them strong, where they had been weak. That gave them courage, where they had been fearful. That took the sting out of death itself, so that all through the New Testament, the note of triumph reverberates again and again. We are more than conquerors, says the apostle through Christ who loved us and gave himself for us. Victory is in the air now, because God has sent his power into his men's heart in his son, Jesus, the Christ. I cannot explain to you how it is, that in this strange lonely battle, which all of us have to fight, Christ brings power. I can only say that it's true, that it works, that it has worked for some of us, who didn't believe it possible, That out of ugliness and unattractiveness, God in Christ has brought something more winsome, and more lovely. There is no rationale for the invasion of men's hearts by God in Jesus Christ, we cannot explain it, we can only testify out of our own life's experience that when some of us have beheld the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, we have been conscious of victory in our souls. We know that this battle that we are fighting then is not a losing battle. That victory comes from the beyond through

God in Christ, that he does for us in this Christ, what we cannot do for ourselves. I say I cannot explain it to you. I can only tell you a story which was passed on to me by my own teacher of very revered memory, Dr. A.J. Gasip. He was a chaplain in the first world war. And he used to tell us who were his students that one day he went far out on the duck board track up towards Passiondale in Flanders. It had been a day of particularly heavy shell fire, and many young Scotsmen laid dead on the battlefield in no man's land. And then suddenly as he walked about among the corpses, he came across one, particularly youthful fellow, lying dead on the battlefield. He had flax and curly hair, and a most attractive rugged Scottish face. And Gasip looking at him, just suddenly thought how some mother's heart back home in Scotland would be completely shattered and broken. And kneeling down beside this boy, he took off his Scottish bow model, and laid it on the ground. And kneeling down beside the dear dead boy, he looked him in the face and said, "Because you've done this my son, I promise for the rest of my life, to try to be a better man." There are some of us who have now gone beside the cross of Christ, which God has sent for our salvation. And we've taken off our bonnets and we've said, because the son of God has done this precious and amazing thing, we promise to be better men and women. No one can explain this, we can only say that through the Christian centuries, wherever the cross has truly confronted men, it has been a power for good, in the battle of the human soul. It has been as if the holy army of God himself were invading their hearts to make them strong to fight. To fight a good fight at last, not on their own human power which is weak enough at best, but on the very power of very God himself. So men and women, I have tried in a very faltering and incoherent way, to sum up something of the biblical messages relevance to our situation. We are fighting this battle today in the soul, all over the world. As we have fought it for generations and for centuries. I still believe with all my heart that because Christ can work miracles in the lives of individual men, he can work miracles in the lives of all men, all over the world. He is the one to deliver, in the battle of the human heart. So when we pray, "Deliver us from evil," let us have in our hearts, the firm unshakeable conviction, that Christ is in fact, the strong deliverer. And if we open up our lives to him in the fullest way, he can make us great where we have been little, strong where we have been weak, and triumphant in life's battle, where we have been defeated. And unto this strong conqueror, even Jesus Christ, whom God has sent to make us great, unto him the honor and glory majesty, dominion and power world without end. Amen. Would you please stand for the Benediction. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you, now, henceforth and forevermore. (tender worship music) (church bell ringing) (bright worship music) Is that the church reports it sees, when it looks at the world. For the church, the worldwide church, we call it the ecumenical church. Is standing at the point of view of Jesus Christ, when it looks at the world. And this accounts for the fact that it reports seeing different things than secularistic groups report seeing, when they look at the world. Some people say when they read church pronouncements, when they're in services of worship like this, and participate in the prayers that have been written by our student leaders of the world, why is it that the church says what it says, and seems to see what it sees? Why when I look at the world, I don't see these things? The explanation is, the church is trying to look at the world through the eyes of its Lord, Jesus Christ. The church sees at least three things, when it looks at the world. First, it sees the world. This may sound obvious, it is not. When the church looks at the world, it does not see nations. It does not see social groups, strata of society. It does not see men cut up into partitions here and partitions there. It's sees a world of people divided into only two groups. The first group is composed of those who have made a positive response in faith and love, obedience and service to the call of God, to all men in his son, Jesus Christ. That's the first group the church sees, because that is the church. The second group, and the

only remaining people in the world as the church views it, are those who have not made this positive response in faith and love, obedience, and service, to what God has called us to do in his son Jesus Christ. Two groups. Only two groups. The church is color blind, to any other division. It does not see people as states or as nations. It seems peculiarly unable to recognize those divisions. Now, what is the practical significance of this? Let us see what the practical significance of it would be. Right now in this service of worship here, at Duke University, in this chapel, who are the people who belong to this congregation, and who are the people who are visitors or guests in this service of worship? The people who belong fully, completely without any reservation, to this congregation, are the people whoever they may be, who have made and are making this commitment to our Lord Jesus Christ. The people who are strangers and visitors, guests in this service, are those people wherever they came from, who have not made a commitment to Christ. This would mean that Phil Stevens of New York, would be as much at home in this service, as Dave Sims of Georgia or Tom Vernon of Florida. That Louis Tuckey of Texas would be as much at home in this service, and as much a part of it, as Betty Brinkley of North Carolina. It would mean not only that state groups are irrelevant in this congregation, but that levels of vocation or calling would be irrelevant. So that Eddie Rashton, a law student, would take communion in the same pew with the medical student, Warner Hall. And there would be no difference. The church recognizes no such significant differences. These things are as it were, irrelevant, when we come together for corporate worship of God and love of Christ, and to grow in the grace of our master. Well, not only is this true in the United States that in Christ there is no east or west, in him, no south or north. But it is true beyond state lines, across national boundaries. Continuing to answer the question, who are the people who are fully a part of this congregation and who are those who are guests. We would say that Danny Eric Chio of the Philippines is completely a part of this congregation. We would say that Steve Powell of Burma, Gazi Cuban of Jordan, John Thomas of Canada, Thor Hall of Norway, Peri Zabul of Hungary. These are the people who are members fully of this body of Christ, this expression of the church here, and the man who was born five blocks away in Durham, but who has not responded in faith and obedience to Christ is an outsider in this congregation. And the mere of fact that this chapel is located in a nation we call the United States is irrelevant, when you are considering the nature of the church. When the church looks at the world, it does not see any national boundaries. It sees only those who have so said yes to God, and those who have not said yes to God. And this determines therefore, the mission of the church. The church, which has responded to Christ has one mission. And that is to bear witness to those who have not responded, bear witness to the love of God in Christ for all men, and the call of God through Christ to all men. And that mission is one and the same, whether it be to that man in Durham, who was born five blocks from here, but who has span Christ, or that man in Uganda, who has never heard of him. The mission is one and the same. It is essentially a proclamation of the love of God in Christ. And when the church looks at the world, that's what it sees. The church sees a second thing, when it looks at the world. It sees persons, as opposed to profits, or any material consideration. Now this runs contrary to much of what the world thinks when it thinks about itself. Hard-headed, cold-hearted, sharp driving businessmen, When they look at the world, see profits or lawsuits. When they look at an industry, they see the profits in the industry. The church when it looks at that industry, sees not basically the profit, but the person. The church asks not what is happening to the balance sheet, but what is happening to the people who are involved in it and affected by it. So that let us say here is a non-Christian, or an un-Christian man who has an interest financially in a coal mine. When he looks at that operation, he asks, what is the profit. When the church looks at that operation, it asks, what is happening to the persons who go down into

the ground? What is happening to their families? Basically the church sees persons, when it looks at the world. And those who resist the Christian revelation, look at profit. In the fourth dynasty in Egypt, the great pyramid was built. And the historian Herodotus tells us that over 100,000 men were involved in the building of this, and many of them lost their lives, or were maimed or injured for life, in this operation. When the Pharaoh looked, he saw a pyramid, he didn't care about what happened to 100,000 persons, but the church looking back upon that operation considers that the greatest, the most significant factor involved, was what happened to the people, not the pyramid. Always the church sees persons. You have stock in a great distillery, you may be interested mainly in whether it is making a profit, and if so into how many millions of dollars that profit may run. The church when it looks at it, wants to know what is happening to the people whose lives are affected. Always the church in industry, in athletics, in social clubs, in every dimension of life, is looking at the people. Or the church is looking at the world from the standpoint of Jesus Christ. And it seems strangely unable to get really interested in any other consideration. Last in distinction from others, the church when it looks at the world, sees hope. Many other people can look at the same phenomenon that the church is looking at, and see despair and defeat and frustration. But the church will always be able to see hope. Not because the church is a Pollyanna. Not because the church denies any of the tragic realities of human existence in sin, but because the church has been given by God, is being redeemed by God, and is undergirded by God. And it stands on the promise that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. So the church sees hope, because it has faith in the ground of hope, who is Jesus Christ, the son of God. And it always believes in the possibility of resurrection, wherever there is a crucifixion. And so it keeps on patiently plugging away. There are some who have accepted defeatism, when they have read history and have seen how one war happens, and another war happens, and another war comes and there is destruction and more destruction. And they have seen this piling up until finally they say, now we have reached a point in history where man will destroy himself, and there is no hope. Let us therefore eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we all die. Such cynicism and frustration is the inevitable conclusion of those who will not stand where Jesus stands, and look as the church does, through his eyes. See that even if man does bring himself to the ultimate catastrophe on earth, nothing that Christ has redeemed will ever be lost. Because the end of history, is not the end of the power of God. And the end of the human life of any individual is not the end of his complete life. For God has given us immortality through Christ. And every good thing that has been done here, will be retained and glorified in his ultimate kingdom. So we work desperately as Christians for the redemption of society about us, now in this world, but we know that should the worst happen here, nothing good that we have given ourselves to, will be useless. Now you see how different this is from the person who is not looking at the world. As the church is through the eyes of Christ. He builds a house of fire burns it down, he has therefore sustained a great loss, hasn't he? He marries someone he loves and she dies. This is a permanent loss, isn't it? He works for peace and war comes, and he says, "What's the use?" He builds and he sees it torn down. He develops his muscles, but old age overtakes him. And finally death. Hope is possible really, only to those who stand where Christ stands, and who look as the church does beyond history. To the Lord of history and to his long range plans. Yes, the church is looking at the world. And what it sees is determined by where it stands when it does its looking. It sees a world, not all cut up by artificial barriers, but a world of individuals, just like we have gathered here today, who are divided two ways. Those who have responded to Christ, and those who are yet to respond. It sees people, not material considerations like profits, pyramids, or anything else. And it sees hope. Not a shallow hope, but an abiding eternal hope, that can make it possible for us to live joyously and triumphantly, in every consideration. Let



us bow our heads for prayer. Infinite and eternal God, we thank thee for the life, which has been given to us through thy son, Jesus Christ. We thank thee for the opportunity we have, every one of us, to respond in joyous love and obedience to Christ. And just now in this moment, We say to him, that we give him our hearts. And we join our hearts in prayer, with others of every land, in the name of Christ. Amen. (tender worship music)