

# SEEKING THE FACE OF GOD

NINE REFLECTIONS ON THE PSALMS

MARTYN  
LLOYD-JONES

CROSSWAY BOOKS

A PUBLISHING MINISTRY OF  
GOOD NEWS PUBLISHERS  
WHEATON, ILLINOIS

*Seeking the Face of God*

Copyright © 1991 by Elizabeth Catherwood and Ann Desmond

First published in Great Britain by Crossway Books, Eastbourne, 1991

First U.S. edition, 2005

Published by Crossway Books

A publishing ministry of Good News Publishers

1300 Crescent Street

Wheaton, Illinois 60187

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher, except as provided by USA copyright law.

Cover design: Jon McGrath

First printing, 2005

Printed in the United States of America

All Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version.

---

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Lloyd-Jones, David Martyn.

Seeking the face of God : nine reflections on the Psalms / D. Martyn

Lloyd-Jones ; edited by Christopher Catherwood.—1st U.S. ed.

p. cm.

ISBN 1-58134-675-1

1. Bible. O.T. Psalms—Criticism, interpretation, etc. I. Catherwood, Christopher. II. Title.

BS1430.52.L57 2005

242'.5—dc22

2004023235

---

VP	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07	06	05				
15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

# THE FOLLY OF UNBELIEF

*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.*

P S A L M 1 4 : 1

There can be no doubt at all but that the greatest matter confronting every man and woman born into this world is that which is put before us by this statement in Psalm 14. Nothing, surely, can be more important than this question of our relationship to God.

There are, indeed, many great questions confronting us and confronting the world in which we live, matters that are not only occupying the minds of statesmen but also of common people. If we think at all seriously about our existence in the world, it is very right that we should be talking about and considering all the national and international problems that arise. Mankind, with its scientific and technological discoveries, has succeeded in doing so many things that have both tremendous and terrible possibilities for the future. And yet, I repeat, this question that is put before us here by the psalmist transcends all those other questions in importance. That is why I shall not be dealing with such things as nuclear warfare or national and international politics or with any other of these matters, because, as I understand my calling, my privilege is to consider with you something that is infinitely more important than all those things, even all put together.

Why is that? For this good reason: We are dealing here with

something that is absolutely certain and goes on and continues, whatever may happen with respect to any one of the other questions. Whether there is war or not, my relationship to God still remains. Even though there be no war, I know that my life in this world is limited and that I still have to face this question. And indeed, should war come and should we find hell let loose again upon the face of the earth, then I think it is clear that there will be nothing more important at that moment than our relationship to God. If our cities are reduced to a mass of rubble, then our interest will not be in their buildings or their universities or anything like that. No; we shall be face to face with our own destiny, and that brings us at once to this question of our relationship to God. So this is incomparably the greatest and the most important matter that can ever face men and women while they are in this world.

There are many attitudes toward this question, but at this point I only want to consider with you this particular one that is here described by the psalmist. It is the attitude that says, "There is no God." This, as you know, is a very common attitude. There are many who take up this position, who say that and who plan their lives and order their existence on this supposition. They say, "I don't believe in God, and"—they add—"the fact that there is no God makes no difference to my life at all."

So let us consider what the psalmist has to say about that attitude. You will notice that he makes a very blunt assertion. What he says about all people who are in that position is simply that they are fools: "The *fool* hath said in his heart, There is no God" (emphasis added). Now, we must emphasize here that the psalmist is making a universal statement. He does not say, "Some of the people who say there is no God are fools"; he says, "Every one of them is." He does not say, "Of course, there are fools who say this sort of thing, but on the other hand there are great and learned and educated people who also say it." Not at all! He makes a universal statement without any qualification or excep-

tions whatsoever. Or to put it the other way round, he says, “Anyone who says, ‘There is no God’ is just a fool.”

What is a fool? Well, the real meaning of the word is that he is a superficial person. The fool is a man who does not think. He is always contrasted with the wise man or, as the psalmist puts it, with the man of understanding. The psalmist says in verse 2, “The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand.” So the fool, you see, is a man who lacks understanding; he lacks the ability to think clearly; he is a man who acts in an impetuous manner, who does not consider the consequences—that is the biblical meaning of the word *fool*. He is someone who acts in an idiotic manner; he is lacking in reason and insight.

“Dear me,” says someone, “surely that is a most extraordinary statement. Is that true today? Is that your contention? Are you asserting that what the psalmist said in his generation is still the simple truth today?” Yes, I am striving to establish this very proposition. I am a preacher because I believe in the depth of my being that people who say there is no God are just fools! And the business of preaching is to enlighten them, to show them their error, to expose them to the utter folly of the position they have taken up. But I do so in love. I do so because of my concern for any such person who may be reading these words. There is nothing so tragic as that people should be fools and that in their folly they should say, “There is no God.”

So then, how do I establish this? How could the psalmist have established it in his day? Well, I want to reason the thing out with you. The times are so serious that perhaps I do not need to remind you that I am not doing this because I delight in argumentation or disputation, nor because I like conducting this kind of inquiry in an intellectual and theoretical manner. I hope to show you before I have finished that, as we have already seen, this is the vital matter of all matters. The things that depend upon it are so momentous and so terrifying that I feel it is my duty to

put this matter as simply and as plainly and as directly as I can to anybody who is prepared to listen.

Here, then, is the contention: Men and women who say in their hearts that there is no God are fools. And the first respect in which this is true of them is that they are people who listen overmuch to their hearts—"The fool hath said in his *heart*, There is no God" (emphasis added). They are, according to the psalmist, governed by their desire; their outlook is determined by what he calls the "heart," which is the seat of the sensibilities. They are governed by what they like and by what they want to do rather than by certain other things. It is a decision they have arrived at, says the psalmist, in their hearts.

Why is this a foolish thing to do? Well, let me put it in the form of a number of contrasts. Here are people who are fools because they listen to their hearts and their desires instead of listening to that sense that is within them (it is in every man and woman born into this world—a sense of God). Now people, of course, may try to stifle that; they may try to argue it down; they may try to browbeat it. But what I am asserting is that in every human being there is a sense of God. And, of course, this is rarely granted because many today who do not believe in God think they can explain away this sense of Him, though they may admit that it is there. But the fact is that there is in all of us a feeling that at the back of everything there is this eternal being, and that behind everything that is seen is the great, unseen, eternal God. There is this natural sense of reverence in us all—perhaps accompanied by an element of fear, but it is there.

You can study anthropology, as has been done, and you can go and investigate the condition of the most primitive peoples that are in the world at this moment. You will find them in many places, and you will find that among them all there is, nevertheless, this sense of God. Many of them worship stones and trees and find spirits in animals and so on, but they all have this sense of a supreme being, of a God who is at the back of and beyond

all the other gods that they worship. Now I say that those who brush that aside and who listen and who are governed by what they want to be the truth and what they would like to be the truth, in order that they may live a certain kind of life, are just being fools. Surely it is our business to pay very close and careful attention to anything that is elemental within us, to anything that is profound within us. Men and women who dismiss something that seems to be an innate part of their personality and of their very being are, I suggest, fools. And those who say, "There is no God" are guilty of doing that. They are going against a voice within themselves that says there is a God.

But that is only the first point. In the same way, such people go against the voice of their conscience. And again this is something that is beyond dispute. We all have a conscience within us. We often wish we did not, but we do have it; and when we do something that is wrong, our conscience tells us so, and it condemns us. It makes us feel miserable. We may pass through an agony of remorse, if not of repentance, and that is the voice of conscience speaking—the voice that says, "You shouldn't have done that! That was wrong! That isn't true! That's against God, a sense of whom you have within you." In the whole of mankind we find a conscience that we cannot explain. And yet, you see, here is a man, says the psalmist, who violates that in the same way. He does not listen to it; he does not pay attention to it; he is not governed by it.

So what is he governed by? Ah, he is governed by another type of life that he has conjured up; he sees other people living it, and he says to himself, "What a wonderful thing it would be if I could go and live that sort of life!" But he is a bit afraid of that, because it is not godly and his conscience condemns him. But he says, "Very well then, there is no God. Perhaps, after all, I've been fooling myself." So in order to live that life, and because he cannot do the two things at the same time, he has to say, "There is no God." But in doing that he is violating the voice

of his conscience, as he has already violated the sense of God that is within him.

But, and this is the point I particularly want to emphasize, such people are fools because they do not use and do not listen to their understanding. That is, as we have seen, the psalmist's contention: "The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did *understand*. . . . Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?" God asks, "who eat up my people as they eat bread" (vv. 2, 4, emphasis added). Here is the final charge against these men and women, and it is, of course, at this point that we see most clearly and plainly the fact that they are fools.

Now, I want first to look at this point in general because two main objections are brought very volubly against it. The average person today, hearing a statement like that, would respond by saying, "My dear sir, do you know that you're preaching in 1957 and not in A.D. 57? To say that people today have no understanding because they don't believe in God—why, it's *because* of their understanding that they don't believe in God!"

That is the argument today, is it not? It is said that these people do not believe in God because of their knowledge, because of their great brains and their wonderful ability. Furthermore, the argument goes, the only people who still believe in God are primitive types who have not yet developed—psychological cases, people who deliberately put their heads in the sand and will not look at the evidence and will not face the facts.

So let me meet that argument. The psalmist's contention is that these people are fools! And they are fools because they do not act on their understanding but on their desires. How do I establish this? Well, let me ask a question: Is this disbelief in God confined to the learned and to people of knowledge? You see, if this argument is right, then all the ignorant people in the world would be believers in God; but the learned people—the people of knowledge and especially scientific knowledge—every one of

them would not believe in God. But is that so? We know perfectly well that for every learned, intelligent person you can show me in the world today who does not believe in God, I can show you one who is unlearned and ignorant and lacking in intelligence and ability who also does not believe in God. Oh, it is a wonderful thing to hear these distinguished intellects speaking on the media—they do not believe in God. But I can find five or six people on the street or wherever you like who say exactly the same thing as they do.

So is this denial of God based upon learning? Then why do ignorant, unintelligent people say exactly the same thing? It is an interesting and a rather important point at the present time<sup>1</sup> that religion—belief in God and the worship of God—is more popular among the intelligent, more educated people in this country than it is among others. Indeed, this brings us to a charge that is very often hurled at the church because of the statistics. “Ah,” people say, “the Christian church is just middle-class; it doesn’t touch the masses of the people.” Now, that is a very important statement, is it not? I am not saying anything against any particular group in society, but I must indicate this: Religion is most successful today in the universities, among the people who are in such places of learning because they have brains and intelligence. It is succeeding there much more than in suburbia, much more than it is among the masses of the people. The fact is that the masses of the people today are unconcerned, and the Christian church somehow or another is not touching them. So I would comment therefore that disbelief in God is not primarily a matter of intelligence. The facts prove that it is not.

But let me put that in a still stronger form. Not only can I thus establish that the unintelligent and illiterate and people who have no culture do not believe in God—I can on the other side show you that men of knowledge, learning, culture, and science have been some of the greatest believers in God and in Christ that the church and the world have ever known. For instance, people only

know about Isaac Newton in terms of his scientific discoveries and theorizings and his brilliant hypotheses; they know about him and the apple falling and so on. They do not know that Isaac Newton spent most of his time studying the Scriptures and writing books about prophecy, and he himself regarded his religious work as being altogether more important than his other work. Yet he was one of the great towering geniuses of all time in the scientific realm. Blaise Pascal, the brilliant mathematician, lived in the same century, and he too believed in God. I could go on, but, you see, the moment you begin to really analyze this argument that the modern disbelief in God is the result of knowledge and learning and understanding, it does not hold water for a second.

Rather, it is clear that whatever the explanation may be for the failure of men and women to believe in God, it is not due to knowledge and learning. It is because these people are fools and are governed by something else rather than by their understanding.

But let me say a word about the second objection, which is this: I can imagine someone saying, “Well, of course, all that you have just been saying might have been quite all right a hundred or perhaps two hundred years ago, but that is not really the position now. The majority today are not interested in God and in Christ and in the church and in salvation because of our *recent* knowledge. Darwin, you see, wrote his book in 1859, and the spread of biological knowledge, our knowledge of psychology, the study of comparative religion and all these other things—that is what has done it. Anyone who is really aware of all this latest knowledge is driven to say, “There is no God.”

But the simple answer to that argument is that in the time when David wrote this psalm, people were saying exactly the same thing. There is nothing new about not believing in God; it is the oldest thing in the world to deny Him. This is what I find so pathetic, that people think it is clever not to believe in God, that

it is modern, that it is something new, that it is something wonderful! But here is a man, King David, writing all this a thousand years before Christ—nearly three thousand years ago—and there were people saying then, “There is no God”—just what clever people are saying today, those who try to argue that they are saying it in terms of some latest esoteric knowledge that they have been given and that other people still do not have. But is it not clear that this has nothing at all to do with knowledge as such?

No; it is a question of understanding, and that is a very different thing. Men and women may have a lot of book knowledge, but that does not mean they have understanding or that they have wisdom. They can be aware of many facts, but they may be fools in their own personal lives. Have we not known such people? I have known men in some of the learned professions; I would take their opinion without a moment’s hesitation because of their knowledge and because of their learning. But sometimes I have known some of those men to be utter fools in their own personal lives. I mean by that, they behaved like lunatics, as if they had not a brain at all. They have behaved in exactly the same way as a man who never had their educational advantages and who had none of their great knowledge. They drank too much even as a less educated man did; they were guilty of adultery even as he was.

There is all the difference in the world between knowledge—an awareness of facts—and wisdom and real understanding. Though people may have great brains and may know a number of things, they may still be governed by their lusts and passions and desires, and that is why they are fools. They want to live the kind of life that the psalmist describes here. “They are altogether become filthy,” he says. “There is none that doeth good” (v. 3). It is because they want to be filthy that they say, “There is no God.” So there is my first reason for calling such people fools. They are men and women who listen to their hearts, their desires; they are governed by what they want to do rather than by true understanding.

But let me come to a second point. I want to show, in a much more positive way, how these people really fail to exercise true understanding, and this is something that I can demonstrate to you in two ways.

The first is that they arrive at momentous conclusions on insufficient evidence, and surely anyone who does that is behaving like a fool. Fools are those who do not reason a thing through. They jump to conclusions; they are governed by their prejudices or, as we have seen, by their passions and lusts and desires. It is the mark of a fool always to draw important deductions from inadequate evidence, and anyone who says, “there is no God” is guilty of that.

So let me try to prove my point. What are these arguments that such people bring forward? We cannot, obviously, deal with all of them, but let us look at some. Here is a very common one: Thousands of people in the world today say, “I don’t believe there is a God,” and when you ask, “Why not?” they reply, “Well, it’s quite simple. If there is a God, why are there wars?” Or, “If there is a God, why are there disabled children?” Or again, “If there is a God, why are there earthquakes and pestilences and things like that?” And on that kind of reasoning, and on that alone, they have come to the conclusion that “there is no God.”

Now it is amazing how intelligent people can reason and argue like that. I had a conversation once with a highly intelligent professional man who came to me and asked if he might talk to me about these things. He told me that he did not believe in God, and when I asked what the reason was for his unbelief, the only reason that he could produce was that his wife, for a while, had to endure a very painful illness. And that to him was proof that there is no God.

Well, of course, the argument was a very simple one. I first had to show him that he had arrived at that tremendous conclusion on that one bit of evidence alone. Had he ever thought that perhaps it was a part of the purpose of God to allow this in order

to bring something else to pass? I said, "How have you and your wife normally lived with respect to God? Have you worshiped Him regularly? Have you lived to His praise and glory in the whole of your lives?" He had to admit as an honest man that they had not. They had been living for themselves; they rarely thought of God at all, and they certainly never attended a place of worship. They had been living an entirely godless life, and yet, because his wife had pain, "there is no God."

"Now then," I said, "it has not occurred to you that perhaps God permitted your wife to have this pain in order to make you both think seriously about God and perhaps come to have this conversation with me. God has blessed you, but you have not thanked Him; you have ignored Him altogether. So perhaps God has chastised you now in order to bring you to your senses." Then I went on, "I have known many people who, looking back across their lives, have said with the psalmist, 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted' because 'before I was afflicted I went astray' [Ps. 119:71, 67]. Do you know anything about that?" I asked. "Have you not thought about it?" No, he had not thought about it. So I said, "My dear sir, if you and I do not understand ourselves and other people and the workings of their minds, how do you think you can so easily understand God and say, 'because He does not do this, then there is not a God'? Do you see the conclusion you are drawing on such flimsy evidence?" He had never thought about it at all!

I cannot stay with this argument now, but there are thousands of people who do not believe in God because of the problem of pain, and yet the answer to that problem is a very simple one. The Bible gives it in many places, and there are books that expound it. It is so easy to explain, and yet these people say, just on that one bit of evidence, "There is no God." Men and women who reason and argue like that, though they may be very learned and very brilliant, are just behaving like fools.

Then look at the other evidence, the evidence from the so-

called proofs of psychology. People say, "Psychology has taught us . . ." or "Psychology proves and demonstrates . . ." Now I could go into this, but we must move on, and it is not my business in a sense to do that; but I am making this point in case there may be somebody reading this who up until this moment has said, "Of course, the only people who believe in God are ignoramuses who know nothing." I am simply trying to show you that we who believe in God do know something about these things, and psychology has proved and can prove nothing at all. Psychology is based on pure theory. Popular psychology is, indeed, based upon insanity and the study of insanity. Freud's whole system is based upon such a study, the abnormal that is transferred to the normal, and then the mighty deductions are drawn. So it is no use saying that psychology proves anything. It puts up its theories and its suppositions, but you must not call that a proof. To base your position upon that, I say, is to behave in a foolish manner.

And then, of course, there is the great question of evolution. "Ah," people say, "men and women used to think that God had created the world and that He had created man, but we know now that is not so. We know that everything has come out of primitive slime, which came from some gases . . ." and so on, and back you go! "Science has established this and has proven it!" Well, I must just say the same thing again. It is simply a scientific statement to say that evolution has not proven anything. Evolution is a theory, and nothing but a theory, and there are many different theories of evolution, some of which cancel one another out. Indeed, science proves nothing, because in a sense there is no such thing as *science*, and when you say, "Science proves . . ." what you mean is that certain scientists say this or that, which is a very different thing. But, you see, on this kind of evidence there are people who say, "I no longer believe in God." I say this is folly.

Then we have comparative religion and all these other matters,

and in every single case the answer is the same. All these things are but theories, suppositions, ideas conjured up in the minds of men to try to explain the facts. None of them is adequate, all of them are criticized, and there are rival theories and rival schools. And so I maintain that anyone who draws the momentous conclusion that “there is no God” on that sort of evidence is a fool.

But look at it the other way round. Such people are doubly guilty. They take their little bits of evidence, and from them they draw this important conclusion; but they do not face the other evidence, the vast, tremendous evidence on the other side. “What do you mean?” asks someone. Well, first of all, I mean the evidence of creation. I mean the world and the cosmos in which we live. I confess I am baffled that anybody should believe that this amazing universe in which we find ourselves is merely the result of accident and chance. I must confess I am in many ways thrilled and moved as I have been reading about this mysterious thing that has just happened and about which everybody is talking at the present time, the launching of this satellite.<sup>2</sup> Have you considered the implications?

I am not referring now to the cleverness or the ability of man, though it is indeed a tremendous thing that the human mind can take this satellite and shoot it up into space and that it is circling the earth. However, I am referring even more to the fact that around our globe is earth’s atmosphere; and then you can get beyond that to this extraordinary “space,” as it were, and then beyond that again there is something else; and this globe—Earth—is suspended in all that, and so are the other bodies—the moon, the sun, the stars, the constellations. Have you thought about this? Have you tried to? “The mysterious universe,” as the late Sir James Jeans called it. And I am asked to believe that all this just happened, that there is no mind at the back of all that!

So where has all this come from? And how does it all consist and hold together? How does it all keep going? Is all this ordered universe, this amazing cosmos, the mere accidental, fortuitous

result of collisions or of gases suddenly condensing? That idea, I say, is unthinkable! As a man who was privileged to learn a little science and who still has an interest in it, I must say that my mind cannot accept such statements.<sup>3</sup> It is madness—it is folly!

And then look at man himself. Are you really satisfied that man is an accident? That he has just come into being, we know not why, nor for what purpose, nor to what end? My dear friend, you are insulting humanity. You are insulting yourself. Man stands up as a protest against it all. There is only one explanation of man, and that is God! Man is too big to be explained in human terms. He is more marvelous than the cosmos itself, this little microcosm that we call *man*.

Further, have you ever considered the evidence of history? Go and read it. Read your secular history, and read Old Testament history. Can you explain all that apart from God? Can you explain the Jews in particular? Look at them. Why have they persisted? Where have they come from? How do you explain their whole story, in the Old Testament and since? I say there is only one explanation of the Jews, and that is God!

Have you ever considered the evidence of prophecy as we find it in the Old Testament? Have you ever considered the fact that events were foretold eight hundred years and more before they ever happened? Have you ever written down on paper the facts concerning the birth and the life and the death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ? Have you gone back to the Old Testament and, as He Himself said, have you found those same facts there? Have you found how it was all predicted and prophesied, going back even to Genesis 3:15 and coming all the way through? How do you explain prophecy? There is only one explanation: God sees the end from the beginning and orders all things after the counsel of His own eternal will and wisdom. God controls history, biblical history, all history. Have you ever read books on the latest discoveries of archaeology? They confirm this biblical history.

But over and above all this evidence I ask you to look at a person called Jesus of Nazareth. He belongs to history, you know. We all recognize that by numbering the years as we do. He did live! And He died under Pontius Pilate. He is in history—secular history recognizes Him. Look at Him! How do you explain Him? Can you get rid of Him? There is only one way to explain Him, and that is God!

And indeed, how do you explain the Christian church herself? Even as she is today, how do you explain her persistence? How did this despised sect become the official religion of the Roman Empire after three centuries? How do you explain the mighty revivals in her history, which are also acknowledged in secular history? The Reformation and other revivals—where have they come from? How do you account for them? Can men and women bring these things to pass? Of course they cannot! It is God!

And then, finally, take the great saints of the centuries. Read the accounts of the greatest benefactors this world has ever known, and you will find they have been men who believed in God. We are all glad to have hospitals, are we not? We are glad they are there when we and our loved ones are taken ill and when we need some operation; we are grateful for them, and we thank God for them. The oldest hospital in London, St Bartholomew's, was founded by a religious man called Rahere over eight hundred years ago. Hospitals have come from godly people who believed in God, and so have all the other beneficent actions. Men like Lord Shaftesbury and William Wilberforce did what they did because of their belief in God and in Christ.

Do away with a belief in God and you wipe out the greatest saints, the greatest benefactors the world has ever known. That is some of the evidence that these people ignore and dismiss when they say, "There is no God." They draw their conclusions out of the flimsiest evidence, and they neglect and ignore this mighty evidence.

But, finally, let me put it like this: My third reason for calling such people fools is because, in that way and for the two reasons that we have just considered, they do not hesitate to risk their whole eternal life and their whole eternal future. “Ah, but,” they say, “I don’t believe there is anything after death.” Well, you may not believe it, but can you prove it? I say that in the light of the evidence I have just been adducing, anyone who is prepared to risk it is a fool! A man who does anything on inadequate security and evidence is a fool. Look at the man who gambles away a fortune. “Will it stop at my number?” he cries. He risks his whole fortune on it! What do you say afterwards? “What a fool! Fancy, risking everything on the number on the dice!”

And yet that is the position here. You cannot prove there is not a life after death. You do not know what is going to happen to you when you die, and yet you say, “I’m prepared to risk it!” Are you? What if the Bible is right and after death men and women who do not believe in God go on to an eternity in misery and wretchedness—endless, useless remorse, kicking themselves because of their utter folly? Then they will have opened their eyes, and they will have seen Christ! And they will have seen God! They will know there is a God, and they will see that they threw it all away and said, “There is no God” because of some things they wanted to do for a moment. They “sold [their] birthright” (Gen. 25:33) for a mess of pottage and for less. They jeopardized their whole eternal destiny on flimsy evidence and on suppositions and theories. Oh, my dear friend, this is so terribly serious. We are in this passing world, and it is becoming more uncertain almost every day. What is going to happen next? Man may suddenly do something, and the whole universe will be shattered and you and I with it. And what then?

Not to consider that, not to have some grounds for your decision and for your action, is to proclaim that you are a fool. But the thing that finally makes such people utter fools is what they refuse, what they reject. They want to live the kind of life that is

so popular with the world; it seems so glamorous, and it is going to lead to this, that, and the other—marvelous freedom and emancipation—they are going to have their fill. They do not even stop to think that when they are middle-aged they will be rather tired of it, and when they are old, they will be lying on a bed somewhere with everything gone, like the prodigal son in the far land, with no one to attend to them. They have not even considered that; still less have they considered what lies beyond it.

But look at what they have rejected and spurned; consider what they have refused! There is no life, even in this world, that is comparable to the godly life. It is a clean life; it is a pure life; it is a holy life, a life lived in fellowship and communion with God and with Christ. It is a life lived among the people who have done the greatest amount of good in this world. I would simply ask you to read, secular books as well as others; even they prove and demonstrate this. You see, that other life is so empty. I read recently a statement made by a certain popular novelist who is now an old man facing the end. He has nothing to look forward to, nothing at all. How terrible! He has always been cynical toward the godly life, and there he is now, at the end of his, with nothing. But this life of trust in God has joys and pleasures to give us that the world does not know, even here and now. And as you go on in it, it gets better and better; and as you begin to contemplate the end, you are not frightened of death and the grave. You do not say, “It’s the end of everything.” Rather you say, “I’m going on to spend the whole of my time with Christ in eternity.”

Even if all hell should be let loose on the earth again, nothing can harm us! Why not? Because our life is that hidden life that is in communion with God and Christ and that is in the safekeeping of God. We are looking forward to “an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven” by God for those who believe in Him (1 Pet. 1:4).

So can you not see the folly of saying that “there is no God”? From every aspect, that is sheer folly. There is no other word for

it. It is the absence of understanding; it is the absence of true reasoning and of clear thinking. Be wise, I humbly beseech you, and give proof that you are wise by telling God without delay that though there are still many things you do not understand, you believe that He is and that “he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb. 11:6). So come to Him to acknowledge your folly, your sin, your shame. Ask Him to have mercy, and He will tell you that He has had mercy, that He sent His only Son to die for you and your rebellion and your sin, that He will forgive you freely, take you back to Himself, give you new life, and make you His child, that He will lead you all the way and eventually receive you into glory.

Tell Him! Repent. Acknowledge your need. Cast yourself upon Him. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and His wonderful salvation. “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom” (Prov. 9:10). Prove that you are wise. Amen.

# NOTES

1. This sermon was preached in 1957.
2. 1957 was the year in which the first satellite was launched.
3. Dr. Lloyd-Jones trained as a medical doctor.
4. From Thomas Gray, "Elegy in a Country Churchyard."
5. *Joy Unspeakable* (Eastbourne, England: Kingsway, 1985).