

**OPENING PRAYER**

Eternal God—

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit:  
You have called us  
to be spiritual leaders of your  
body,  
this church.

Help us to surrender  
our hearts and minds to you;  
To humbly seek your voice;  
To boldly do your will;  
To compassionately  
share your love;  
To faithfully be your servants;  
and to reverently  
lead your people.

Bless all that we do,  
so that we can do what you  
bless.

In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

**PAUL TILLICH, *THE ETERNAL NOW***

[T]here cannot be wisdom  
without an encounter with the holy,  
with that which creates awe, and  
shakes the ordinary way of life and

thought. Without the experience of  
awe in the face of the mystery of  
life, there is no wisdom. Most  
removed from wisdom are not those  
who are driven for desire or power,  
but those brilliant minds who have  
never encountered the holy, who  
are without awe and know nothing  
sacred, but who are able to conceal  
their ultimate emptiness by the  
brilliant performances of their  
intellect...

He who has encountered the  
mystery of life has reached the  
source of wisdom... He experiences  
the limits of his being, his finitude in  
the face of the infinite. He learns  
that acceptance of limits is the  
decisive step towards wisdom. The  
fool rebels against the limits set by  
his finitude. He wants to be  
unlimited in power and knowledge.  
He who is wise accepts his finitude.  
He knows that he is not God.

**REFLECTION  
QUESTIONS:**

- What does this passage say about our relationship with God as individuals and as a church?
- What role does it say about what we need as leaders of a church?