

Christ Our Life - Part 2

by Art Katz

Art Katz emphasizes the necessity of living a life fully surrendered to Christ, recognizing the eternal significance of every action and the transformative power of baptism.

Duration: 22:12

Scripture: Mark 9:43

Topics: "Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker recounts a powerful experience he had while preaching at the University of Illinois. He describes how he witnessed a man wither and shrink away after he spoke, and how this led to seven days of intense meetings at the university. The speaker also mentions a debate with a philosophy professor and the impact his preaching had on Jewish students. He concludes by emphasizing the importance of every moment and every word spoken, as they can have eternal consequences.

Transcript

I just want to dwell on that You are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God When Christ who is our life shall appear So can I ask the question that we need to ask ourselves and frequently check Is Christ our life? When Christ who is our life shall appear Is that automatic? Is that mechanical? Is that fixed? Or does it need a continual affirmation by faith? A continual denial of condescending to the natural And we can say Christ is our life You know I'm gambling on that tonight I don't know how this is sounding, how it's going over How did you get this theme today Cass?

The same way I got the theme yesterday or at any other time A quickening, something out of the life that is of such a kind that no other subject is to be contemplated Have you ever experienced that?

That unless you attend to the thing that has been quickened any other alternative is stone cold dead I don't care how biblical it is, how right it is, how appropriate it is It's dead You've got to be where the life is And that's why Watchman Lee could not knock on the door The life went out of his arm It was not time He was correct, he could have brought a necessary counsel to bless But evidently the working of God was not to be impaired or interfered by the well-meaning intention of a minister He had to desist And he's a man who could be led by the light We need to have such a proximity to that life that we're not being quickened, we don't act We know where his life is and that's the thing to which we yield and give ourselves interest which I assume I'm doing tonight Once you become keen

to understand the issue you'll see the frequency that it's before you You mustn't discard it because it's not some major issue To defer to your life rather than the life of God is a major decision There's no such thing as major or minor or greater or lesser in the issues of the kingdom Every issue is a major issue It's always an issue of significance There's no such thing as small The whole life now is charged with a significance of an importance that we had not before seen where we cannot lean back and rest upon our haunches because well, this is not some big issue of ministry this is just how I answer this brother what I do with my wife, what about this situation No, every act is consequential We've got to grow in this, we've got to abide, dwell and recognize no thing small So here I'm

paying a thousand dollars to attend a single banquet of Commentary Magazine, the leading Jewish conservative publication in New York and in the world because I'm out for Norman Port-Horwitz's soul and know that if I meet him, I'll meet him on background and sure enough we came to the banquet two years ago and he's meeting people at the door and I gave him my name and he said Oh, he said you're the evangelist I'm too old to be evangelized What would you say just then where your thousand dollar investment is up for grabs in your response in a single moment over a man who's your age a Jewish man who is brilliant and enjoys world prestige and yet does not know Christ and has even written a book on the prophets in which he acknowledges that it is very difficult to avoid the Christological

implications of Isaiah 53 but he's found a way to do so I covered the man's soul I'm paying a thousand dollars for one banquet just to come in touch with him meets me at the door, takes me by surprise because I'd given an earlier publication so when he heard the name he remembered and makes the wisecrack, I'm too old to be evangelized What do you say in a moment like that when you'll not have another moment in fact that was the only moment there was no other further contact with him that night and so I heard myself saying all the more reason you're too old to be evangelized all the more reason to be evangelized Did that affect him?

I have no idea It would take one issue out of me in an unforeseen moment when those moments are the issue of eternity Who's sufficient for these things? Isn't that what Paul says? Who's sufficient? A word, a gesture, an act at a single moment can have such remarkable consequence for time and for eternity Who has the wisdom, who has the knowledge to proceed? Are you mindful that every question every moment is of eternity? Are you living in the consciousness of eternity? That however trite, however seemingly innocuous and ordinary the exchange might be or the occasion or the moment eternity is that It may be a last occasion, a last witness an eternity without God the eternal shame, the mortification the anguish of soul that Jesus spoke about is being decided by affected by what is spoken by you in that one moment?

What happened when you opened up those meetings at the University of Illinois the first time you ever had university outreach years ago and they had stickers all over the campus Kansas coming, as one word and the meeting began at the student union building and they prayed with me the little inviting Christian body and then I was sent up to the microphone and they stood back, and there I was all by my lonesome in a crowded student union building that was like the Colosseum where they came for sport to mock this Jewish freak who was coming to preach the gospel at one of the outstanding universities of America and so I don't know what I shared and when I finished I opened for questions and answers and there was that guy in the back of the room I knew he was trouble and the moment I saw him, he's waiting for his opportunity his hand went up Mr.

Kassi said Do you believe in hell?

How old was I? 4, 5, 6, 7 years old I had never really contemplated the subject but here was the issue before me so I took a deep breath opened my mouth and the Lord said something like It behooves you to understand that no one has spoken more prolifically on this subject who warned that hell would be an eternal anguish of soul a fire that could not be quenched It behooves you to heed an answer to a question that was asked mischievously in order to embarrass his servant lest you find yourself standing before him more quickly than you think and suffer that consequence I'll tell you that what I spoke was much more eloquent than what I'm now saying and it came forth like a and I watched this guy wither he shriveled he shriveled up and blew away and the Lord began seven days of day and night

meetings at the University of Illinois that included the leading Jewish fraternity house where I debated the professor of philosophy over steak dinner where I turned from the table not to eat and when the meeting began he made his statement and in five minutes after I opened my mouth the man slipped out the door with his tail between his legs and we went out till two o'clock in the morning blessing those Jewish students that were toppling over under my prayer it was a visitation of the most the man who's the head of the French work of youth with a mission Tom Bloomer a lot of you guys have heard these things before was a Vietnam vet on drugs at the University of Illinois and staggered into one of the meetings and sank to the floor and listened and when I finished I opened for questions

and these students began to wisely challenge me he got up and said, what are you men doing? he says, don't you know that God is in this place he got saved and today I would say he's among the half dozen most significant figures and the greatest Protestant mission movement in the world today and if ever we will have access to that movement through our perspective which up till now has not succeeded through Lorne Cunningham it may come through Tom Bloomer I just saw him on my last trip he said, you know it's 31 years what saved him? what arrested him? that other students found objectionable and lashed out at me in contempt and he said, God is in this place broke and wept and came to the Lord out of his drugs and has risen to the place the power, the life of God if you're gifted or

intellectually able you have more to overcome in entering into that life because your gift is always wanting expression your intelligence is always seeking to be expressed much more difficult to his attention not that God who gave that intellect is intending that it be permanently forsaken but that it be activated by his life in the moment of his choosing and not when you're wanting to be clever there's a difference when it's the life that animates your intelligence or whether you are employing it as if it's your own baby at will and are you willing to look stupid? and be without answer until are you willing to bear the death for the life because when his life is revealed it's revealed unto glory so Lord this is the heart of Paul this is the genius of Paul there's no way to understand

Paul the greatness of his life his contribution, his doctrine his courage, his example the way that he was a nursemaid, he was a mother he wept, he prevailed fierce with his own people, jealous thank you my God what he was to the church, what he was to the Jew with everything issued out of the abundance of your life and so my God, he's a prototype, a model not just to admire at a different distance but to emulate, this is the paradigm of apostolicity this is the genius of it the crucified life for me to live as Christ this is my life so Lord, so much as this was your thought tonight and your life was in its expression let nothing of it return to void and these precious children whom you've assembled of whom the world is not worthy darling in every way admirable and yet to a greater degree

than we have known and realized still living, still serving out of human intelligence, out of human ability and impressively but not gloriously so Lord we're asking a surrender of that ability that good thing that so

imperils the perfect which is your life that they would be willing to be dead and hid with Christ and God until your life is fulfilled bless these children Lord there's enough potential in this room and the churches and fellowships and nations represented to be so impactful in the world if only they would return to their places as the sons and daughters of the resurrection who say with complete confidence with Paul for me to live as Christ so come my God show us to what degree our life is not God yet our own and our willingness to forfeit the acceptable, trustworthy thing

tested in order to risk what is hidden and can only be revealed after the will we bless you for the privilege of this life and you could only have come to us out of the union with you in death and burial in the water of baptism forsaking that forsakes any prospect of this realization so we're happy my God that this was the very day in which you performed and acted it out before us and then bring as a capstone this elaboration of what that baptism now permits of a life changing kind as it will come to Australia for the hunter-hunt communities and the various things for the lives of those who entered and joined you in death and burial today we bless you oh precious God put this in our hearts declare a death sentence make it clear once and for all Lord I'm finished it's not your hang-ups and

your defects that he's waiting for, it's your virtues it's not your worst that needs to be brought to death, it's your best the thing in which your identity is established and you want most to be recognized and to succeed, that's the thing that is the final impediment to the operation of this life waiting for the death of the good thing even the thing given of God because it's given not to be retained but to be forsaken are you willing to give up your virtues the thing that you've spent a lifetime cultivating and nurturing and for which you've been complimented that if that's taken and brought to death who are you and what are you that's the death, give him that and he's got you to deny that is as much an antichrist expression as to deny the eschatological fulfillment of that it's the

same phenomenon the incarnation of life in us resisting, rejecting and opposing that is the same as opposing his final expression so it is the spirit of antichrist that despises the life and doesn't want to seem manifest now through the saints or manifest in him in his coming is at heart the same issue so our every act now of giving expression to his life is the affirmation of his coming and nowhere resisted more powerfully than within Christendom itself, and all false religions are some form of human attempts at a seeming equivalent, but the real issue is the issue of the cross, his death and our privilege to enter it through the waters of baptism that's why this sabbath is the ultimate measure of this reality not because we're following a synagogue pattern which is itself an aberration

but at the heart of sabbath is ceasing from yourself seeking your own pleasure, doing your own thing and what if on a particular shabbat you would have thought religiously that you should be doing this or something appropriate to the occasion and the lord says go out and play ball go out and have a blast go out and have a picnic, but lord that offends my whole religious sensibility, I was just getting into the proper religious mood, and your requirement that satisfies you is contrary to what I would have imagined appropriate your obedience is the fulfillment of that sabbath we mustn't limit the holy one by our religious propensity because he will go out of his way often to contradict it, because it itself is so formidable in the opposition to his life, though ostensibly it seems to be in

his honor so come into that precious rest that wonderful unselfconsciousness that chamber speaks about in today's selection of my utmost first pious, believe that what's in your heart is his will and don't be in conflict and waiting for confirmation for the lord to confirm himself you're dead to yourself you have no life unto yourself and you have a disposition for discipline believe that that's him, and if it's not he'll be quick to

check, and until he will, do it it's a wonderful freedom from religious self-consciousness debating should I, shouldn't I, is it god, is it not if it's in your heart, and your life is christ, it is god okay so we bless the lord, thank him for tonight, and that because it issued out of his life, it will now return to him void and where we need it, as they

hammer upon the rock where our our self-esteem, our identity is rooted so much yet out of our own natural life and ability and we're loath to relinquish God of course, what will be the alternative if his life is not revealed that we'll be willing for the suffering of the death out of which the life comes so lord we make that a prayer thank you lord, let your word be as a hammer upon the rock, you know the death of this intractable self-life all the more powerful when it becomes religious, and yet even more powerful than that when it becomes spiritual and impressive and with all the less reason to forsake it, we want to succeed on that basis, and serve you on that basis, and it's enough to keep us from the expressions of your life that eclipses anything that could have come out of any

human virtue of our own so my god, this is a radical faith, and how dare we take the word apostle to our lips, or apostolic fellowship apostolic reality, apostolic witness, if it is not out of this life come and show us my god, where we have fallen short of it, fallen short of the glory because of a greater concern for our own esteem our own acceptance, so we bless you lord, for the provision that you've made, not a bed of nails of self-denial that's phony, but the cross, the power of death that you experienced in full that we in union with you in baptism, can die to that very thing that doesn't want to give up the ghost, and therefore be raised with you to a newness of life that is altogether other so this is the heart of the heart of the heart of the heart of the mystery of the gospel

of the faith and we ask my god that it might be an appropriation tonight, in a depth of reality that eclipsed anything we have previously understood and for which we have been willing we bless you lord my god in your jealousy for us, in what you have made available for us through your suffering unto death nothing less would have saved us my god from the depths of this human and intractable thing so we bless you you are a great god, you have emancipated us and given us a realm of union with yourself thank you lord come, let these children taste of it and be spoiled not in the great moments, but in the ordinary moments that you are there in resurrection enablement, and grace and sweetness of spirit, and wisdom and all the fullness of the godhead bodily in any situation that comes up if we

would but trust and your life would be revealed so we thank you lord, put a seal on this night that it would not be an exaggeration to say yes, everything till now was preparation for this and put a seal on it that it shall not dissipate away where to proceed from this? we don't even know but god who has brought us this far will continue he is the alpha and the omega of our believing and so we bless you lord, what love toward us what jealousy so insistent lord thank you for what is ultimate thank you my god we receive your jealousy we bless you for the provision thank you my god be glorified in the church by christ jesus world without end from all nations in thy precious name

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