

From the Alley to the Highway

by Bruce Frye

The sermon is about the speaker's journey from self-sufficiency to finding true meaning and purpose in life through faith in Christ.

Duration: 33:05

Scripture: Psalm 40:3, Matthew 6:33, John 3:3, Acts 16:31, Romans 10:9, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 1 John 5:13

Topics: "Testimony"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker, Bruce Frye, shares his personal experience of feeling empty and unsatisfied despite his success in the music industry. He recalls watching a movie where a character died without any mention of receiving Christ or being saved, which deeply affected him. This led him to cry out to God and seek a change in his life. Eventually, at the age of 43, he was saved and delivered from his previous lifestyle of drugs and alcohol. The speaker emphasizes the importance of a changed life as a testimony to God's power and encourages others to trust in the Lord.

Transcript

I want to give a warm welcome to Evangelist Bruce Friday's family. Do that. God bless you, brother.

Welcome to Franklin Road. It's just an honor to be here today and be able to share with you what Jesus Christ has done in my life. And I look across the congregation and I was looking at some faces that I know and some that I see, and that brings me comfort today.

It's going to help me this morning. So before I start, I have to sing a song for you. I'm just going to sing one that I wrote for our Lord for Easter a couple years ago.

It's simply called, The Cross. And you know, I know that many, many people look at the pictures of Jesus Christ and I don't think any artist yet has drawn a picture that really shows what happened on the cross. I've yet to see one to this day.

And, you know, because you see the pictures of the cross where Jesus is up there and a little trickle of blood here and a little trickle of blood there and a little around his brow, but it wasn't like that, not according to the Bible. He was beaten beyond recognition, the Bible says. And the Bible even says that when people saw it, they turned their face from the sight of it.

The Bible says in the book of Psalms, when Jesus looked down, that he could see his ribs hanging out, mercifully unbeaten. He was tired, he was hungry, he was thirsty, he was dehydrated. And, you know, I heard a man say one time, he said, Bruce, I work with Rock of Ages prison ministry sometimes, and he said, Bruce, have you ever heard that saying, that if you were the only person on the planet, Jesus Christ would have left heaven and came down here and died just for you alone? I said, yes, sir, I've heard that.

He said, have you ever thought about this? If that were possible, if that could happen, not only would he come down here and die for you, but you would have been the one to spit in his face. You would have been the one to pull the hair out of his beard and out of his head. You'd have been the one to put the crown of thorns on his head and beat it on there with a reed and a rod.

You'd have been the one to whip him with the cat of nine tails and rip the flesh off his body. You'd have been the one to nail him on the cross. You'd have been the one to take the cross and drop it in the ground and all his bones come out of the joint.

You'd have been the one to watch him suffer and watch him die. You'd have had to be the one to take him down from the cross, prepare his body for burial, and on and on I could go. But I just want you to listen to the words of this song that I believe God inspired me to write.

It's called The Cross. Jesus Christ was born to die The die He did for you and I He gave His life so we could live God's only Son, His greatest gift He came to do His Father's will He bore our shame on Calvary's hill That through His blood we might be saved A promise from His word He gave The cross, the cross where my Savior died I can still see the tears in His mother's eyes Bloody and beaten He was crucified For a sinner such as I For a sinner such as I Like a lamb the slaughter was laid From His lips not a word was said To a thief hanging there by His side Today you'll be with me in paradise And He revealed that I was lost So I knelt at the foot of the cross Saved from the death of my sin For by grace I am born again The cross, the cross where my Savior died From the grave He has risen and He is alive Jesus said it is finished, God said it's enough For a sinner such as I For a sinner such as I I want to share a verse of Scripture with you before I start this morning.

In the book of Psalms in chapter 40, the third verse says this And He hath put a new song in my mouth Even praising to our God, many shall see it and fear And shall trust in the Lord Many shall see it What is it they're going to see? They're going to see the miracle of a changed life How God all the way from heaven can reach down here And stir the heart of someone like Bruce Fry And change him from what he was And make him to what he is now And I want you to know, as the pastor said, you know I was saved when I was 43 years old And I had lived a life In the middle of the music business Rock and roll and country music Drugs and alcohol, the whole bit And God saved me and delivered me from all that And some of you here may have never taken a drink in your life You can sit right now and bow your head and thank God That He kept you from that But I thank God that He saved me from that And I just want to pray and ask God to help me right now Father, God in heaven, I need your help right now I can't do anything without you I need your power upon my life Father, I thank you for each and every soul that's here today And I pray that you'd use me to speak to the hearts Especially of your people And then again of those who may not be your children I pray if there'd be anybody here lost, Father Something I would say would spark their heart Make them realize they need you And they need salvation And I'm asking you to help me now, Lord And I know you will And I love you and I praise you in Jesus' name Amen I want to share a couple of quotes with you before I start There's a...

I've been reading a book about a fellow by the name of Stonewall Jackson For those of you that don't know He was a Christian man And one of the reasons I knew he was a Christian man Because I wasn't three chapters in the book And I found this quote in there And I haven't forgotten it since Because one of his soldiers saw that No matter where he was, he was comfortable And this soldier didn't understand it Because, see, he saw something different about Stonewall Jackson And he didn't know what it was And what it was was God And his soldier came up to him and asked him He said, I just don't understand you There's just something different about you How can you just be so comfortable no matter where you are?

And Stonewall Jackson said this, I love it My religious belief teaches me to feel as safe in battle as in bed He said, God has fixed the time for my death I do not concern myself about that Those words came from a man who knew where he was going when he died He had no question about it And another man, I heard your preacher mention his name last night Billy Sunday Billy Sunday said this He said, I'm so sure that I'm going to heaven when I die That I would grab hold of a rotten grapevine And swing across the pit of hell singing Blessed Assurance all the way Now that's sure, that's 100% I'm not worried about it, sure Or North Carolina, I ain't worried about it, sure Amen And I'm here today to tell you that I'm so sure that I'm going to heaven when I die If it were possible I know it's not, Billy Sunday's in heaven now But if it were possible, I would be willing to grab hold of the leg of Billy Sunday As he grabs hold of a rotten grapevine And I'd swing over the pit of hell singing Blessed Assurance with him And my question to you this morning Are you so sure about where you're going when you die?

If it were possible, would you grab hold of my leg As I grab hold of Billy Sunday's leg As he grabs hold of a rotten grapevine Could you swing across the pit of hell singing Blessed Assurance?

Or maybe you have a hint of doubt And maybe you're scared to death that you'd fall in the pit It's my prayer today, if you're not that sure That before this day is over, you'll be that sure The very first verse I learned to quote after I got saved was 1 John 5.13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God That ye may know ye have eternal life And I know and I want everybody else to know But there was a time when I didn't know And I'm going to start back from the very beginning When I was a little boy I grew up And my mom made sure that My brothers and I went to church Sunday school every Sunday As a matter of fact I don't want to lie to you, I can't remember It was either 8 or 9 years in a row I never missed Sunday school or church I had the Sunday

school pins to prove it My brother did too And he, like me, we both said at one time in our life We could have had all those pins on Standing there proud as a peacock And jumped into the water And the weight of them would have carried us to the bottom We would have died and gone to hell just like that Because a Sunday school pin doesn't get you to heaven When I was 13 years old All I ever wanted to do My whole life, all I ever thought about being Ever since I was, as long as I can remember I wanted to be a star I wanted to be the next Elvis Presley of this world I wanted everybody to know who I was And I wanted everybody to hear me sing And before I even had a guitar I would take a stick and a piece of string And I'd wrap it around my neck And I'd close the door of my bedroom And turn the

music up wide And I'd stand in front of the mirror And I'd sing to myself And pretend there were thousands of people out there Listening and clapping and hollering my name And later on in my life That became a reality for me I no longer had a stick hanging around my neck I had a guitar And people were screaming and people were yelling And although that was a great feeling I'm not going to lie about it But it didn't last And no matter how big I got How much money I made Or how many people knew who I was It was never enough I just couldn't seem to get satisfied There was always something missing So when I was about 13

years old My mother thought it was time that I join the church You know a lot of churches Aren't like your fundamental Baptist churches Where you have to be saved and then

baptized And then join a church They've got it all out of order When I was 13 years old My mother gave me a little gospel tract to read And it was about a 12 year old boy Who had given his life to Christ And after reading that tract I got very emotional I remember going to my mom in the kitchen She was washing dishes And I said, Mama I think I'd like to do what this little boy did And she said, Okay, I'll call the preacher And have him come by and talk to you A few days later the preacher came by the house And we went into the living room And I don't remember a lot about it I remember being scared to death I remember crying a lot I guess I said a prayer I do not remember But the next time I went to church They called my name I went forward I was baptized And I was added to the membership

of the church But I want you to listen to me I was not saved I was not truly born again I made an emotional response and stuff But there was never any change in my life after that I wasn't a terrible kid I was a rebellious kid as a teenager But the thing about it was After I did all that I never had a desire to read this book I never had a desire to go to church I went right back to being the same old boy That wanted to be a star I didn't care anything about telling anybody about Jesus Or anything like that And so for all my life I lived Not all my life But up until I was 43 years old I trusted in a prayer That I don't even remember saying as a boy To get me to heaven I trusted in a baptism And I trusted in a church membership And trusting in all three of those things I would have died

and gone to hell Because it's not about something that you do It's about what He did And I never truly trusted Christ And Christ alone So I just lived my life thinking that I was supposed to be a star And doing what I wanted to do And when I wanted to do it I left home when I was 17 years old Because I hated authority And you know if I would have truly been born again Truly been saved God would have dealt with me about my rebellion But He never did because He didn't live here And so I just kept on being rebellious And I didn't want anybody telling me what to do And so I just went on my own way Did my own thing In North Carolina I was living there for a while And doing really well in the music business Making a lot of money And I started a band I moved to Raleigh, North Carolina Started a

band there And we started going We opened up for all the people from Nashville That would come through town That would come through Raleigh And then we started branching out And going to the other states And things were going really well But no matter, like I told you before It just wasn't enough for me And so I told my band members I said, you know what guys I know we're making a lot of money We're having a lot of fun What we thought we were having fun at the time Because sin is fun for a season But I said, it's just not enough for me I want more So I left everything that I was doing in North Carolina My band and everything And I moved to Nashville, Tennessee I wanted the record deal I wanted the buses I wanted the fame, the fortune I wanted it all And so when I got here I thought as

soon as I got to town Everybody would know Bruce Frowell was in town And then I'd get a record deal just like that But it didn't happen just like that I realized that I had to get in line And back of a lot of people that had been there Been here in Nashville a long time before I got here But I did everything that I thought I could do And for almost ten years I was here I knocked on the doors I did songwriter nights I did showcases I did everything that I thought that I should do To get a record deal But I kept getting turned down And I know now that that was just the grace of God in my life Because I believe now If I'd have got a record deal I'd be dead right now I wouldn't be here telling you this But what happened was that God started doing some things in my life I had come to the point

where I had done Everything that I thought I could do to get a record deal And I didn't have one I had MCA, RCA All the big dogs came to see me And they all were saying the same thing Well Bruce, we enjoy you We think you're pretty good and everything But just not what we're looking for right now And I remember I just got so discouraged To the point That one night I had a little apartment down there off of Harding Place And I used to talk to myself in my bathroom mirror all the time And I walked in my bathroom And I looked in the mirror And the tears were streaming down my face And I didn't know what to do I didn't have a record deal It didn't look like I was going to get one At that point in my life And I remember looking in that mirror And looking at myself And I said, Bruce, what are

you doing with your life?

What are you doing that's going to matter Ten thousand years from now? And I answered myself I said, nothing I can think of And so I left that mirror Left that bathroom And went in my bedroom And I got down on my knees And I said one of the most sincere prayers I can ever remember saying as a boy But I looked up and I said God, I'm miserable And I don't know what to do I said, I thought that you gave me my talent So that I could be a star I said, if that's not it Why am I here?

What is my purpose? What am I supposed to be doing if that's not it? And I was serious when I talked to God that night First time I've been serious with Him in years Because, see, I always believed in God I always believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God I believed that Jesus Christ was God I believed He left heaven, came here, died on a cross And after the third day rose again according to the Scriptures I believed all that But there's a verse in the Bible, James 2, 19 Thou believest there is one God Thou doest well The devils also believe and tremble So I had it here But I didn't have it here See, there was something missing But after praying that prayer that night I slept And when I woke up the next day I went to the store And I bought myself a Bible And I started reading it And the more I read The more I realized what I needed to do And I knew what I needed to do But I still wanted my record deal I wanted to hold on to the life that I was doing So instead of doing what the Bible says Turning from my sin and turning to Christ I made me a list I said I'm going to quit cussing I'm going to quit drinking I'm going to quit the drugs I'm going to quit the partying I'm going to quit this I'm going to be a good person See, I was trying to work my way to God And the Bible says Not by works of righteousness Which we have done But according to His mercy He saves us For by grace are you saved through faith And not of yourselves It's a gift of God, not of works But I was trying to work my way to God And no matter how good I tried to make myself I never got there doing that And so I started asking people questions I started with my band members first I went up to them individually Each one of them And I said Where do you think you're going to go when you die?

And every one of them said something Similar to this I don't have any idea What are you asking me for? Only God knows that Nobody knows that Just do the best you can That's what I say And every one of them said that to me And then I started asking the people That came to my shows People that I knew That had been coming to hear me sing for 20 years I'd walk up to them I said where do you think you're going to go when you die? I was making everybody uncomfortable Everybody And nobody had answers for me And even before I got ready to sing I'd walk up to the microphone And I'd look out at the audience At the clubs that I was playing in And I'd look at them And right before I started the show I'd say look I know you paid your money To come and hear me do a show tonight And I'm going to give you the best show that I can give you I'm going to do the best that I can do for you But I want to tell you something There's something going on inside of me And I don't know what it is And I don't even know why I'm telling you I just want you to know And then I'd do the best show that I could But at the end of the night I was just miserable While I was on stage I was miserable When I was by myself I was miserable When I was with people I was

miserable And I didn't know what was going on And then God started doing some things He allowed me to meet Hank Williams Jr.

In a bar in downtown Nashville In Printers Alley one night And this club, this particular club I used to go there when I was depressed Just to be alone Just to go and sit and drink Just to be by myself And this particular night Hank Williams Jr. came in And I was up on stage The guy that, there was a house band there And the guy, he said I want to go hang out with Hank Why don't you get up and sing for a while And I said okay So I got up there and was singing a little bit Next thing I knew Hank got up on the stage Started singing with me And then when we got off the stage I sat down with him at the bar Talking to him face to face And here's a man that had everything I wanted He had the record deal He had the houses The buses The fame The fortune All of it And I saw the tears streaming

down his face And as I talked to him I said man, he's just as miserable as I am And God never let me get over that And not long after that The man that owned the club that I was playing in Many of you probably heard about it It was Skull's Rainbow Club He was murdered one day And I went to his funeral And I'd already been reading the Bible I already knew the truth And I'll never forget that funeral As I was standing there in the back And some of the words that were said at his funeral Like he was not a religious man Not a church going man But he was a good man Did a lot of nice things for people And I was just weeping uncontrollably back there I said man, you know That's not going to get it And you know I didn't want to judge my friend I didn't know Maybe he made a profession of faith

before he died I didn't know I hope so But I remember as I threw dirt on his grave As I walked by I wondered where he was And I wondered for the first time in my life More than any other time in my life Where I was going And then I remembered That I had a brother Back in North Carolina Who was a youth pastor Had been a youth pastor for many years And I knew my brother was a Christian I had seen his life change He got saved back in 1977 But what I didn't know Was that every day my brother was going out behind his house in a barn And getting on his knees And crying out for God to save my soul I didn't know that his church family was praying for me I didn't know that everywhere my brother Sammy went to speak Around the country That he was asking people to pray I still meet people today Who

say I prayed for you boy And I thank God for the prayers Especially the prayers of my brother My brother cared about me so much to do that for me So I called Sammy on the telephone And I asked him some questions And he had the answers from me From this book He had the answers And then one night I used to play at a club in Wintergreen, Virginia It was a ski resort And we would get there on a Tuesday night And we'd play all the way through Saturday And usually when I got there Our lifestyle was such That we would arrive there We'd set up our equipment Take us a couple hours And then we'd go get showered up Come back And we'd play for four hours And we'd party all night Sleep all day And do it It was a circle that we were in It was a lifestyle But I wasn't doing that this time Because I had

this book I was still trying to play the same music And do the same things And it was getting harder and harder for me I didn't like the songs I was singing anymore For some reason I wasn't enjoying it like I used to And that whole week When I would get through singing I'd go back to where we were staying I had a room by myself And I'd shut the door And I'd read my Bible And I'd pray And I was asking for God to help me To be a better person And to do the right thing And I was doing pretty good all week And Friday came And I had to go to bed early Because a friend of mine Was getting married in Raleigh, North Carolina Which was about three and a half hours From Wintergreen, Virginia And I got up Saturday morning And drove there And sang at his wedding And after that wedding was over The

preacher that did the wedding Walked up to me And he said, Bruce, I enjoyed your song today Can I ask you a question, son?

And I said, Yes, sir He said, Have you ever been saved? Have you ever been born again? And I was honest with him I said, No, sir, I have not I said, But I'm really trying very hard to be And he said, Well, let me tell you what happened to me And he was a musician God had saved him And God had called him to preach And he had started a church in Delaware And he had flown down there to do that wedding I believe God sent him for me And all the way back Three and a half hours Back to Wintergreen, Virginia I thought about everything he said I thought about everything I'd been reading All the things that I'd been doing And that night As we got ready to start our show The guys in the band said, Bruce, you've been here with us all week You hardly spoke to us And you're staying off by yourself And don't you like us anymore?

I said, Yeah, I love you guys But I'm trying to change my life Did you hear what I said?

I'm trying to change my life But you see, I couldn't change my life No matter how hard I tried And that night The next thing I knew I was right back in the middle of the muck and mire That I was trying to get away from The party, the whole thing I woke up that next morning And I was just sick to my stomach Not physically sick Just mentally just sick Sick of it And I went around And woke up all my band members And I said, Guys, pack your stuff I'm gonna take you back to Raleigh They all still lived in Raleigh I took them back to Raleigh My brother had invited me To come and hear him preach On Sunday night In Whispering Pines, North Carolina So I drove them back to Raleigh And then I drove to Whispering Pines And I got there a little late The service had already started And I came in the

back door And my brother didn't know I was there I was sitting way in the back Trying not to let anybody see me And I couldn't tell you to this day What he preached on But I was shaking I was crying And the tears were streaming down my face Then my brother started giving an invitation And he said these words He said, If you're here tonight And you're not 100% sure That you're going to heaven when you die He said, Would you just step out of your seat And come down here And we can open the Bible And show you how you can receive Jesus Christ as your Savior And be born again Into the family of God And I remember I wanted to come down so bad But it was like my feet Were nailed to the floor This was my hometown Everybody knew who I was I was in the newspapers all the time In my mind I felt like

I was Elvis in my hometown And I remember I was talking to my brother Under my breath I said, Oh God, Sammy I can't come forward Everybody knows who I am I'm a mess I'm crying And I'm shaking I can't do it I was too stinking proud To leave my seat And my brother didn't know I was there But he extended the invitation He said, The Holy Spirit of God Is revealing to me There's somebody here That needs to be saved I don't know who it is And I was back there Going, It's me But I can't do it tonight It's me But I can't do it tonight And I remember I was asking I was begging I said, Sammy, stop it Stop it Please stop it I've got to get out of here And finally he realized Nobody was coming forward And my brother said this He said, Well if you're here And you're not sure That you're going to

heaven Would you just raise your hand So I could pray for you My hand went up there in the back And my brother said, I see your hand I'm going to pray for your soul right now And he prayed for me And as soon as the service was over I got out of there And the next day My brother Invited me Before I headed back to Nashville He said, Can we have lunch together Before you leave I said, yeah So I went and had lunch with him And I was the same way I was just shaking and crying And he opened the Bible Showed me the simple plan of salvation But I didn't get saved For nine hours I drove from North Carolina To Nashville,

Tennessee And if it's possible For a human being to cry For nine hours I believe I did And a week later To make a long story short I was in my apartment By myself And I'd come to

the point Where I was so tired Mentally and physically And I just told God I said, I don't mean to be Disrespectful to you Lord But I don't want to think About you tonight I don't want to think About the Bible I don't want to think About church I just want to relax and rest I'd rented a movie And I popped it in And watched the movie And after watching that movie I just got right dead Into the movie And the character in there Was such a nice guy Did all these wonderful things For people And at the end of the movie He died When that video stopped playing And the television went blank I started weeping like a child Like I'd never wept before In my life Because I said You know, if that had been A real person He wouldn't be going to heaven There was nothing in there About him receiving Christ

Being born again Being saved I went there for a while Went in my kitchen And I filled my sink up With tears there And then I went into that bathroom Where I talked to myself So many times And I said Oh Bruce, what's wrong with you?

Are you going crazy? And finally I couldn't stand it anymore And I just went into my bedroom And I fell down beside my bed On my knees And I cried out to God And I don't remember Everything I said But I do remember Saying a few things I said God, I don't understand it all But I'm miserable And I need you in my life I said God, I'm sorry For everything I've ever done That was displeasing to you Would you please forgive me? I said From this day forward I'll go anywhere you want me to go I'll do anything you want me to do If you'll have me And I'll never forget I felt like the Atlas man In the world Just rolled off my back And I didn't know what that was then But I started studying the Bible And I realize now That that was the peace of God Which passeth all understanding And I got in the bed And I bawled up in a little ball Still crying And I said Oh God, I hope I said All the right words to you And I know now It's not the words you say But that you mean them From the depths of your soul And I did that day And people ask me many times Well Bruce, how do you know That you're so sure That you're saved?

And I said Well, I was there When it happened Amen? But I know this When I woke up the next day I wanted to tell the whole world About the decision that I made That was the difference The difference when I was 13 And when I was 43 Is I said a prayer Without repentance And a prayer without repentance Is like a bird without wings It's not going anywhere But I was truly sorry For my sin And I wanted to turn from it And I turned to Christ And He saved my soul And from that day to this day That's what I've been doing Because He changed my life And I want to thank you For allowing me to come And share what Jesus Christ Has done in my life And I want to just Ask you right now To bow your head And close your eyes Just for one minute And I'm going to play you a song Two weeks after I got saved I went back to North Carolina And my brother And his family Took me out And we celebrated My born again birthday party And it was at that restaurant That I told my brother I said, Sammy, you remember A few Sundays ago When you were preaching And you extended the invitation But nobody came forward He said, Man, I'll never forget that night Even his little daughter said I remember that night I kept saying, Daddy, let's go home Nobody's coming forward I said, Sammy, that was me That was back there He said, You're kidding me I said, No, Sammy, That was your brother That was me that needed to be saved And this is the first song That I wrote After I got saved And I'm praying If you're here today And you've never Truly, truly trusted Christ and Him alone Please don't leave here today Without doing that Please don't leave here lost A young man A bottle in his hand Not too long ago That was me Every night Saturday night Dim motel lights Not too long ago That was me That was me Who had strayed Confused and afraid Counting all the calls That was me Kneeling by his bedside Tears flowing from his eyes Not too long ago That was me Jesus

Christ Let him in Forgiving all his sin Not too long ago That was me That was me Who had strayed
Confused and afraid Counting all the calls That was me A friend approached and said I heard you found
the Lord I replied he wasn't lost That was me My Savior wasn't lost That was me

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