

The Purpose of the Cross

by David Ravenhill

David Ravenhill's sermon emphasizes the centrality of the cross in understanding our faith and spiritual maturity.

Duration: 1:18:51

Scripture: Matthew 24:11, Acts 20:28, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Ephesians 5:25, 1 Peter 2:1, 2 Peter 2:1, Revelation 5:9

Topics: "The Cross", "Discernment"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the deeper purpose of the cross beyond just forgiveness of sins, highlighting the need for believers to surrender their lives to God and live for His glory. It warns about the danger of false teachings that can subtly infiltrate the church and lead people astray, emphasizing the importance of discernment and staying true to the true teachings of the Bible.

Transcript

Be with you this morning, this evening. I am a bit jet-lagged and we've only been here a few days, so you know we are from Australia. And the only thing, I'm a little bit disappointed I don't have my children with me.

We have six children and we are travelling California and travelling and sharing God's Word and witnessing and it's a privilege for me to be here. I'd love to share one of our gospel songs that I know a man that was very famous, they called him a king. But he sang this song and I know in you there was a greater king than him.

Who am I that the king should live and die for? When I think of how he came so far from glory Came to dwell among the lowly such as I To suffer shame and such disgrace On Mount Calvary take my place And I ask myself this question Who am I? Who am I? Would be through every answer I may never know Why he ever loved me so That to an old rugged cross he'd go For who am I? When I'm reminded of this I'll leave him Would be through you give to you Life forever The answer I may never know Why he ever loved me so That to an old rugged cross he'd go That to an old rugged cross he'd go For who am I? Who am I? 1990 auditorium packed 1700 people at the vineyard in Anaheim. And the worship had ended and an old man in his 80s came to the pulpit. And I felt, oh, what can this old man say and do in such a young crowd? That day forever changed my life.

Leonard Reagan Hill was there and many consider him to be the greatest apostle of revival of the 20th century. Seldom in the Bible and modern do you have a son that will step into the shoes of a great father and do them justice and show passion and compassion as the father. Last night, as I heard the message that you're hearing tonight in Garden Grove, I was transformed.

His son David, whom I'm getting to know, has a passion and purity and holiness that cleanses the heart. It's a tremendous joy to be here tonight. It's always good to see all the tribes together.

And I don't know what your tribe is, but you're part of a greater family in Garden. And as I said last night, it's always good to meet the rest of the family. Whether you like it or not, those are sisters of mine we may never have met before, but we're redeemed by the same blood and have the same father, going to the same destiny.

And so one day we will have time to sit down and fellowship and really get to know each other. And get to listen. Let's just pray one more time, shall we? Father Henry, acknowledge our need.

Say, Lord, unless you fill the house, we may bring pain. God, we invite you to come by the power of your spirit and do what no man is able to do. Touch lives, transform lives.

Lord, take this word that was inspired when it was first uttered 2,000 years ago and inspire it all over again. Let it be God breathe to me. Father, take us beyond the red of the pills to the spirit that brings life.

Touch each and every one of you, Lord, in Jesus' name. Amen. I want to speak to you tonight on the purpose of the cross.

I think you are mature enough, judging from the crowd, to understand the cross is the very core, the very crux, the very foundation of our faith. Paul says, I preach Christ and Him crucified as a first importance. Not second, third, or fourth, but as a first importance.

In other words, it is a priority, Christ and Him crucified. There is no Christianity apart from the cross. And yet I'm convinced after 30, 90 years now of full-time ministry, that the church really does not understand the reason that Jesus Christ died.

Now, you may feel that I'm being somewhat judgmental. I don't mean to be that way. We have a certain understanding, a certain revelation, if you like, of the cross, but we are missing the dimension.

And I believe that it's because of that missing dimension that the church is in the condition that it's in. The world is in the condition that the world is in. This message was first given to me 38 years ago now.

My wife and I were married. We just celebrated our 38th anniversary. We were married in Minneapolis.

Two weeks later, we drove to New York City and we commenced our ministry with David Wilkerson in New York City. We had just graduated from a Bible school and had a great missionary emphasis. I was sitting one afternoon in the small apartment that we had there in Brooklyn, New York, and I was asking myself this question, Why is the world still un-Evangelized? 2,000 years since the death of Jesus Christ, 2,000 years since the day of Pentecost when the Spirit of God was outpoured, and yet we are still far from completing the task that the church was given to do, to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

And so I began to ask myself, Why? What's wrong? Something is wrong with our message. And I believe it was on the basis of that question that God began, over a period of time, weeks, maybe even months, to unfold what I want to share with you tonight. In chapter 7, at the end of this chapter, Jesus gave a story, a well-known story about two men.

They both built houses. One built on the rock, one built on the sand. And seemingly both houses were identical, at least outwardly, until the storms came.

And one day the rains descended. That is something you don't know too much about here in California, I guess, but the rains came. And as the rains descended, the winds began to blow.

And one of those houses was totally destroyed, the house that was built on the sand. The house that was built on the rock was able to withstand the tempest, the storm, the raging winds and so on. According to Webster, this is the definition of sand I have here right now, Webster's definition of sand.

Loose, gritty grains of disintegrated rock. Loose, gritty grains of disintegrated rock. In other words, there are people who are trying to build their lives on partial truth instead of the totality of God's work.

And I think one of the great tragedies in the house of God is that we are trying to build a gospel on loose, gritty fragments of truth rather than the totality of God's work. That's why, according to James Dobson, 1,500 ministers a month are dropping out of the ministry in America. 18,000 men that have had the call of God and been trained in some Bible school seminary per year are leaving the ministry.

Something is wrong. And I believe it goes back to a failure to understand what it truly means to be born again and to serve again. And so that's where we're going tonight, and I want to begin, if you will turn with me, to the epistle of John.

1 John chapter 2, or 1 John chapter 2, and reading from verse 12. John says, I am writing to you little children. Verse 13, he says, I am writing to you young men.

He also says in verse 13, I am writing to you fathers. John is addressing here three levels of spiritual maturity. He is not literally writing to the children's department, and then to the youth department, and then to me.

He is addressing three levels of spiritual maturity. And he begins by saying, I write to you babies, or I write to you little children, because your sins have forgiven you for his name's sake. That's where it all begins, isn't it? We begin the Christian life when we begin the natural life, we begin as babies.

My father used to enjoy telling the story of the American tourists who were visiting my country, England. Got off their bus, their tour bus, with all their camcorders and gadgets. And here was one of these quaint little British villages with its statues, cottages, and beautiful cobblestone streets.

And the old pub outside, where the well was. And one of these American tourists went up to an old man sitting on the park bench, wanting to find out a little bit about the history of that particular village. And he said, sir, could you tell me, were there any famous people born in this village? The old man didn't even lift up his head.

He said, no sir, only babies. See, nobody's born famous. Nobody's born mature.

We're all born the same. We're born helpless little beings. We're born that way physically, and we're born that way spiritually.

The wonderful thing about child is it has no past. A child may cry for various reasons, but it never cries regretting some act that it committed five years ago, six years ago, because there's no history. And the Bible says, if any man may cry, he's like a new baby.

Old things have passed away, and old things have become new. And so John begins by saying, I want you little children, your sins have been forgiven. There's no greater joy than the realization that we have passed through death and life.

The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, has cleansed us from all sin. Not 99%, but all sin. And where sin abounds, grace is much more abounds.

It doesn't matter how deep you've gone into sin, the blood of Jesus Christ is able to cleanse you. And of course, when you're born in the natural, in a normal home, at least you come into a relationship with your father. And so he says, your sins have forgiven you, for his name's sake.

And he goes on and goes on to say, I've written to you children, because you know the Father. And we come to this wonderful relationship, as the Bible says, where the Spirit of God lives, Christ can inhabit. We're part of a family.

We have a Father that loves us and cares for us and forgives us, and that is there to protect us and nourish us, and so on and so forth. As wonderful as children are, they're pretty useless things. I speak not only as a parent, but as a grandparent.

We have four wonderful grandchildren, who unfortunately have just moved to New Zealand four weeks ago. And we're still trying to forgive our daughter for doing such a thing. But while I enjoy my grandchildren, at the same time, they're not much of a help when they come to our house.

I get to hear my oldest grandson ask if he could help haul the lawn, or drive the tractor, or wash the windows, or help paint, or do the dishes, or anything like that. You know, they're just a constant source of, you know, I need this, I need that. Papa, I need this.

Papa, I need that. Papa, let's go. You know, catching frogs and bugs, or whatever it is, and kids are into it.

And so we need to mature. And of course when we begin to mature, we come to the realization that we have an adversary. That adversary is out to destroy, to undermine everything that God is doing in our life.

And the only way that we can successfully stand is to be strong. The only way you can be strong is to have the Word of God abiding in you. And so he writes to the young man, he says, I repeat, you young men, verse 14.

Because you are strong, the Word of God abides in you, and you have overcome what you want. God wants us to be overcomers. We don't overcome in our own strength.

We overcome in the strength of the Lord. We overcome because the Word of God makes us strong. It is that which grips us, gives us insight and understanding.

And the ability to know how to deal with the enemy without being, you know, consuming his devices and so on. We can put on a full armor of God, and you, I'm sure, are familiar with that. And then he says, I write to your fathers.

And he says, I write to your fathers because you know Him, that He's from the beginning. Now, I have always been somewhat disappointed in John's revelation of what I would consider full of spiritual maturity. You see, we're talking about maturing here.

We're talking about spiritual growth. When you give us a child, we come to be a young man. But we realize we've got to stand on our own two feet, defend ourselves, get into the Word of God, overcome, live a victorious Christian life and so on.

But then we come to that place of being fathers. And he says, I write to your fathers because you know Him, that He's from the beginning. Now, I think I could have done better than John.

I think if I was saying what fathers represented, I would have put something like this. I write to your fathers because, you know, you've memorized the book of Isaiah. You've started 20 or 32 churches.

You've led dozens of people to Christ. You've been on at least a 340-day fast. You know, something that sort of gives a little bit of maturity to it, at least sounds mature, doesn't it? And all he says is, I write to your fathers because you know Him, that He's from the beginning.

To add to the confusion, what is the difference between knowing Him, that He's from the beginning and knowing what he says to the children who know the Father? What's the difference between knowing the Father and knowing Him, that He's from the beginning? It doesn't really seem to say anything different. Well, obviously, there is a great deal of difference. Like I said, my wife and I, she's here on the front row tonight.

We've raised three daughters. They've also raised us. You know how that works.

But for most of my life, I existed for my children's sake. Again, it was, Daddy, do this and Daddy, do that. Daddy, push me down the street.

Daddy, put me to bed. Daddy, read me a story. Daddy, you know, buy me an ice cream.

Daddy, take me to Toy Trust. Daddy, I need a bicycle. As they got more mature, Daddy, I'm off to college.

I need a car. But it was always, you know, Daddy, you just take care of my needs. And so they knew me as a father, hopefully a loving father that provided and took care of their needs.

But I think John is saying something greater here than just knowing God as Father, as wonderful as that is. And he says, you know Him that is from the beginning. In other words, if I were to take three words to describe these three levels of spiritual maturity, the first word would be the word regeneration.

I write to you, children, your sins are forgiven. That's salvation. Salvation is an all-inclusive term that deals with the moment you get saved, the moment we stand in our glorified body before God.

No longer seeing through a glass door, but face to face. That's the whole process of salvation. But the word regeneration, the new birth, being born again.

And then I write to you, young men, the word maturation. They've begun to develop. They've begun to grow spiritually.

But then the word for the father is the word consummation or culmination. The consummation, the tying together. A father sees the beginning of things.

He sees the end of things. He sees the panoramic view, if you like. The reason a father disciplines his child or his children is because he sees beyond the immediate.

The reason a father begins to set money aside is one day he wants to provide that child with a college education and so on. He looks ahead. That child lives in the immediate.

A father sees the end, the beginning. And one of John's favorite expressions is this word beginning. John uses it more than any other writer in the New Testament.

He writes the Gospel and the beginning was the word and the word was with God. He begins his epistle, that which was from the beginning. Which we've seen in the book of Acts and Matthew concerning the word of truth.

The book of Revelation he talks about the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. And John has got this word beginning, if you like, lodged in his mind. Now I've said all that to say this.

We will never understand the cross until we understand the beginning of things. Let me say that again. We will never really understand the cross until we understand the beginning of things.

Let me explain that. The cross is God's medicine for man's sickness, if I can use that analogy. But we need to know what is man like when he is well.

In other words, we need to have something to judge the effectiveness of that medicine by, so to speak. Let me use a different illustration. Let's suppose I demolish this podium.

I take every single strip of wood, the sides off, the fronts off, the shelves inside and so on. And I say to somebody, is there a carpenter in the house? And that person says, I'm a carpenter. And I say, okay, would you put this back together again? Now let's say we take it out of the setting and we put it in somebody's home, in somebody's garage.

And so it doesn't have any connotation of being associated with the church building here. And I say to the person, I'd like you to put this back together. Now, if they've never seen it originally, how are they going to assemble it? Who knows what we will end up with.

We may end up with a coffee table. We may end up with a nice bookcase. We could end up with all sorts of different things because they've never seen it originally.

So how can they restore it to its original condition unless they know what it was to look like originally? Now you see, the problem with the church, I believe, is that we are trying to restore people to a standard we really don't understand. And therefore we need to go back to God's intention, God's original purpose for man. In order to do that, of course, we need to go back to the beginning, which takes us to the book of Genesis, which as you know is the book of beginnings.

And in Genesis chapter 2, we have a picture here of man before he sinned. While you're tuning to that, let me use this illustration. Jesus said, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so the Son of Man must be lifted up.

Now we can look at that in a very sort of superficial way and say, well, Moses made this grace on a serpent, put it on a pole, lifted it up, and when he looked at it, it was healed. Likewise, Jesus was nailed to a pole, a cross, and whoever looks at that will be saved. Or we can sort of go a layer deeper, if you like, and say, well, why was it necessary to have the grace of a serpent in the first place? Because the children of Israel rebelled, they sinned.

They rebelled against the ways of God, the law of God, the purpose of God. And as a result, God was angry at their sin, and he allowed serpents to cut him. And those serpents began to nip at the people.

Moses, as a good shepherd, cried out to God for intervention. And God said, I want you to make a brace of serpent. As soon as you lift up that brace of serpent, whoever looks at it will live.

Now, one moment they were perfectly healthy, normal. They were full of vitality, full of life, full of energy. As soon as sin came in, death, the process of death began to work.

I don't know how long that took to destroy somebody, you know, whether it was a matter of hours or a matter of minutes. They went into death throes, no doubt, and they were convulsed around, and pretty soon they were just blinded. But death was at work.

But as soon as they looked at that brace of serpent, that very moment life coursed through their body again. Sickness was taken out, and they were once again restored to a place where they were before. They were healthy, they were normal, they were full of energy, and so on.

Even so, Jesus said, the Son of Man has to be lifted up. In other words, the cross then is to bring us back to God's original purpose and intention. So here in Genesis 2, this is what man looked like before he sinned, before he rebelled, before he disobeyed God.

Let's look. Verse 15. And the Lord God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and to keep it.

Now there are three words that are used there, and it's those three words that I want to look at. I say they're used there, at least the implication is there. The first one is the word submission.

The second one is the word vocation. The third one is vocation. First of all, submission.

The Lord God took the man. In other words, when God created man, he was totally compliant, totally subservient, totally submissive to the worship of God himself. So much so, that God was able to take him.

The Bible doesn't give us the details, but it was like a cat picking up a kitten by the strut of the neck, I don't know. But it doesn't say that man objected. It doesn't say that man resisted.

It doesn't say that there was a fight going on. We don't have, you know, pedobots all the way across the horizon doing man objecting, trying to resist God. Saying, God, I don't want to do that.

No, man is totally compliant, totally submissive. So the first one is the word submission. The next one, the word vocation.

God said to man, I'm going to place you right here. In this case, of course, it was down at Eden. He doesn't give man options.

He doesn't give man choices. He doesn't say, I've got a variety of places. You know, I'll give you a sort of exam to see what your aptitude is.

Maybe you've made a good horticulturalist. And if so, I've got this magnificent garden. On the other hand, maybe you've made a good photographer or artist.

And I've got this beautiful condo on the beach with these magnificent sunsets you can paint all day long. No, he doesn't give man a choice. He says, this is where I want you.

And he places it in the, if you like, the divine location that God planned for man. And then in that location, he reveals his vocation. This is what I want you to do.

I have a calling upon your life. In this case, I want you to look after the garden. I want you to cultivate it yourself.

Now, I am convinced that if we understand the cross correctly, that God is wanting to reach into your life and my life at any given time without, number one, any objection on our part, without any resistance, where we are totally and completely yielded to the lordship of God. And so he can take us and he can place us in the geographical place of his choosing. Whether it's California, whether it's Indonesia, whether it's China, whether it's Africa, wherever it may be.

And then in that place, you feel why he's placed us there. You're here for my purpose. You're here to fulfill my will.

You're not here for your own pleasure. Yeah, because I placed you here because I've got a calling upon your life. Now, that was banned originally because we're going to look at a number of scriptures.

And what we're going to do is we look at these in Colossians chapter one. We're going to try and get into the mind of God, the understanding of God. This is important.

We're laying a foundation as to why God created man. And so we need to find out from the word of God what the word of God says. Colossians 1 verse 16.

For by him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities. All things have been created by him. Let's pause there for a moment.

I trust you don't have a problem with that. I have never questioned the fact that God's word is true, that the Bible says, by faith we understand the world is made by the word of God. It takes far more faith to believe that some of the believers billions of years ago, you know, went through this temple office over and over and over and they split it into a billion different species and so on and so forth.

But I think all of us would freely acknowledge the first part of this verse. But then notice how that adds a very significant couple of words. All things were created by him and for him.

Now this gives us a perspective. It gives us a reason. You see, God did not just simply wind up this toy, so to speak, called the planet Earth, you know, like some old, you know, wind-up mechanism and just sort of sit there and let it sort of spin.

I say, you know, I'll be back in a couple of thousand years more and I'll check out and see how you guys do it, you know. No. There was a purpose behind it.

All things were created by him and for him. And that now all of a sudden makes it very personal. It deals with your life, it deals with my life, with God's creation, but he had a specific purpose in creating you.

You were created for himself. Revelation chapter 4 and verse 11. Worthy are thou, O Lord, and our God, to receive glory and honor from power, for thou didst create all things.

Once again, it's an adoration. Lord, you are the creator of all things. But then he gives us a reason why.

Thou didst create all things, and because of your will they existed and were created, the King James says, and for your pleasure they were created. In other words, God created us with his pleasure in mind, with his will in mind, with his purpose in mind. And so once again now, this becomes very personal.

I am being created for the will of God, for the pleasure of God, for the purpose of God. We then know it from Hebrews, along these sacral lines. Hebrews 2. Verse 10.

For it was fitting for him, speaking of Christ, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things. Let me put it in the order of the other verses. It was fitting for him, through whom are all things, and for whom are all things.

In other words, he is the author of everything, but not only that, we are being created for him. Through whom and for whom are all things. So it's one thing for us to clearly acknowledge, Lord, I am created as you created the heavens and the earth, and your crowning creation was when you made man and the remnant.

I am part of that crowning achievement. But Lord, I was not simply made by you, I was made for you. Not just through you, but for you.

Then we go to the book of Romans. If I said to you, let's quote together Romans 12, verse 1, I dare say that 90% of us at least could begin to quote that verse. But if we back up one verse, and I say, let's begin by quoting from Romans 11, verse 36, chances are 2-3% of you, at the most, would be able to do it.

I'm sure Brother Nichols there would have no problem. But let me read it to you. For from him and through him and to him are all things, to him be the glory forever.

Amen. Now here is this wonderful revelation that John, or Paul has rather. He says, from him are all things.

In other words, he is the source of everything. Everything originated from God. All things are from him, but not only that, all things are through him.

It's from him and through him. In other words, he sustains all things. He holds together all things by the word of his power.

The Bible says, we live, we move, we have our very being. So he not only created all things, he sustains, he keeps everything together. And so not only is it from him and through him, but it is also to him are all things.

Not some things, all things. Therefore, and what I use as a teacher, are chapter divisions. So let me follow through with the way Paul says it.

From him, through him, and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Therefore I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you give back to God your body, which is from him, which is sustained by him, which belongs to him, as your reasonable offering of worship.

You see, when you tie it together, all of a sudden it's got a greater fullness to it, doesn't it? You see, you came from God. You are part of his creation. You are sustained by him.

Therefore, you belong to him. And the least you can do, once you have that revelation and that understanding, is to give back to him that which you created for his pleasure. That's what Paul was saying.

One printing of chapter 8. Paul can't seem to get away from this revelation. In verse 6 he says, Yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we exist for him. One Lord Jesus Christ by whom are all things, and we exist through him.

Notice once again, it is from him, it is through him, and it is for him that are all things. He turns it around a little bit as far as the order, but nevertheless the essence of the same thing that we read about in Romans 11 is still there. It is from him, it is through him, it is to him.

You see, this revelation is sort of one of the great revelations to judge every new window. Is it from him? Is it through him? Is it to him? You take the prosperity message that is very popular today. Is it from God? Yes.

Riches and honor come from the Lord. Is it through him? Yes. He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing, every material blessing we find in Christ Jesus and so on.

Is it to him? No. Most of the time it terminates in man, 99% of the time. It is from him, it is through him, but it is not back to him.

It works like this, if you give me \$10 for my ministry, God will give you a hundred. It is not back to him. Now Paul, of course, has the full revelation and he says yes, it goes back to him.

If we really understand it correctly, he gives seed to the soul. He gives back to you a hundred grains. You give ten, you get back a hundred.

But now you've got a hundred grains to sow again. My father, I'm diverting a little bit, but I have to tell you the story. My father was, while he was a hellfire preacher in a lot of ways, he also had a great sense of humor.

And he told the story about a man who was testifying about his journey from rags to riches. He said it all began when he was a little boy, 10 or 12 years of age, going into depression. And he had accumulated about \$4, and in those days \$4 would buy you a good bicycle, I guess.

He was planning on buying himself a bicycle. The problem is he made the mistake of going to church on Sunday morning, or Saturday, and gave us a missionary talking about the needs of the mission field. And he was begging for money in order to accomplish this task.

And the little boy felt, you know, like a millionaire when he heard about all the needs. And so he gifted him to his \$4, took \$0.25 out of it in the offering. The missionary, of course, kept on talking about the starving natives, the nationals, all these poor children and so on.

Again, he felt guilty, and so he reached him and he put another \$0.25 in the offering. The missionary kept on talking about the needs, and again he began to squirm. Finally, he came under conviction.

He took the rest of the money and he put it in the alphanumeric. And he said, I want you to know, God has honored me over and over and over again because of that. And he says, today I am a multi-millionaire.

And, of course, the crowd erupted. You know, all clapped and so on. Isn't God great that He would honor the faith of a little boy? And now, here he is, a multi-millionaire.

Of course, everybody was deeply impressed, apart from one little old lady sitting on the front row. And after the crowd, the applause died down, the little old lady said, in just an audible whisper, I dare you to do it again. You see, that's what it's really all about.

It is from Him and through Him and to Him, all things. But you see, so often it terminates you in man, doesn't it? And any doctrine that terminates in man, something is wrong because you don't have a full revelation. And so that's why Paul says, I beseech you now, brethren, give back to Him your body.

Oh, not your sin, your body. Now, we have taken a little bit of time to look at the foundations, to try and get into the mind, the understanding of God as to why He created us. And we know, of course, for a period of time, how long, we're not exactly sure, that man had fellowship and intimacy, communion with God.

There have been hundreds of years. We read it, of course, so, you know, creation happened, and then the next day man sinned. Not necessarily.

The Bible says, in the day that we descend off, our sins shall be died. And man began a day until his thousand years. He never quite made it.

But it could have been hundreds of years where he had intimacy, fellowship, and then one day, of course, the heavenly came along, and he was deceived, and we know the rest of the story. But man chose to disobey. Man chose to rebel against God's authority over his life.

And Isaiah 53, verse 6, summarizes man's condition where it says, Oh, we like sheep have gone astray. We've turned everyone to his own way, meaning, of course, we said, God, I don't want you any longer as my Lord and my Majesty. I don't want you dictating to me or telling me how to run my life.

I don't need your wisdom. I don't need your understanding of things. I'm a big boy now.

I think I can cope for myself. I'll see you around. I'll go smack the prodigal.

Now that you've blessed me, I'm going to go off and go to my country. And man turned against my sheep and went astray. Now we come to the cross.

The cross, of course, is to bring restoration to man's condition. Now, before we look at these persons together, I want you to give a moment. I want to share a demonstration.

I've shared it all over the world, and no need to change it. But let's assume that my wife and I have just been married for one year. We just celebrated our 38th wedding anniversary in August.

But by way of illustration, we've been married one year. Let's say that when we got married, we had a number of debts. We have determined between ourselves that we are not going to invest in any sort of luxury item until we've paid off our debts.

We feel an obligation to pay off our debts before we accumulate any other things, and so we have this agreement. And so a year has gone by, and we have now successfully paid off all of our debts. And not only that, but we've accumulated \$1,000 between us.

And I said to my wife one day, I said, Darling, you know, we really need our own transport. One of the things we've gone without, we've sacrificed, we've gone without transport. We've been reliant upon friends.

I'm part of a car crew. My wife takes the bus or whatever it is, or the train. So we've gone without our own transport.

And I said, Darling, you know, it's embarrassing, calling our friends all the time, hoping that they'll pick us up, drop us off. They know that's a burden that they need. You know, they've gone more than a second mile, and what do you think? And she says, Well, I agree, but \$1,000 isn't going to get us much.

And I said, I know. But I said, Let's believe that God will do it. You pray.

This is my department. If you pray, you know, I'll go out looking for a car. Now, let's also assume that in the year that we have agreed, we have established together a reputation, a reputation of being Mr. and Mrs. Clean.

Everything about our lives is accurate. We have that reputation. If you come into our house, everything is beautiful.

You know, everything is in order. There's nothing lying around. The walls are always beautifully manicured.

The shutters are always cut. The windows are always sparkling. You know, the drivers always select everything about our house.

And this reputation has been there for months and months and months. Now, with excellent illustration, I go out looking for a car. After looking around for a number of hours, I finally settle on a car.

And for \$999, it's mine. The car is 20 years old, but it seems to be running quite well. It's had the engine restored.

And I drive it home. The problem is, this car is silver. Again, it's got 20 years of accumulated dirt on it.

And so I drive around to the back of the house, and I proceed then to wash this car. I take a really fine can of paint or water, put plenty of salt in it, get some scratches and, you know, glass. And I begin washing that car.

And I wash, and I wash, and I hold it down, and I wash. But there are some things that just won't budge. Some grease and, you know, tar from the road.

And so I get some solvents, and I begin to, you know, dissolve the tar and the buildup of the solvent. And then I come and polish that car. I get some wax, and I begin to just work with that car.

And finally, that car, the luster comes out, and it is a beautiful, you know, metallic group like this. And it sparkles. I do all the chrome work.

I blanket the wheels. Oh, 20 years ago, I almost took the white wall wheels, whatever. But anyway, this car now is a real gem.

I get tackled inside. I take the seats off. I take the vacuum cleaner, and I go over the upholstery numerous times, and then shampoo the upholstery.

Shampoo the seats with the upholstery cleaner. I windex the windows, and offer all the mesh. And after a while, that car is absolutely happy.

If you can run your finger anywhere, there's not a trace of dirt on that car. And then I go into the house. My wife is still in prayer, and I get the kitchen table.

I remove everything off the kitchen table, and I pile on the kitchen table all these filthy rags and sponges, this huge bucket of absolute filthy water. I take the contents of the vacuum cleaner, and I spread the canister open, and I shake out all this fluff, all the table. And here now is this mound of absolute filthy rags, and dust, and dirt, and everything else.

And then I call my wife in prayer. I say, Darling, really excited. Come in here.

Look, look, look. And she comes rushing in, and I say, Can you believe what we got for \$1,000? I mean, this is an unbelievable lot. I get that, and that's good.

I'm so impressed with what we've done. I mean, look at it. Nobody's ever done that much dirt for \$1,000.

Now, obviously, something is wrong with that picture. I did not go to purchase dirt. I went to purchase a car.

The object of my payment had nothing to do with dirt. Well, it had something to do with it. That is, I hate it, and I wanted to get rid of it.

You see, I have a reputation for poverty. I am known as Mr. Clean. And therefore, that car is going to be an extension of who I am.

And therefore, that car has to represent me. Now, imagine if I drive around in the filthiest car in town. People are going to say, You know, those Rangels, they really have school.

You know, everybody thinks they're so clean. Have you seen what Brother Rangel's driving these days? He has got the filthiest car I have ever seen. There goes my reputation.

So therefore, I have to bring that car up to my stand. I have to wash it. I have to cleanse it.

If the car doesn't do the washing, I do the washing. The car can't cleanse itself. But you see, the thing that I am after is the car and not the dirt.

I have no need of the dirt. You see, Jesus Christ is not interested in your sin. He hates it.

The Bible says, As far as the east is from the west. I don't know if this is North, South, East or West, but for you. As far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us.

Another place, one of the minor prophets, he says, He takes our sin. He buries it in the depths of the sea. It was Corrigan who used to say, he puts up a little sign.

No fishing here. Thank God for that. In other words, it's in the sea of God's forgetfulness.

It's the old hemorrhoids. And so, God is not interested in your sin. He hates your sin.

God does not have a sin collection. You know, when there is sort of peace on earth for a good while, which isn't very often. You know, and the Lord is sort of sitting back and having a day off.

He doesn't gather around a few of his cherubim and say, hey guys, you know, why don't you just show me my sin collection? And you know, you reach gently, quietly there. And both times, people have it on you. He says, look, I guess I have to show you this.

I've been collecting sin longer than anybody else. And look, I've got some of the rarest sins in the whole world. See this one here? This is the only one of its kind that I have.

I mean, on eBay, this thing would reach millions. This is the world's rarest sin. It was committed back in the 12th century by an old man up in the mountains of Tibet.

And there hasn't ever been another one. Now, obviously, God is not interested in sin. He doesn't collect sin.

He hates sin. But what he is after, he's after you. Now, with that in mind, let's look at some scriptures.

All these scriptures now deal with the atonement, to use a theological term. All these scriptures talk about the cross. They talk about why Jesus Christ died.

We need a fresh revelation, a fresh understanding. And we need the word of God, faith covered by hearing. Hear it by the word of God.

This is not my bright idea. This is what God's word says about why his son died. Romans chapter 14, verses 7, 8, and 9. Not one of us lives for himself.

No one dies for himself. If we live, we live for the Lord. If we die, we die for the Lord.

Notice who we are, whether you're alive or dead. You are his. And then verse 9. For to this end, or for this reason Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord.

Why did he die, according to that verse? To reestablish his worship. Not to be savior, but to be Lord. Notice he died for this end, for this reason.

That he might be Lord of the dead and living. We are very successful, maybe I say successful, maybe we think successful. Can't teach the gospel today in a very man-centered way.

But the Bible says, whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. If we confess with our mouth Jesus Christ as Savior, oh no, Lord, we shall be saved. See, we need to get back to what the Word of God says, not what man says, not what the multitude of nations says, but what the Word of God says.

He died for this reason. That he might be the Lord of the dead and the living. Then over into the Book of Types.

Now while you're turning to this, let me just say this. From the very moment that you and I were born in an actual self-occupied throne of our lives. We are born into a self-centered world.

And we cultivate that selfishness, don't we? From the moment a baby is born almost, it begins to recognize that he gets on my nerves. A certain cry, there is a certain response. That baby comes into the world and all of a sudden there are aunts and uncles and cousins and mother and father and siblings doing an eye, eye-holing, eye-holing, whatever, kissing and all the other things that go on and gifts arriving.

All of a sudden, you know, it's like the king of the universe. And everybody's having baby nights and so on and so forth. And it enjoys that.

And then, of course, the night coming. Mother lays that little one down and finally he's exhausted and falls asleep. Everybody's been doing their night over it.

Now it's in a darkened room and it wakes up in the middle of the night, doesn't know where it is, and thinks, what on earth happened? You know, it was the king of the universe a few hours ago. And now everybody, you know, seems to have fled. And so it lets out a bell.

And, of course, the mother comes running in, picks it up, turns the light on, turns on the little music machine or whatever it is and walks back and forth once again. It's the center of the universe. And, of course, all of that computes and registers.

And so night after night this happens. And as the Bible says, train up a mother in the way she should go. And when she's old, she'll not be bothered.

And so night after night, mother will not be bothered with her little baby. Now, the selfishness of it. We go to school and we hear about an exam.

And the day comes when our teacher says there's going to be an exam on Friday. Again, our little computer goes off. Those are terrible things, exams.

I've heard about these from my siblings. Wake up that morning and all of a sudden you remember. You've got mail.

You know, exam day. And that little mind of yours now goes into overdrive. You come down to breakfast.

But on the sad looking face, of course, mother's being trained by now. She says, okay, that's fine. You can stay home.

See, we know how to negotiate and get what we want and what we don't want. So on, I don't want to do a test. So I get to stay home.

Miracle of miracles. 30 seconds after the boss departs, there is a supernatural healing that takes place. My man, feel good.

Right now, of course, it's too late to go to school. He gets to swim, jump on the trampoline the rest of the day or something. And so we develop this selfishness.

Now, the problem with that is that when we look at the cross, we look at the cross selfishly. There's a man who opens the cross there. Here's the cross.

And what we do, because we have been trained in selfishness from the moment we were born, when we were 16, 18, 20, we look at the cross and say, what's meant to be? What has Jesus Christ done that I can benefit from? And of course, out of that comes the gospel, as we know. Jesus Christ shed his blood for Christ. So that I will go to heaven.

So that I can have peace with God. So I can have a ransom over the hilltop. Now, I personally don't believe there are any ransoms over the hilltop.

I don't want to shatter your theology. I don't think God's going to throw us all back into boxes up in heaven so we can act independently of one another and so on. You know, there'll be no need to eat up there.

We'll have glorified, resurrected bodies if we do eat up there for pleasure only. So you can eliminate petition, you know. There'll be no marriage, a good marriage.

And no need of rest. So you can eliminate the bedroom for a couple of reasons. There'll be no basements, there'll be no storms and so on.

We're not going to make the move to see a den all day long trying to catch up to the news so you can eliminate the den. So logically, you can eliminate just about the entire house, anything. But, you know, we have this idea, don't we, that all these things are true to us in Jesus Christ.

And of course, that's true. Now, if you look at the cross, I want you to look at the left side. That's man's side of the cross.

What Jesus Christ has done for us. He died for my sins. And I'm going to be forgiven.

I can come into a family of God. The Spirit of God within me can bear witness. I'm a child of God.

I can cry out, Daddy, I'm a father. I'm part of a new family. I have a new destiny.

I have a new nation. I have new brothers and sisters. I'm part of a new kingdom.

Old things have passed away. Old things have become new. I have the peace of God.

I have peace with God. And all of those things must be welcomed. Now, Titus talks about that here in Titus 2. Verse 14.

He gave himself for us that he might redeem us from every lawless deed. Now, let's pause there. In other words, Jesus Christ died in order to forgive us for whatever sins we've committed.

Any act of lawlessness. Sin is a transgression of the law of Christ. So, we are being forgiven.

We are being cleansed from every act of lawlessness, rebellion, perversion, whatever it is. We are being forgiven. That is what happens, of course, when Jesus Christ died.

He's the Lamb of God. He takes away the sin of the world. Now, he's always been Jesus.

He shall save his people from their sin. There's two ways of looking at it. First, we'll look at it in a moment.

But then notice, it goes on that he uses the word, and. He gave himself for us, verse 14, that he might redeem us from every lawless deed, and purify for himself a people for his own possession, zealous for the works. And you see, this is God's final cross.

You see, we fail to understand why Jesus Christ died. In other words, did he just simply die for man's sake, or was there something in it for God? I was in a pastor's office studying, not too long ago, and he had a book that caught my eye, and we had two services that morning, so I had 45 minutes or something between services. And I saw this book, and I went over to his bookcase, and I pulled down what's called The Cross and the External Order by Henry W. Todd.

And I just jotted down, just sort of briefly, out of the first chapter some quotes. This doesn't read the best, because it's bits and pieces, but let me try and read it. It says, The atonement belongs primarily to what, speaking in human fashion, we may venture to call the history of God rather than the history of man.

Its results for man, whatever they may be, is to lead us to some result for God in the way of restoring to him a perfectly ordered world. We cannot understand or write how a divine Christ could be a help to man unless we seek to understand also and primarily how a divine Christ could be a help to God. Now, I don't read all of it.

It goes on to say, whatever the theory, oh, I'm sorry, the theory is just this, to see how the cross moves the world further along towards the fulfillment of God's eternal intention. Now, I wish I could develop all of that, but what I'm saying is this, that the cross is primarily for God, not for man. But you see, we are selfish if we look at the cross from this angle only, man's side, Jesus, you died for my sin.

What a wonderful Savior. And we fail to understand that there is something in it for God. Until we understand what this verse says, and, in other words, add it to our forgiveness, it says, and purify for himself a people for his own possession, sell us with words.

In other words, God died on the cross, a people. Now let me say this, and I hope it doesn't sound irreverent, but using the car again as an analogy, this side of the cross is the car wash. This side of the cross cleanses us, for when we drive through the cross, so to speak, while the blood cleanses on this side, the blood cleans on this side.

Let me say that again. While the blood cleanses on this side, the blood cleans on this side. You see, thou shalt call his name Jesus, and he shall, what, save his people from their sin.

It's his people that he's after. See, we just said the sin aspect. In other words, he's wanting a people.

He wants back what he created. He created us for himself. He went to redeem us for himself.

2 Corinthians 5, and verse 15. Now, I spent, my wife and I, seven years with youthful ambition in the very early days of that wonderful ministry, and it began by sending young people all over the world, knocking on doors, evangelizing. I had knocked on doors down to the Caribbean and down to St. Lucia.

I had knocked on doors from New York all the way to Chinatown, from Halifax, North Scotia, all the way to San Francisco. And I had witnessed to thousands of people, I guess, along with whoever I was with. And invariably, when you knock on somebody's door, you're knocking on somebody's door, and you're knocking on somebody's door, the best single verse of Scripture in the Bible concerning the cross.

Verse 15, He died for all, there's John 3.16 already, the day who live should no longer live for themselves. Let me say it again. Notice why He died.

He died for everybody, the day who live, that's you, that's me, should no longer live for ourselves. You see, before the cross, we were going our own way. All we liked to do was turn everybody around in His own way.

But the purpose of the cross is that that has to die. We should no longer live for ourselves, but for Him who died and rose again on our behalf. In other words, the cross is to radically change your reason for living.

It's to re-motivate you, give you a whole new incentive. I'm no longer living to satisfy and gratify my own desires. I am now living in order to bring pleasure to God.

Paul says, I have as my ambition, whether at home or abroad, to be pleasing to Him. You see, I think there's a lot of what I would call false security in the unconditional love of God. See, God loves us three daughters, isn't that right? My wife and I have three daughters and four grandchildren and I love them unconditionally, doesn't matter what they do.

You know, their grandkids come to my house sometimes and break things and come in with their muddy feet and so on. You know, I still love them. I don't want to deprive them of their bed for the night.

My wife has to deprive them of the meal and so on. But you know, they don't always bring me pleasure. I love them, but they're not always pleasing.

And you see, there is a higher realm that God wants to bring the Church to, and that is the realm of not just the security of His love, but the desire to bring pleasure to Him. That's why the Bible says, this is my beloved Son in whom I walk with. I do only do the things that please the Father.

And we need to learn how to please Him. So once again, He died for all, they who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him. In other words, we are motivated now by self, all of a sudden our whole motivation is to live for Him.

Revelation chapter 5. All of these verses deal with why Jesus Christ died. You'll notice that it's put in there very clearly. He died for this reason, not for this purpose, and so on.

Revelation 5 and verse 9, they sang a new song saying, worthy art thou to take the book and to break the seal, so thou wast slain. There again a declaration of the fact that Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God. There in verses 5 and 6, slain, and so they're glorified, they're magnified, they're singing the song of the Lamb, thou wast slain, and is purchased for God with thy blood, man, from every tribe and tongue of people and nation.

Notice what He purchased with His blood. Sin? Not according to my Bible. In other words, the Son does not come running back to the Father as the Father.

What the hell is sin? Can you believe this God? Have you ever seen so much sin in your life, Father? Aren't you a happy Father to have that much sin? It says He went to purchase with His blood man, from every tribe and nation, and He's made them to be kings and priests. He's got to put up a skin for us. So we've got to see why Jesus Christ died, not just for sin, did this with a grain of salt, but in a sense, the cleansing of sin, in a sense, is a byproduct of the real reason that He came.

The real reason was to redeem for Himself a people. Now, let me give you another verse. Acts chapter 20, verse 28.

Paul addressing the elders of Ephesus, and he says, Be on guard for yourself and for the flock about which the Holy Ghost has made you an overseer to shepherd the Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood. Now what did He purchase? Sin? No, He purchased a people. That's what He purchased.

In other words, when He hung on the cross, He was birthing a company of people His body that He was going to express Himself through, and have His will and His way through their body. And so He purchased for Himself a body. Ephesians 5, loved her.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church, and what? Gave Himself up for her. Why did He die? In order to give birth to something, not just sin. They were saying, keep your wives.

If you go to the Old Testament, Psalm 74, and I'm elaborating a little more than I normally do so that you understand this is not just something that is based in the New Testament. Remember, verse 2, Psalm 74. Remember Thy congregation which Thou has purchased of all.

Now you go back to the book of Exodus, of course that's where we get our time from. In Exodus chapter 12. Exodus chapter 15, sorry.

And it says here in verse 16, Terah and Drek have hung by the greatness of Thine arm their motionless stone until Thine people pass over, O Lord, until the people pass over whom Thou has purchased of all. You see, what did the blood of the Lamb accomplish in the initial pass over? When the blood of the Lamb was shared, Jesus Christ purchased a people, it says. You see, you can't break this typology.

It wasn't sin that He was after. Sin had to be dealt with because we are His representatives. We have to be among His people.

But He is after a people. A people to bring pleasure to Him. Bring forth His purpose of the earth.

Turn with me to 1 Corinthians chapter 6. While you're doing that, let me give you a brief testimony. I was born in Pritchard, Melbourne. My father was a minister for 70 years.

He started Pritchard when he was 17. Died at 87. Good long time.

He was a hellfire preacher. I told people he needed an asbestos suit on the first 5 or 10 rows. I'd been dead in local flames more than I could imagine.

I knew that I was due to a Christless eternity apart from the grace of God. As a child, I grew up wondering, knowing that if I died tonight, I was not saved. I knew even though I was born and raised in a Christian home, I still needed the blood of Jesus Christ.

God suddenly cleansed me that my righteousness was still like filthy rags. But I didn't become a Christian until I was 18 years old. Now, I never got involved in any processes.

I've never slept with a woman apart from my wife, and that was after we were married. I've never smoked a cigarette. I've never been to a dance.

I've never been to a movie. I've never been drunk. I've never even had a drink.

I should be able to smoke a racket. They just have not discovered me yet. You see, I was a good Pritchard's kid.

Now, that's not always the case because there's a lot of rotten Pritchard's kids, but I was one of those good ones. And I had two brothers. I was in the middle of a family of three.

Older brother, younger brother, were both very, very bright, both sort of straight-A students, as we would say. My younger brother, with a PhD, worked at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., up and up with the Rockefellers, wrote books about Oxford Press, made movies for National Geographic, was world-renowned in this particular field. My older brother was a Michelin still is down in South America.

And I was the one that failed in high school. Wrote more maths on my report card on more than one occasion, especially in things like English, for sciences and so on. But I had a gift in the area of art.

I was artistic designer. I wanted to go into the field of fine arts, be a commercial artist, do illustration work, and be creative. And somehow I knew deep down, I don't know how to explain it, but somehow I knew that he was after more than my sin.

He was after me. And of course I was after him. And so from the age of about 13 to the age of 18, hundreds of times, literally hundreds of times, I was shamed of the conviction of sin.

I couldn't even hold it anymore. Knowing that God was trying to draw me to himself and yet refusing to bow to me to his fortune. Now I longed to have peace with God.

I longed to know that I was forgiven. I longed to put my head on the pillow and have the assurance that if I died in my sleep, I'd be with the Lord. But I also wanted to do my own thing.

And finally at the age of 18, in a meeting about three times besides, I came forward long before anybody came to pray for me. My prayer was something like Lord, I'm a sinner and I need a savior. I need your forgiveness, I need your cleansing.

And I'm asking you to cleanse me, forgive me for all my sins. But Lord, I'm not here tonight just to give you my sin. I'm here to give you my life.

And Lord, tonight I surrender all my goals, all my plans, all my ambitions, I lay everything to the altar and I put my hand to everything to you unreservedly. Now I did that at the age of 18. I'm 59, be 60 in a couple of months.

And by the grace of God, I've never held back. Never for a brief second, because that was a major, major milestone in my life. It was not just simply acknowledging Christ as my savior, but making him Lord and Master.

With the full consciousness of what I was doing, I was giving up my way, my plans, my purpose, my dreams, my goals, my ambitions, and I was saying, Lord, from here on out, it's all about you. And that's exactly what Paul did after Damascus fell. He had an encounter with the living God.

What came out of his mouth? The very first words out of his boiling head mouth, even though he was incredibly a religious man, as we know. Lord, what will you have me do? Not simply defend me, but take away my sin. Was he saved? Obviously.

Was he ascended? Obviously. Writing to Timothy, he says, I formerly was a violent aggressor, I was a blasphemer. So he was saved from all of that, but that very encounter on that Damascus road was Lord, and you can't say Lord and at the same time say, I need to do my own thing.

So it's Lord, what are your plans? Screw God's system, get off your feet, go into that town over there, I've got somebody waiting, he'll tell you. I've appeared unto you for this reason. I'm setting you apart.

You're going to take people out of the kingdom of God and send them to the kingdom of God so you're going to suffer and so on and so on. God had a purpose for his life. And the moment he came under that lordship, the will of God began to unfold.

1 Corinthians 6 says, verse 19, do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own. For you have been bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body. Now notice here again is the cross.

What happened when Jesus Christ died, you were bought with a price. What did he buy? Does it say anything about sin in this verse? It says anything about your body. He bought your body, and we are allowed to use his body, not for self-glorification, but for his glory.

You see, it was you that he was after, not your sin. He doesn't want your sin, he hates your sin, he doesn't have a sin collection, he buries your sin, he gets rid of your sin, he's a God that cannot behold iniquity, so he doesn't take any delight in your sin. He does delight in his sin, because you bear his likeness, you bear his image.

You were created again for his glory. And he wants to bring many sons to glory. And so he waits to redeem for himself eight people.

And so you are not your own, you were the object of his suffering, he bought you, therefore this body now is not your body. It's like marriage, we say when we marry people, you know, with this body I worship you. This body now going to the Bible belongs to my wife, the body belongs to me, going to the Bible to the spiritual marriage, this body belongs to her.

It's not my own. And what do I do with it? Act in glorified love, not serve my own selfish ends. Well, I think we've established a trust, enough verses now concerning the cross, let's go into 1 Peter.

Sorry, 2 Peter, chapter 2, and verse 1. And I want us to see now how far we have drifted as we bring this to somewhat a close. You see, the book of Hebrews warns us about drifting. Doesn't it? Some of you are

fishermen, you go out maybe on a nice, classy lake and you are rummaging through your tackle box and putting lures on them and casting and enjoying, you know, the fish that are hiding, if there's a little bit of a breeze you're unaware of, after a while the young guy brings the fish and you look up and you realize, my goodness, look how far we've drifted.

You know, the jetty of the wharf is way over there, not the way we've drifted most of this time. The Bible warns us spiritually about drifting and it's a slow, gradual process. I think another word for what is used in Matthew 24, the love of the Hebrew, wax, coal.

My wife loves candles. I told her if we were Catholics we would have emptied the purgatory single-handedly. But, you know, occasionally I'll blow out the candles, she goes to bed and when the candle's in the house, I blow it out and that wax is blistering hot and, you know, just liquid there, you can blow on it, but I maybe turn out a few lights and make sure the doors are locked so I can come back and touch it and it's still nice and quiet all night.

But I get up in the morning and it's so hot. But it is a process, the love of the Hebrew, what wax, coal. Now, I want you to see now how far we've drifted.

In 2 Peter chapter 2, verse 1. But false prophets arose among the people. Now, I was never very good at English grammar, even though I do have a couple of books at the back there for sale. Thank God for editors.

But this is past tense. At least I was good enough to know past and present tense. False prophets arose.

Peter is saying we have had a problem in the church in times past with false prophets arising, deceiving people, leading them astray. Then he says, just as there will be false teachers among you. So now he is blowing the prophetic trumpet in the right and he is signaling to the church there is coming a day when there will be false teachers coming to the church and they will come in secretly and they will bring with them damnable doctrines or destructive heresies.

I think you can put in brackets to the purpose of God. Now, when something is done secretly, you are unaware that it takes place. My wife and I, this was the beginning and we had a time when there was a number of break-ins in the area where we lived and every single night of course we would make sure the doors were bolted and locked because maybe just a couple of doors down would be great and we had two little children at the time so we would make sure we locked everything up.

I closed it but nothing seemed to be disturbed so I proceeded to close it, went into the kitchen, the kitchen door was open and I realized that we had an intruder. I found out that they cut through the mosquito netting, removed all the moving windows and then came in through the kitchen and locked the doors open for a quick exit. I immediately checked out the kids' room and the kids were safe, thank God.

I went into our bedroom and discovered that there had gone to my left side of the bed and up the table corners virtually about this far below the pillow. We got to bed listening to a tape. Covering my side of the bed and my wallop.

A number of other things were gone but it was all done secretly and we were unaware until it was too late. Now this is what Peter is talking about when we're coming to the church, he says one day prophetically a teaching that will come in secretly. We will be unaware of it and it will bring an end to us even denying the mass for the people.

Video: https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/tJnb_Hlk3Lc.mp4
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-ravenhill/the-purpose-of-the-cross/>

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