

Studies in Titus - Part 3

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the five phases of the divine operation and the nature of genuine repentance in the Christian life.

Duration: 49:35

Scripture: Titus 2:11

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker encourages the audience to memorize a specific scripture passage from the book of Titus. He emphasizes the importance of living a godly life and looking forward to the return of Jesus Christ. The speaker shares a story about a Chief Justice who was convicted of his need for a Savior during a sermon. The sermon also discusses the five steps of the divine operation in bringing someone to salvation and the importance of repentance and receiving the Son of God. The speaker references Galatians 4:4-6 to highlight the adoption of believers as sons of God and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Transcript

On the day when we began this study, I made a suggestion that you memorize the scripture. Were I to give out a free trip to Florida, how many could say you've memorized Titus 2, 11 to 14? I'm glad I'm... Maybe I should say I'm giving out a free trip to Florida to everyone that has. No.

That's marvelous, yes. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Father, we ask that thou wilt illumine our minds and hearts and enable us to lay hold on thy word until it in turn lays hold upon us.

It governs our thinking first, governs our praying, governs our witnessing, our living, every part of our lives influenced by it. May the word have free course and be glorified in us. Thank you that the very Holy Spirit that moved Paul to write so to Titus is here to apply that same word to our hearts.

First to quicken it to us and then to enable us to share it with others. And so to that end, bless we ask our Father for the praise and honor and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

I hadn't realized that I had written on the wall with the unerasable pen, but there it is. These are the five phases or steps of the divine operation when God would bring someone out of death into life. And it's important for you to understand when you're talking to someone for the first time to find out where they are in relation to these five steps.

They're all either saved or unsaved. It's like saying people are married or unmarried. It's a very broad classification.

It's too broad in fact. Here's a person that's unmarried, but tomorrow they're going to have a wedding. And here's someone that's unmarried and they've never had a date, never met anyone.

No interest. Are they both in the same state? No, not at all. And so to talk about saved or unsaved is far too broad a classification.

It doesn't give credit to those phases of God's work that have already taken place. See, that's the thing I'm concerned about when I emphasize this. If you understand how God works, then you know how to work with God.

If you think salvation is nothing more than just a function of the intellect or the will, then of course what I'm saying might not have too much relevance. But if you understand that, as someone has said, salvation is all of the Lord. Salvation is of the Lord.

That's true. But salvation is of the preacher. How can they hear without a preacher? And salvation is all of the sinner.

Because except they repent, they will perish. So it's all of each. Each is responsible.

And therefore you have to understand that there are certain things that God does in response to certain other things that we do. So when you're meeting someone, you ought to ask the Spirit of God to guide you. Is there evidence that this person is awakened? Or are they in that where probably the most of our family are? Just asleep.

The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them. That describes the sleep of death in which most find themselves. Now from that company there are those that have had someone come alongside of them to live Christ before them, to intercede for them, to witness to them.

And the first phase is awakening. And then conviction and repentance. And then that hard faith that savingly unites them to Christ.

And of course then the distinction is that you don't tell the person that says they believe that they're born again. That's a function of God the Holy Spirit. And God the Spirit does that.

He tells them. The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. And how easy it is to say, well why don't you pray this prayer after me? And when they pray they say, now what did you say? Now what is this? And lead them in one or two deductive steps to the point where they say, well now, oh that means I'm saved.

Well they may be or they may not be. One out of two hundred that go through that process give evidence that they're born again a year later. But these people that are dear and precious to you, neighbors and

friends, are you willing to gamble on a one in two hundred odds with something as important as a never dying soul? Are you? In your zeal and earnestness wanting to see someone brought to Christ, are you willing to take a one to two hundred chance that if they follow a certain person that they're going to function? That doesn't mean that out of every two hundred that one is going to be born again.

It may only mean that five out of a thousand or ten out of two thousand. It may be the last ten. So you can't even gamble on one out of two hundred.

So why should we do something that has such terrible odds of failure? Whereas if you say to that person, now this is what you must do, then this is what God will do, and when God has done it, you will know because He will tell you and you will know the same way you know He hasn't up till now, you will know that He has. And when you're sure and you're certain, you tell me. Just a simple little thing from you acting as a Protestant priest coming between a soul and God, or you're letting the person meet God for themselves.

But if you're going to act between them and God, then you're going to have to keep on acting in that role as long as they're alive. If they ever doubt it, they have a right to come back to you and say, you're the one who gave me assurance, now give me another dose. And you can't turn around at that point and say, oh, you've got to meet God.

That's too late. You should have done it here. So there's this out to this point.

It takes long. Seven times we are told. John Bunyan made a profession of faith in Christ before he was born again.

And that's why he was so concerned about it that he wrote Pilgrim's Progress after he'd finally come to reality. Somebody got to him. So it's nothing new.

This isn't something that's just happened in my lifetime or yours. It's been going on quite a while. But if you understand then, you'll understand why I'm so personally so terribly concerned.

I remember I was speaking up at the Canadian Bible College in, I think, Regina, Canada. And a student came to me once and he said, brother, I don't understand. You know, he said, you teach differently than most of the preachers we have come through the school here.

Most of them just are in the stream of present-day evangelism. And now you come along and you tell us something like this. How can you be sure you're right when you're so alone? I said, that's a very good question.

You don't always say that when you're looking for an answer. That's a stock reply. That's a real good question.

That gives you a little time to hunt. No, it was a good question. I appreciate it.

At least he saw there was a difference. And I'm sure most of the people nine out of ten of them didn't even realize they weren't even listening. They weren't aware of the difference.

But he was. Well, I said, there's several things. First, you have to go back and find out is the position, is what you're teaching according to the Word of God? I said, as far as I'm concerned, I'm a coward.

I'm like a little bunny rabbit on the opening day of hunting season. Discovered that the safest place to be is behind a big stump. Because if the hunter is going to get him, he's got to shoot through the stump to get him if he just always stays in the backside of the stump.

And that's the way with me. I'm going to hide behind the Word of God. And if what I'm saying is in accord with the Word, go ahead, blast away.

I'm not paranoid. I'm protected. I'm behind the Word.

If you've got to shoot through it to hit me, go ahead, shoot. That's all right. As long as I'm certain I'm hiding behind the Word.

That's rule number one. Rule number two is the position that you've taken consistent with what the church held in other centuries. In other words, are we walking in the fellowship of the redeemed? Has this position been held by others in other times? Or is this something quite new? Special revelation.

I don't have much time for special revelations. I am not only a devout coward and hide behind the Word, but I also like as much company as I can get. And when I find I'm walking in the company of the writers, the patristic writers, and the people through the ages, then I'm really comforted and consoled.

And then the third thing is if there are some others whom you have reason to regard with respect and confidence who share that position. And this boy up in Canada said to me, well, there's only three others I know of that believe like you do on this. I said, well, who are they? He said, well, A.W. Tozer is one.

Alan Redpath is another. And Stacey Woods of InterVarsity is a third. So just you three guys, I said, that's good enough company for me.

I'm not leaving the... That's our gang. We'll just hang. I wasn't quite aware of it prior to that, but if he thought so, it satisfied me, and it was true as well.

But the point I'm making is if it's a position that is according to the Word of God, according to the history of the Church, and there are those others who hold it, and I might add that the revivals of the 19th century were all based on that. The difference, I think I've told you perhaps many times, but it's important. Ten years after he left Rochester, New York, Lyman Beecher, the brother of Henry Ward Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, became very angry with Charles Finney because Finney had introduced new methods and deserved, therefore, to be defrocked and fought.

Well, he had introduced new methods. Do you know what they were? Mr. Finney invented the anxious section in his meetings in Albany, New York, first as far as I recall. He felt he had to deal with people that were somewhere in here, and so he created in the church auditorium a section, like he would say, this here is the anxious section, and if you are here and you're awakened, you're convicted, you understand your lostness, but you're concerned enough about it to identify yourself, will you come and sit in this section? On one occasion, he was preaching again in Albany at the time, this was about the time, as I recall, this was inaugurated, and he was a lawyer, and the State Supreme Court of New York State met in Albany, held and sat in Albany.

That particular occasion, the whole State Supreme Court had come, and midway in his two-hour message, he was the one who said, don't expect revival if you're too lazy to preach two hours. He said, I've never known blessing come from heaven except in the last 40 minutes of a two-hour message. It

takes an hour and 15 minutes to get the people, whose minds are so cumbered with all the inventions of our modern time, it takes an hour and 15 minutes to even get them seriously think about divine truth.

Anyone who is too lazy to speak two hours need not expect blessing from God. Well, at any rate, in the midst of his two-hour message, a gentleman in the balcony stood up, and he recognized him. He was the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York.

Mr. Chief Justice, Mr. Finney, you have carried your point. I judge myself to be a sinner in need of the Savior of whom you so well speak. With your permission, sir, I shall come to the anxious section and there remain until I have that witness of the Spirit of which I have heard you speak.

Now, for this, Lyman Peacher said he was a heretic. And so his brother, Henry Ward, didn't like Lyman anyway. They'd fought since they were kids.

And Henry Ward said, he is being unfair. I don't like him either, but Lyman isn't fair about that. So Henry Ward got a blue-ribbon panel of people across New York State to go to Rochester and do about a six- to eight-week study of the people that had made professions of faith in Finney's meetings ten years earlier.

And do you know what they found out? Ten years after the meeting was over, eighty-five percent of the people who'd made professions of faith were living consistent for Christ at that time. Now you compare eighty-five percent after ten years to one-half of one percent after two years, and I think you will discover that numerically at least there's a necessity for us to re-examine certain very important principles. Well, we have them here.

At least one set of them, one aspect of them. Because you see, God's purpose in grace is not to fit us up with a premium-paid hell insurance policy. That's not His purpose in grace.

For the grace of God that brings salvation teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. That's what it teaches us. And therefore, there not only has to be justification, there not only has to be a settling of the law obligations and the vindicating of the holiness of God, but there also has to be transformation of the life.

There has to be the impartation of a new dynamic, a new relationship, and new power. Because this person now is to be a new creation, a new person born again. And he is to have a whole new attitude toward life, a whole new walk or conduct in life.

Everything's to be different about him. He's not just to have a different destiny at some future time, to walk as he has throughout time. It didn't say to save us from hell even though we're going to have to sin a thousand times a day in thought, word, and deed.

That's not what it said. It taught us that we should live soberly, righteous. It says the grace of God that brings salvation teaches us that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

Soberly, righteously, godly in this present world. It not only teaches us to, but it teaches us how to. Both are important.

We're not only are taught to, but we're taught how we're going to live soberly and righteously and godly. Well, only on the basis of genuine repentance, which is, as we've tried to point out in the past, not being sorry for what we have done, but a repudiation of the attitudes with which we did that for which we truly

ought to be sorry. The principle of sin is, I'm going to do what I want to do.

And the evidence of repentance is a change from, I'm going to do what I want to do to, I'm going to do what he wants me to do. It's a change of mind, of will, of intention, and of purpose. Therefore, this one who has savingly received the Son of God and as the witness of the Spirit to the new birth, has at this point says, the purpose of my life is to please God.

As a sinner, the purpose of his life or her life was to please self. Now, it's to please God. That's the evidence.

That's the nature of repentance, that change of mind, or will, or purpose from to. Now, on the basis of that, savingly having received the Son of God and the witness of the Spirit is not only to the fact that one is forgiven and one is pardoned, but one has entered into this new relationship with God. I think in that connection we should have, you should have, if you've notes that you've made, Galatians 4, 4 to 6. I think it's extremely important that in reference to this fifth point, we should have a clear scripture to carry us back to.

For in the fullness of time God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons. And since we are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his heart, God has sent forth his Spirit into our hearts whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Now, I think I made a mistake of one or two words there.

And because we are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying, Abba, Father. And therefore, the witness of the Spirit is to the fact that we are now partakers not only of forgiveness, but of the divine nature. We are in his family as sons.

Now, in the light of this, you've got to ask yourself a couple of questions. All of this genuine, all of this real, that is our assumption for the moment. Let us then ask ourselves, what is it that this person who today or yesterday or Friday savingly received Christ as the witness of the Spirit to the new birth and today is Sunday, third day into their new life in Him.

What did that person carry into this new life? Their new creations. All of this that's real and genuine has happened. What did they carry in? Well, obviously, the same body.

Correct? They got a scar on the back of their hand like I had when I had filariasis. The doctor made an incision trying to find the filaria. He didn't know what he was doing, but he left a scar there to prove it.

And it's there. The day after you're born again, your scar is still there. So he carried the same body.

Now, one day you're going to have a body like unto his body of glory, but that didn't happen Friday. So they carried the same body. Correct? And what else did they carry? Well, they carried in the same memory.

Same memory. That same memory bank came right in with them. Memory of all the things that they'd done.

And what else came with them? Well, appetites and urges and drives and propensities, which were the standard equipment of human beings. What are some of those appetites? Oh, they got hungry, didn't they, the next day after they're born again? Didn't stop that. So they got hungry about 11.30. On Thursday, they

got hungry on 11.30 or so on Friday or Saturday.

And that didn't change. So the appetite for food remained there. And what about the appetite for pleasure? Did they carry that into the Christian life? Sure.

Sunset gave them pleasure. Beethoven's Sixth Symphony or Third or whatever gave them pleasure. It still gave them pleasure.

They had an appetite for pleasure. Knowledge? Of course they were, especially if they were trying to learn how to work a computer. They had an appetite for knowledge.

Had to in order to keep from taking a club to it. I found the ultimate solution to the person having a problem with a computer. I saw a cartoon that said there's more than one way to solve your problem.

The picture showed somebody looking through a door there and a couple of knees dangling at the tide of the door. He fell and hung himself. One way to get out of it.

Solved their problems. And so they had an appetite for knowledge. And an appetite for status? Of course.

Okay, wait a minute now. What about these appetites? Appetite for sex? Yeah. Well, what's new about him? He's got all these urges and drives and propensities and appetites.

And he's a new person. He's born again. Huh.

Now, wait a minute. Let's go back. Go back to Genesis.

Remember when God made man? And he looked at the creature he made and he said, what? Boy, that's a mess. Is that what you read it? What did he say? Very good. Very good.

And what did Adam have? He had an appetite for food, an appetite for knowledge, an appetite for sex, an appetite for status, appetite for pleasure. Is there anything wrong with the appetites? Not one thing. Well, what did the God of this world, what did Lucifer do in the garden? What was the problem? What took place there? Came to Mother Eve, didn't he? And what did he suggest? He suggested that she satisfy a good appetite in a bad way.

That's what temptation is. Temptation is the proposition presented to the intellect to satisfy a good appetite in a forbidden way. Now, if you understand that, then you're going to understand why the people that are praying that, Lord, oh, work in my heart so I'll never be tempted again.

You've prayed that way and so have I. And I'm always ashamed of myself when I do. Because you know if God answered that, what He would do? He would make me holier than His Son or less unhuman. Because the Scripture says the Lord Jesus was in all things like unto His brethren and He was tempted in all points like as we are.

Now, what is temptation? It's a proposition presented to the intellect to satisfy a good appetite in a bad way. A proposition, a proposal presented to the mind to satisfy a good appetite in a bad way. How do you mean? Ah, precisely, precisely.

That is what temptation is. This is the end justifies the means. Very, very, very appreciate that because that's essentially what it is, right? And the enemy says any way to satisfy the appetite is all right.

No! No, God has told us how, the right way to satisfy. We can't, we can't use that argument, the end justifies the means. Can't do that.

What we've got to do is recognize that God has specifically told us how appetites are to be satisfied. Now, what's sin? If temptation is a proposition presented to the intellect to satisfy a good appetite in a bad way, what's sin? Exactly. The sin is the decision of the will to satisfy a good appetite.

Didn't even have to get around to accomplishment yet because He said, He that looks, He that speaketh. As soon as the decision is made to satisfy a good appetite in a bad way, hey, we're in trouble. That's sin.

He that hateth, he that hath the intention to hurt his brother is a murderer. The intention to do it makes it in the eyes of God the accomplishment. Then we realize that to teach us to live soberly and righteously and godly wasn't a big deal.

Because that happened back here. That was a decision of the will to live soberly and righteously and godly. As long as I live, that's what I'm going to do.

But teaching us to wasn't such a big problem. We settled at that point. But the how to, how to live soberly, righteously and godly.

Oh, now we're coming to another whole kettle of fish. And we better look at that one real close. Because what does it mean to live soberly, righteously and godly? Well, it means to please God in everything.

That's what it would mean. What's going to interfere with it? What's going to interfere with this purpose to please God? I'll tell you what you carry into the Christian life. You know what you carry.

Not only the urges, drives, and appetites, but the learned habits of response. Oh, boy. Domino theory, huh? I love to watch children.

About ours are a little above the watching age on some of these things. But I got a whole new crop of grandchildren coming on. And I want to say to you, if you don't know it already, grandchildren are a lot easier to raise than your own children.

Believe me. I wish I could have started out with grandchildren. It would have saved us an awful lot.

Well, anyway, I've discovered that my grandchildren are very much following right on. They don't follow, you know, apples don't fall far from the tree. But you say to little Sarah, give me that.

And little Sarah doesn't have to have an argument and debate the ethics of the thing. She picks a truck up and hits her brother on the head with it. She's discovered that the best defense is a strong offense.

And boy, it's amazing how offensive some of them can be sometimes, isn't it? Just little folks. The seeds are... At any rate, what happens is we've got lots of responses. You say something to me, I'm going to say something to you.

And what do we carry into the Christian life? We carried in that whole... I'm not a psychiatrist or psychologist. I get all my science out of the Reader's Digest. Makes me an instant authority.

But I think if you were one, you could probably explain to us how habits get to be sort of tracks that follow fairly easy. And sometimes you just do things because it's appropriate. Isn't it interesting how much of life

we can put into habit? Aren't you glad you don't have to make everything about your life a real issue and a debate? Some things are habit.

Well, some other things are habit, too. And here you are, you purpose to please God. Friday you were born again.

You have the witness, the Spirit, who said, I'm never going to do that to displease God again. And today somebody says, I think you're a hypocrite. Well, you know how to deal with that.

You've done it for years. Just like that. And you told them what you think of them.

The only thing is, it wasn't on sober reflection, it wasn't very righteous or godly, what you said to them. And you purposed to please God. But in that, what was it? Habituated response to certain life experiences.

That you carried with you into the Christian life. And the memory of how you had solved certain problems you carried into the Christian life. Oh, you carried quite a lot with you.

Now, so here you are. You purpose to please God. Now you go back and you understand what Paul's talking about when he says in Romans 7, 8, you know when he's talking, he says there's one law.

Well, what kind of law? I don't know if this is what Paul's talking about or what I'm talking about. Well, there's one law. There's the law of the way I develop my pattern prior to my meeting Christ.

And that's all in my raw memory. That's all there. That's just part of the standard equipment.

It's built right into the computer. Now, I've carried that all in to my new life in Christ. And it's just, I have another law.

I determined that the governmental principle of my life is going to be to please God. I'm going to please Him in everything. So I've got a conflict, haven't I? Between the way I used to do and the way I'm committed to do.

The way I met problems and the way I'm going to meet problems. And I'm much closer to the old than I am into the new. And I've got to... Where is my panic button? How can I stop this? Isn't there a stop button, a help button somewhere where I can just stop this chain of events? Do you see what we're coming to now? It not only teaches us to live soberly, righteously, and godly, but teaches us how.

Boy, that how is where the problem is. That's where the rubber hits the road. How? I got to Africa as a missionary.

And I've heard some of you at least have heard me refer to this. Seven years after high school getting ready to be a missionary. And what did I do? Oh, I thought I was right.

If anybody was. I was certain when I got there that I was going to out-pray, pray, and hide. I was going to out-love Mary Schleser.

And I was going to out-Africa Dan Crawford. I had dedicated myself to do this. And I'd worked at it.

But you know something? I found when I got to Africa that I had the oddest bunch of missionaries I was going to have to work with. Oh, man. No folks were as angular as a bale of barbed wire.

You couldn't find any place to pick them up. And I found out they weren't spiritual. They weren't nearly as spiritual as I knew I was going to be.

It hadn't turned out that way. So the only thing I could do to justify the reality of what I found... See, I counted on that ocean trip two weeks on the vessel to Alexandria. That was going to make that metamorphosis from me to he.

But I got there and I found it was still the same old me. Only thing that had happened to me during that time on the vessel was I got seasick. And it is yet to be established what the spiritual benefit of three days of seasickness is.

But it had not turned me into praying hide or anything else. And so the only way I could prove that I had a right to stay in Africa was to prove that I wasn't any worse than any of the rest of them. Man, that is not a good way to go.

And so what I had to do then was to... Well, I never made a decision to do it. It just sort of came out as a way of dealing with the problem. I found I had a very critical mind.

I could spot a flaw clear across Sudan. And Sudan is as big as eastern half of the United States. I could spot a flaw.

And I found I not only had a critical... I had a censorious spirit. And I found out something else. I had a sarcastic cut.

You never had a blade of grass cut you. It never heals. It cuts so perfect.

It cuts so sharp. There's no place for the edges to get together. And I found that's what happened when I let loose my sarcasm.

Like Zorro's... Remember Zorro? He would leave a Z carved on somebody or on the wall. That was the way it was. I never made peace with it.

I'd go home filled with remorse. I'd go to bed, couldn't sleep, get up, kneel on that old concrete floor, mud floor, case might have been, and cry out to God, just this once, this once, just this once. I'll never do it again.

And He forgave me. And I did it again. Because you see, I didn't know where to have victory over the tyranny of my traits and my habits of thought and my disposition.

The grace of God had taught me to live soberly, righteously, and godly. But somehow or other, I'd miss learning the how to. And it's not enough to be taught to.

You've got to also be taught how to. How to. Did Christ just die to save us from hell? Or did He die to save us from ourselves? That's the issue.

What was in redemption? Just escape from the punishment of what we've done? Or escape from the tyranny of what we are? And boy, that was a serious issue. When I came back from Africa, I said, Lord, I know I've been a waste of money for four years. And I'm not going to go back until something happens.

And I went to the pastor of a local church that I admire and respect. He said, you know what I think you need? You need three years of seminary. I already had seven years, but I hadn't included seminary.

And I thought he was a serious good man, so I matriculated to the seminary he recommended. He gave me a good recommendation, and I matriculated there. And I sat there in my room with the books that I was to have this first semester.

And I looked at them. I'd read three out of the seven, and I didn't like them when I read them. Now I was supposed to study them.

And I looked at the other table of contents and the other four. I said there's not enough in there to feed a jaybird. It's not going to meet any heart need there if this is what you go for.

What year are they going to deal with me? And I read through the catalog and found out they didn't even include me in the curriculum. And I said, well, if they're not going to do it, then there's no use for me to hang around here and feed through their fodder trying to find a bite now and then. I'm going to go where I can get something to eat.

So I dematriculated the next day. And I did go, and I went to Clearwater Beach. The mission, the Sudan Interior Mission, the Great Mission Society, was hard up to get somebody to represent them down at Clearwater that March, February.

And so they asked me to go. And I went, and I came on the grounds about 10 o'clock at night, and they had a place for me. And the next morning, I listened to this preacher whose name I'd never heard.

I'd never heard of George Mundell. Didn't know him from Adam's off box. He didn't mean a thing to me.

But after I listened to him for that, about half of that session, I said, that man knows the word. The next night I listened to him, and I said, that man knows the Lord. The next morning I listened to him, and I said, that man knows me.

And the next night, it was terrible. Oh, it was embarrassing. Because he sat, stood behind that pulpit.

He wiggled his finger right under my nose, and he told everybody in that congregation all about my failure as a missionary. All the things I, he just spread it all out. And I knew he wasn't talking to anybody else.

And I couldn't figure out for the life of me, who told him. I remember why I left seminary. I wanted something for me.

Well, I'd get more for me than I could handle right about then. He said, you know what your trouble is? And I almost broke the silence of the meeting saying, no, but you've told everything else. Go ahead, tell that too.

But I held my peace and just sat on it. He said, your trouble is when you came to Christ, all you thought you were to get out of Christ was what you knew you needed. You needed pardon.

You needed forgiveness. You needed the gift of eternal life. And you accepted Jesus as dying for you to give you pardon and forgiveness and eternal life.

And you got everything you needed and believed for. But you didn't get all you needed. Now you're in trouble.

Because you didn't realize how much more the Lord Jesus died to help you that you really need. You looked at the cross. You saw the cross.

You went in through the cross. You went into the Christian life. You went busting down, now I'm going to serve the Lord as a missionary.

You've been falling over your own feet, falling over your own habits, falling over your own attitude. You've been hurting people right and left, getting up saying, oh, God forgive me and I'll never do it again. God forgives you and you'll do it again.

When are you going to stop? And I almost broke the silence and said, friend, you talked me into it. I stopped right now, but where do I go from here? I didn't say anything. He said, when are you going to stop running and turn around and look at the cross from the inside? And when you do, you're going to find that not only did Jesus Christ die on the cross for you, but since He was your representative, it was as though you died on the cross with Him.

You were crucified with Christ. He not only died to save you from hell, He died to save you from you. And then He said, knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be annulled, that the habits and attitudes and dispositions and traits, you might have a panic button, reckon yourself to be dead.

And then He said, Paul said in Romans 6, I am crucified with Christ. And in Galatians 2, 35 years later, he said, I am crucified with Christ. He never outgrew it.

His union with Christ is death. Oh listen, the Scripture doesn't just tell us to live soberly, righteously and godly. It tells us how to.

We not only need to know the to, but we need to know the how to. Well, we aren't finished, but I am. It's time to quit and pass.

So let's stop. We'll come back to it next Sunday. Father, we thank You and praise You that You loved us when You knew the worst about us.

And there's nothing we'll ever find out about ourselves that will surprise Thee or make You sorry that You loved us or change Your mind about drawing us to Yourself. Oh, give us the courage, Lord, to know ourselves, see ourselves, and to realize that the great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all of this. To that end, our God, we ask You to bless this choir and our hearts as we meditate upon it and as we return again.

Thanks, Lord, today to continue in our study. May it bring to our remembrance those things which will glorify Christ and help us, we ask in His worthy name. Amen.

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