

# Bristol Conference 1975-01 gal.2:16 - Yet Not I

by Stan Ford

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of allowing Christ to live through us, highlighting the themes of justification by faith and the necessity of self-denial in the Christian life.*

**Duration:** 42:48

**Scripture:** Matthew 27:22, John 3:30, 1 Corinthians 7:17, 1 Corinthians 11:1, Galatians 2:20

**Topics:** "Imitating Christ", "Christian Leadership"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of imitating and following the example of Christ. He encourages the audience to look to the elders and leaders in their community who are living a life that reflects Christ. The speaker also highlights the concept of impartation, where the life of Christ is passed on to believers. He urges the audience to live their lives with the awareness of Christ's presence and to seek to protect and cultivate that presence. The sermon references the Bible verse 1 Corinthians 11:1 and emphasizes the need to imitate Christ and those who inspire us.

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## Transcript

Thank you. It's a joy to be here, and it's a joy to have the responsibility of this Perth gathering. The words of John 3 and 30 above me are some of the most cherished words in the whole of the Bible, and while I'm not going to preach from them this evening, the very team of them I want to share with you.

In the course of the week we will be looking together day by day into the epistle of Timothy, but for this Perth talk, I wonder if you would turn with me into the second chapter of the epistle to the Galatians. Galatians chapter 2, verse 16. Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law, for by the works of the law shall no blank be justified.

But if, while we teach to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid! For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor, for I through the law have said to the law that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live, yes not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

I do not prostrate the grace of God, for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in bed. The Lord will add his thanks for bread, and for the other portions of his word, for which we will make reference

this evening. I want to talk, if I may, on that very simple phrase yet not half.

May I repeat it? Yet not half. I have chosen three portions on the New Testament that use the same phrase. We're going to think of the words of Galatians 2 and 20, then we're likewise going into the 15th chapter of the 1st chapter to the church at Corinth, and we're going to think of the words of one who could dare say, I labored for abundance, and they all, yet not half, yet not half.

Then we're going back into the 10th chapter and 1 Corinthians, and we're going to read some of the most marvelous of words, as the apostle writes again to this church, and dares to say, I put on, yet not half, but the law, not half, but the law. If there is one thing I have learned in the school of Christian experience, it is this, that the Christian experience God wants us to have is not an experience of palpitation, it is an experience of palpitation. It is not just the matter of making ourselves low, it is the matter of blocking out of hell voices.

Yet not half, but Christ. Yet not half, but the dreams of God. Yet not I, but the law.

It is palpitation, and the more I read my Bible, the more I understand this, that the stern, inescapable problem of the blocking out of hell, the perpendicular pronoun, is surely one of the most difficult things for any one of us to learn. It was Bishop Horton, of no doubt you know, who played a little golf. Can't say I sympathize with him in that.

Whatever big, grown men find chasing a little ball about, I'm not quite sure. But, nevertheless, Bishop Horton played a little golf, and one time he went out on the cold breeze, and one of his acquaintances said, Bishop, what's your handicap? The great man looked at the person that asked the question and said, the self. What's yours? Isn't that it? Have not you found that the greatest problem in life is that person that we call self? The problem of what we're going to do with Christ, the problem of whether we are going to say, He must increase and I must decrease, is the problem that men always say.

It was the problem of John the Baptist. Now, I would not want any one of you to think that I am belittling John the Baptist. The Lord said of him that he was the greatest of the prophets, and that is true.

But, I contested that John the Baptist had created for me, again and again, immense problems. You know, he was the man that could point his finger at Jesus and say, behold the Lamb of God. He was the one who could advise his own disciples to lead and follow Christ.

And, I've often wondered why it was that John the Baptist never followed Christ. I've often wondered why it was that he didn't plead the bad side of the devil, and walk in company with the Lord Jesus. I sometimes, when seeking to instruct young men, say this, you know, I believe that if John the Baptist had kept his head, maybe he would never have lost his head.

Well, you take that one out. For, I know this, that John the Baptist knew who was the right to be the head, both of the church and of all men. John the Baptist had dared to say that there cometh after me one, the latter of whose truth I am not worthy to understand.

He dared to say of him that this was the one who was preferred before him, because he was before him. He knew that Christ had the right to be his head. Yet, in a prison cell, he tends the people.

Aren't thou he that doest harm, or look we for another? I suggest to you, the greatest problem in the life of John the Baptist was the problem what place Jesus did find. It was not only the problem of John the

Baptist, but I think you will find that it was the problem of the Pharisees. That's a wonderful chapter, the twelfth chapter of John, it says.

You will remember, in the eleventh chapter, Jesus has climbed to the loud voice, the latter of whose truth I am not worthy to understand. But, in the twelfth chapter, the man that was raised from the dead is seated at a table with him, not only his acquaintances, but many of the scribes and the Pharisees. But, most of all, Christ is there.

And, as those Pharisees look at the Lord's people, why they tend one to another, what shall we do with this man? What place shall we give him? What shall we do, for the whole world is gone after him? They saw men and women who decided to follow Christ. They saw men and women who were praying in their hearts, we're going to put Christ first. And, those Pharisees take the problem, what place shall we give to Jesus? What place shall we give to him? The whole world, what shall we do? The whole world is gone after him.

But, if it was the problem of John the Baptist, and if it was the problem of the Pharisees, I think you will grant me that it was the problem of the man that we know as Pontius Pilate. As he looked into the faith of the Lord, he received the message from his wife, has that nothing to do with this just man? For I suffered much this day in a dream because of him. And, now he has the faith of the problem, what place shall I give Christ? What shall I do with Jesus, who is called the Christ? What shall I do? And, brethren, listeners, in these coming days, we're going to have a hallelujah time.

I'm persuaded of that. I believe God has something to pray for us. But, right at the beginning of the gospel, let's take this question, what place is the Lord going to have during this week and at the end of the week? The little chorus that our brother introduced tonight was a chorus that I introduced some 10 years ago.

I was leading the Julia Bible reading in Scotland. Night by night, we had a crowd much larger than this of young folk, and day by day, who had come from all over Scotland. And, I was teaching the epistle to the Philippians, and we would gather in the main auditorium.

And, before I even rose to speak, from what I know not who it was, after we first learned the chorus, from one of these 10, there lived a crowd of teenage and early 20-year-olds. They started to sing, let the Lord have His way in your life every day. There's no rest, there's no peace, until the Lord has His way.

And, friend, I dare believe this, that I believe God's faithfulness to the ministry of the word in that conference. And, I believe that God's faithfulness to that little chorus. And, I dare say this to you, that if every one of us will pray, Lord, you can have your way.

Not I, but Christ. Not I, but the case of God. Not I, but the Lord.

And, I believe that God is going to work in our hearts, and the assembly from which we come will feel the impact of seven witnesses who speak to Britain. I should suggest to you that, in that very wonderful portion in the fifteenth chapter of the epistle to the Corinthians, we have brought before the tremendous facts of the secret, the secret of service and success. The secret of service and success.

I labor more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was in me. And, then He goes on, and He dares to say, and so we preach, and so ye believe. Not I, but Christ is the secret of service, we labor, and success, we preach, they believe.

I believe when we come to the seventh chapter of 1 Corinthians, it is not the secret now of service, of service and success, it is the secret of supervision and protection. As the apostle is touching the very heart of human life, he is speaking indeed about a man's relationship to his wife, and the wife's relationship to her man. And, he dares to say, yet not I, I command, yet not I, but the Lord.

We are living in a time when all around us there is need of spiritual leadership. All around us there is a need of men and women who will take a lead among God's hosts. Men and women who will supervise the kings of God.

Men and women who will know nothing of trust, moral and spiritual leadership, but willingly men and women will subject themselves to their rule and their authority. And, I believe you older brethren and sisters, that the secret of it is this, not I, but the Lord. Ah, but I must speak not the first.

I want to spend the moment in collation to and thanksgiving, and I want to remind you that it is the secret of salvation and transformation. What glorious words are those words! Why, as the apostle dares to say, I live, I am crucified, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave his life. I suggest to you that here is the secret of salvation.

I live, for I am crucified with, I am crucified with Christ. What a chandelier reading of the second brings the fact before us that the law has laid a demand, and because of our sin, because of our rebellion against God, because our lives have not been according to the plan and purpose of the Almighty, the law places its hand upon us, and demands its upper hand, our death. Oh, the wonder of a Christian's faith is this, God sent his Son into the world, down from his glory, ever-living glory, my Lord and Savior, and blessed be his name, he died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us his arm.

Therefore Calvary taught the Lord Jesus Christ, and there was a time in my experience, when not by the works of the law, but by faith, I associated myself with Jesus Christ, and God accepted the death of Christ on my behalf. Now let me stop a minute and shout hallelujah, for if I've learned anything, you folks don't shout it very often. Did you know something? Here's the thrill to our hearts, the thrill to our hearts, that I am alive, and I am crucified with Christ.

God has accepted the death of Jesus Christ on my behalf, and I stand on ground, that's acceptable to heaven, not ours, but another did it for me, Christ died for me. Any hope I have of glory is in His hand in this, for God accepted the death, but it is not only the secret of salvation, it is the secret of sanctification, for though I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and I have been set apart, sanctified, I have been set apart for the glory of God. God sees me sanctified in Christ, for Corinthians 1.30 says, Christ is laid unto us.

One of the things that Christ is laid unto us is sanctification, but never let us forget that we are sanctified in Christ, set apart by Christ, our lives are His in Christ, and we praise God for that, but never let us forget that while God sees us in Christ, the world doesn't see us in Christ, the world sees us just as we are. God wants us to go out and live a sanctified life, I live, yet not I, yet not I, Christ liveth in me. Speaking to a crowd of students some little while ago, one of them came to me afterwards and said, Mr. Boyd, what is the technique of the Christ life? I looked at him and said, what did you say? He said, what is the technique of the Christ life? If I gathered it correctly, what he was saying is this, how can I live the life of Jesus Christ? What are the practical issues of a sanctified life? Well, I wonder if I could answer that.

I wonder if I could suggest to you that when we take the tremendous statement, I live yet, not I, not I, we are facing, surely, the greatest of challenges, and I'm going to attempt, if I may use the words of my young friend, not quite being sure of what they meant, but I wonder if I could use them, the technique of the Christ life is this, it is found first of all in imitation, that's what I would be saying. I want you to grasp the fact, if you forget everything else I say, that if you and I are trying to live a Christian experience, it starts with imitation. I suggest to you it continues not with imitation, but inspiration, and I suggest it continues from imitation to inspiration, and it goes on to impart a, first of all, imitation.

Come with me in thought to the first verse of the 11th chapter of 1 Corinthians, while the apostle dares to say, be ye followers of me, as I am of Jesus Christ. I rather like Mr. Phillips's new translation, or hardly translation, paraphrase. You remember Mr. Phillips puts it this way, he says, copy me as I copy Christ.

Do we want to know something? Do we want to know something of living a life, the life of Christ? Then God has sent in the assemblies of his people, those who are elders over people, and they are there as examples to the flock. I look around this conference today, and you know my heart is in tears. I see dear Mr. Smith and Mrs. Smith.

They won't mind me telling you, but they're overnighing. I see Mrs. Kaye and her sister, when I mustn't say anything about ladies' ages, but the pictures will say that Mr. Smith is just a boy. I only know this, that there are in this common brethren and sisters over many, many, many long years, have lived for Jesus Christ.

And I say to you young folks here today, I say this, that God has placed amongst us those who like the apostle Paul to say, copy me as I'm a prophet. I have come to almost hate, almost hate this modern trend of the deployment of those who amongst us have curbed God as overseers in his heaven. God has placed amongst us those imitating, imitating.

For all that you and I may know something of that imitation, that we may mark man a monster to love and curb God, and learn from them the lesson, as they have learned. For if there is one thing they will do, here there is one thing they will do, by their right and by their left, they will conquer the evil. But then I suggested that the secret surely of saying of I'm a Christ is not only the secret of imitation, but the secret of inquiry.

Why, when Paul wrote to young Timothy in his last letter, speaking of holy scripture, he said, all scripture is given by inspiration of God. When again we come to the word, when Peter put his pen to paper, he writes and he says, holy man wrote that they were moved by the Holy Ghost. And I believe that the secret of I'm a Christ is the secret of inspiration, and I know of no source of inspiration like the word of God.

Men were inspired to write it, men who have impressed it, written it, read it, and when they read it, they were inspired. I believe that they might say you and I need to come back to the word of God, that we may know the very inspiration, the very inspiration that comes to a daily study of scripture. Not I. Oh please, it does not come by kneeling down and saying, Lord, henceforth it's not going to be I. That's only the part of it.

If you and I are going to cross out the perpendicular pronouns, there's something to do. We have to imitate those who love the message. We have to be inspired to the reading and posturing of the... I was speaking this evening with our good friend Mr. McKenzie, who will be leading us in the afternoon sessions, and I'm sure we're in for something wonderful.

Some of you heard me say when last time I was with you that while it's been my joy in some 32 different countries to have been with Christ, one has been as vivid as the mission field in many areas. I have never in all my life been challenged as much as I was challenged by a girl from your country in the heart of Angola. There I used to say my day, hello Mr. Teddy Bean.

The next time I'd lay on my bed and I'd tap on my head, wondering however it was that such a girl, so small, so precious, would do such things for God. Mr. McKenzie, he won't mind me saying this, he will say it stronger than I will say it during the course of the week, but Mr. McKenzie said this to me today. That he had got in touch with Teddy Beans with all the desperate happenings in Angola today, with polka being killed every day.

The suggestion was made that Teddy just leave permittedly. He dared to say that if the believers died, then I got my day too. He's imitated Christ actually for the sake of you and I and not for Christ.

Brethren, sisters, let me tell you this, a friendly fellowship is not dead. It's still alive. God, God is moving amongst us all over the world.

There are those that we should imitate, those indeed that would inspire us. I have never been so inspired by a human being as I was by some of those dear missionaries in Africa, or maybe some of them away yonder in Malaysia. I only know this, God says not I. And I said that there was not only imitation and inspiration, but there was impartation.

To be imparted, having a life of Christ imparted to us, I live, yet not I. And this is the secret, Christ lives within me. The works are important, but this is it. The words of the hymn that you love to sing, you ask me how I know he lives.

He lives within my heart, that you and I could use the words of that we might practice the presence of God, to practice the presence of God. Brethren, sisters, may I say this very, I want to live my life conscious of Jesus is with me. I don't want to live my life as though Christ lived and passed a few years ago and sent me a code of laws, sent me a law of conduct.

I want to live my life as though Jesus is with me. The flesh body is, but I want to be conscious of Christ. This is what Paul is saying, I live, yet not I. Christ lives within me.

This was not the truth you thought. Did you so clear to me, O Jim, that when you came, you thought the sense of a kid? From your eyes he beckons me, and from your heart his love is shed. Till I lose sight of you, and see that Christ is dead, I am crucified.

And I said it was the secret of salvation and sanctity. I want to pray it is the secret also of service and prosperity. For in that great fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, it deals so much with the rhetoric.

The apocryphal dares to remind them that he is what he is by the grace of God. By the grace of God, he says, I am what I am. I laboured more abundant than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was in me, with me, through me.

Use what wills, work you wills, and here is the secret of service. The secret of service, I labour, yet not I, Christ, by the grace of God, through me. I think this is important, don't you? I believe that we are living in a day when you and I need to be up and doing.

If there is one thing that I am absolutely confident of, it's this, it's that God has a work for every one of us to do. God wants you and I to labour for him. Now, I know it's one of my hobby points, you know, and some of you've heard me say it again and again, and I'll let you in if God enables me to hear me say it again as well, but if there is one expression I have grown to dislike in America, do you know what it is? It's this expression, he's in the work.

Should I say this? Should I say that every Christian here is in the work? Or should he? Should he? I wonder why it is that we always talk about someone who did. Most of his time for the ministry of the scripture has been in the work. You know, we've got a very limited idea of the work of God, haven't we? Do you remember the old speaker? Do you remember? The Lord borrowed his boat, so the Lord said, I'll borrow it.

The Lord's no man's And he said, Peter, I want you to go in your boat, I want you to let down your net for a draft. And out they went in the boat, and Peter went fishing. Not for souls, but for fish.

You know, the things you have with chips. Fish. He went doing a job of work because Peter told him to do it.

He was in the work of God fishing. Now, I know he wasn't a very good fisherman. The Lord said, let down your net, and he let down a net.

No wonder the jolly big boat served him right. I only know this, that the Lord told him to do a job of work, and he did it. And he was in the work of God.

And so I believe you're in the work of God raising that family. I believe, my brother, you may be a bricklayer, you may be a baker, a candlestick maker, but if you're doing it for Jesus, you're in the work of God. Oh, may you and I realize this, that God is better in our work, our work, to do it for Him, to do it for Him, that we might be able to say, I labor more abundantly than them all.

Hey, you won't forget part of that labor, he was taking tax, but he did it for the Lord. And what's that he came to Aquila and Thessalonica and Apollos, and the church in Corinth, and the church in Ephesus, because he went making tax. You know, that's one of the things that always thrills me about the missionary.

I want to say this to you, in 30 years of preaching, I've never yet come across a lazy missionary. I've never come across a lazy missionary. Everyone I've met has worked, has worked, has worked, and it has all been preaching.

You know, some of them failed, and some of them kicked the ball, and some of them weren't connected, and some of them kicked the women's, well, toe and nipple, whatever it is women do. And they're in the work of God, and the proof is that all over the world, there are assemblies of God's hosts, because someone realized that they were going to labor more abundantly than anyone else. And yet, in it all, it was not them.

It was the grace of God which was working to them. The secret of Corinth, not on the grace of God, not on. I say, when we talk a bit about it, but when we come to preaching and the ministry of the Word, is it not a fact that the men who set their mark for God and for good are men who set no high? George Whithill came to your country, and revival followed in his wake, but it's not necessary for me to remind you that there he stood and cried, let the name of George Whithill perish, if God be glorified.

Oh, that is, when a man's prepared to say, not I, but Christ, not I, but the grace, grace of God, if I've noticed anything in the homes that I've been into, that most of you brethren are great lovers of preaching of Charles Hatton's version. I think I come across more of Charles Hatton's version books in America than I do on the bookshelves in England. You've got an appreciation for something as good.

I only know this, that Charles Hatton's person was drawing almost his last breath, and he cried, let my name perish, but let Christ's name last forever. The greatest revival we saw in my country was from Northport in old age, and would as well be termed the revival of grace, when God spread through the valleys and the mountains and the towns of Wales. The great Welsh revival was unholy, Campbell Morgan was sent down by the ministerial gentleman of the city of London to find out what was happening among these promotional Welsh folks.

He himself was a Welshman, but he got off the train for a sightseeing walk towards the little village of Lougher, and as he was walking towards the village, he saw a road sweeper, and as the man was sweeping the road, Campbell Morgan stopped and said, excuse me, my man, but can you tell me where the revival is? And the road sweeper stood up and said, yes, sir, right inside here. My men, when pubs, liquor bars were shut down because no one would buy the liquor, when theatres shut their doors and never opened them again, when people went to the stores and paid debts that they'd been owing for years, thanks to a revival, a revival of righteousness, it all happened to a little miner who thought he'd better have some education, and he went down to a Bible school in Newcastle, England, and he was there one month, and the leader of the Bible school said, I've nothing to teach you, you'd better get out and serve God. And as he went, heaven loved him, and he couldn't treat them at home.

I've got about 60 of his parliaments at home, and you know, there's hardly one of them that you would say was real oratory or real Bible exposition. And when he spoke, hundreds of souls were touched, and Evan Roberts was at Locker, and he toured in the rostrum of the Baptist chapel in Locker, and the gallery was crowded, and the same chapel was crowded, and they were seated on the floor in the aisle, and there were hundreds outside, and they started to sing their great wells, and Evan Roberts started to pray, and then he started to speak, and there was no music, songs were like rocks. Suddenly a dear old lady sitting in the front of the platform said in a Welsh tongue, Evan, do you know what's wrong? The people come to see Evan Roberts, and not Evan Roberts gone.

Evan Roberts looked down in the congregation, and the Lord hired from the Welsh. He refused them, but they dared insult him, and they dared insult God, and they come and listen to a man, instead of coming to meet God. The crowd started from the kitchen, and the blessing came.

Souls were swept into the kingdom, not all, not all, not all, the grace of God which is in me. Then I dare to say, that not I, or may I use the words of John 3, and pardon me, he must increase, I must decrease, not I, but Christ. It is not only the secret of salvation and sanctification, it is not only the secret of promise and compassion, it is the secret of true provision and protection.

Seventh chapter of 1 Corinthians is that rather difficult portion. The portion that deals with marriage, tremendous chapter, chapter every one of it will ponder. The apostle was speaking about a man leaving his wife, and the wife leaving her man, and this is what he said, I command you get along with the Lord.

No wonder there was so much torrent, he spoke with the authority of the Savior. As an elder indeed of a truth, an apostle of a truth, a teacher of a truth, the apostle writes to them and has chaining words to tell them that they were willing to listen, and this was why they were willing to listen, because he could say, I

command you that you and I are going to know in the day in which we live of movement of the spirit of God, of monsters, of the families of his people, and how we long for them. I tell you, one of the things that comes to do, brethren, may I say, is to serve and care for the women in your house.

You've got so to walk with Christ, so know his word, that when someone comes to you for advice they don't go away and say, brother, so-and-so says, they go away and say, the Lord has said, oh this is the secret homily, all but you and I who take some things amongst ourselves, may be those who will plow and dig and say of us, Lord, all I want to tell the people is what you want me to tell, all I want to say is what you want me to say, all I want to do is what you want me to do, Lord, I want to be your man, I want to be an elder for you, I want to be able to go out and say, I command, yet that I, oh God grant that you and I may know something of plotting out of that perpendicular program, we may know something from God, not I, but the grace of God which is not I, oh may it be said by each one of us, he, he must increase my peace, and may it be for his name's sake, amen. Mother, could I ask you to sang that little chorus slow, would that be all right, would you put the gadget on for me, thank you, there are the words, we long above all else that the Lord Jesus might have his way, we long that it may not be I, but him, we might be able to say, not I, but Christ, oh not I, but the grace of God which is in me, not I, but the Lord, oh give us we pray these gifts, the rightful place of Jesus Christ, that we in our own lives may know the joy of salvation, and in the fellowship we represent, the impact may be found in the man who loves the Savior, grant it we pray thee, for Jesus' sake, amen.

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