

The Church Leader and the Cross

by Al Henson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the cross in the pastor's life, highlighting its role in bringing spiritual life, freedom from sin, and resurrection life.

Duration: 1:04:46

Scripture: Matthew 5:3

Topics: "Church Leadership"

Description

In this sermon, the pastor emphasizes the importance of the cross in the life of a church leader. He starts by discussing the Beatitudes in Matthew chapter 5, highlighting the need for recognition of spiritual destitution. The pastor then moves on to the disciples and how they were not effective in their ministry until they came to the cross. He expresses the burden and yearning of Christ for the disciples to fully surrender to the cross. The sermon concludes with a promise to delve deeper into the application and teaching of the cross in one's personal life.

Transcript

Let's pray together. Father, Lord, I acknowledge even at this moment, apart from Thy Holy Spirit, I am absolutely destitute. I can think of nothing in my being that has any ability to accomplish anything for eternity.

And so, Father, I come here cast before Thee again as one who is destitute, but yet because of the indwelling Holy Spirit, Father, I have a deep desire to glorify my Savior and my Lord, to see His kingdom expanded. And so, Father, I come and I praise Thee, O Lord, that You joyfully give unto us the Holy Spirit to carry out Your work. We praise You that even much more than if my son asked me for bread, I would not give him a stone.

And if I am evil, have this kind of heart to my own son, Lord, how much more of a heart do You have to give unto us the Holy Spirit if we ask? And so, Father, I come asking. I don't ask to consume it upon my own lust. I only ask it that I might ask for Him that I might decrease and that Christ might increase even in this time.

And I pray, O Father, for my dear brothers and sisters and co-laborers in Your kingdom as we've gathered here from all over. O God, would You pour Your Holy Spirit out upon them and give them ears to hear, eyes to see, and a receptive heart. And again, Father, I come and I ask personally, O Lord, I not only want

to minister the truth of Thy Word, so I pray for the mind of Christ, the mind of God, but I want to minister Your heart, O Lord, Your life through the Word.

So, Father, I pray right now that You would give me Your heart for these people at this time. I want to know how You feel toward them, O Lord. Perhaps You're grieved because of some, and yet You have great hopes for all, great desires.

And, Father, as You compel men and exhort men and plead with men in the Spirit, I want to enter in union with that, O Father. So I lay my heart out before Thee, O God, willing to be spent for Thee. And, Father, we pray that in Christ's name that Satan, any distractions of time, any distractions of the world or thoughts, that he would be bound now to the Word of God, to the power and the energy of the Spirit of God, would have free course in this place at this time.

We praise You that You're a prayer-hearing God, and that You are hearing now and answering these prayers, and we give Thee thanksgiving. O, how our hearts adore Thee, and all that is within us, we bless Thy holy name. How it's so beautiful, wonderful to behold.

Thank You that through Christ and His ascension and the descending of the Holy Spirit that we now can participate in divine life. Praise Thee, O Father. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

If you have your Bible, turn to the book of Matthew, if you would, and I'm going to be looking at three different things today. The importance, the subject that's been given me is the pastor or the church leader, not just the pastor, but the church leader and the cross. The church leader and the cross.

First of all, just briefly out of Matthew, I want to share with you, out of Matthew in chapter 5, the importance of this message of the cross in your life as a church leader. Then I want to take out of the life of the disciples and show you how they were not effective, and how Christ yearned and was burdened for them. Even though they were deeply surrendered to the Lord, He was burdened for them because they had not come to the cross.

And then thirdly, so you know the direction that we're going, whatever time allows, if it's five minutes or ten or fifteen, I want to take some time to give some application or teaching just on the cross and what it means in your own heart and life when it is applied. So that's the direction that we're going. Quickly, so I want to flow as quickly as I can through these first couple of points here.

Point number one, the importance of the cross in the pastor's life. Now here in Matthew in chapter 5, we have the Beatitudes. Christ is teaching here, and just I want to read the first three of the Beatitudes and make a comment briefly on each of the three.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they which mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Now Christ in the context here is teaching. Remember John the Baptist had preached, repent for the kingdom of God is at hand. And then Jesus picked up the same message, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

And He takes the opportunity in the beginning of His ministry with a crowd of Jews gathered perhaps on the side of a mountain somewhere. He takes the opportunity to begin to express unto them the kingdom of God, the kingdom of the Lord, and living in the kingdom. And truly His kingdom is a spiritual kingdom.

Dear brothers and sisters, you must understand that it's a spiritual kingdom. And as Brother Don was sharing this morning about we take upon us physical things and we try to carry out the work of God in the realm of physical things, but spiritual is first. Now God does a spiritual work through physical instruments like you and I and through a piano and organ and promotions.

He can do a work through those things, but the emphasis is that this is a spiritual kingdom. And really when we talk in terms of revival, we are simply talking in terms of coming back to the life of the kingdom of God, coming back to kingdom life, enjoying kingdom life, which John 10 says is not only eternal life, but it is abundant life, abundant living. Many terms, Canaan life, one of our brothers used here, victorious life, a life of peace and joy, a life that is filled with the fruits of the Spirit.

But Christ says here in one of His early messages of His kingdom, that my kingdom shall be after this state. It shall be, first of all, those that will be ushered in the kingdom, blessed are they which mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they which mourn, for they shall be comforted.

So you find the mourning here, or excuse me, blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. The poor in spirit means simply spiritual beggars, those who are destitute, those who are destitute. Perhaps some of you come and you're already two-step one.

And I would encourage you, that's where you start, a recognition of the need. That's simply what this verse is saying, one recognizes a need. And if some of you come and your church perhaps is a deadness there, there's a dullness in your own life, there's a dullness in your ministry, and it does not have the energy and the power of God, your very recognition of that, you ought to praise God.

That is step number one, a recognition of that, a recognition of your own spiritual place of destitution. And all those of you that testify that you've met God in revival, don't ever lose that. If you lose that place of destitution, if you lose that heart of destitution, it is possible to be walking in victory, it is possible to be filled with God and sense a great destitution in your heart.

And I must confess, at least to my point in my walk in life with God, that has been the case, that it seems that the more that I grow in the Lord, the more destitute I see myself. And oh, if you have met God in revival today and you can testify of something in the past, can you testify of something afresh in you? Do you sense within your heart one of a spiritual beggar, one that would be like the blind Bartimaeus that is just looking, and you've come in this week, and you've come in these days, and you're simply looking. You realize that you are blind, and you have heard the testimony through perhaps of the Canadian Revival Fellowship that Jesus sometimes shows up there, that when they have meetings, Christ comes, and you've heard that Christ has come, is going to be there, and you are blind, and you've come this week.

Well, don't leave in these days without crying out, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. Don't leave. I think if I had come in a destitute position with no answers, and if Saturday had come and I'd met with God, I'd go grab somebody and say, Please pray.

I cannot leave. Well, you remember the story there that Jesus didn't hear him, and the men came to him and said, Bartimaeus, just hush. He doesn't have time for you.

He doesn't have any time for you, blind Bartimaeus, because of his faith, and maybe not as much faith as it was just his own destitution. And by the way, you may have little faith, but if you've got great destitution, do what blind Bartimaeus did, and the Bible says, and he pushed him aside and he cried ever the louder,

Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. Have mercy on me.

And oh, my dear brothers and sisters, this is always where the beginning of the ushering in of kingdom life starts in your heart. You remember when you were saved? That's how the kingdom entered in within you. And cried out, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me, a sinner, and save my soul.

Why did we stop crying that out? Well, the attitudes go on here, and the less of the day which mourn. The mourning here, I think, simply comes because one sees his sinful condition, and that may be where you are in these days. You may have come destitute.

The problem is, you really don't see your sin. You say, what do I do, Brother Al? Do you know that it is the mercy and grace of God that has shown you your destitution? Do you know that God didn't even have to show you how destitute you are? We ought to praise God. If you feel destitute today, you ought to praise God.

That is an act of God's grace in your own life. Do you understand that? And instead of murmuring and complaining, that may be the very thing that is hindering God from showing you your sin. That you're murmuring and complaining that you're destitute, and it is God Himself that has done the work to reveal unto you your destitute condition, and you're murmuring and complaining, and God is saying, well, I can't continue this work in your life.

Thank me that at least some of you ought to just right there in your own mind say, God, thank you that you've shown me my destitute position. Now, God, show me my sin that I might mourn, because I want to leave here comforted in these days. And then you come to the third, and I'm moving through these quickly.

I have a tape series there on the Beatitudes, eight messages, one on each of the Beatitudes. You may want to get them. Each of them, they're in an hour and length, so you can see how quickly I'm summing these up, moving to number three.

Just because of the cross, I wanted to move to number three, blessed are the meek, and I believe that's the cross. That's the crucified life. Blessed are the meek.

You see, a person sees his destitute position, and then he understands that it is his sin that has caused him to be destitute. It's not God. It's not God's fault.

It's not his wife's fault. It's not the church's fault. It's not anybody's fault.

It's his own sin. It's his own sin. He bears the total burden, and dear pastor, your condition wouldn't improve if your church got revived, unless you did.

Your problem is not your church, dear Christian leader. Your problem is your own. It's your own sin.

And when one in a destitute position, and God shows him that by his grace and mercy, and then God shows him his sin, he so wants to be free of that, that he comes to understand that the only instrument that can ever set him free is the instrument of the cross. Romans, in chapter six, when it says there that he that is dead is free, and this old man has been crucified with Christ, that's the whole message of Romans in chapter six, that the cross sets us free. And then when you are free, you are free indeed.

And so one comes to the Lord, and he says, God, I see that I'm destitute and miserable, and I see that it is my own sin and selfishness that has brought it about. Oh God, I don't want that anymore. Oh God, apply

thy cross by faith.

I trust you to do that. Apply that cross. Put to death all that is in me that is contrary to you.

And in the next verse, the first thing that will happen, you'll begin to hunger and thirst for righteousness. And then the Bible says there, and you shall be one. Filled in the word literally means satisfied.

Satisfied. And importance of this message is this. No other way to resurrection but by way of death.

No other way. I wish I could tell you that there was. I wish I could tell you you could memorize the New Testament, and that would get you to resurrection life.

I wish that I could tell you that there was some way, but if I could tell you any other way, it would be a work of your own hands, and you'd have something to glory in. There's no other way to resurrection life, personally as a pastor, but by way of the cross. And there's no other way for your church to come to resurrection but by way of the cross.

Remember that. That is the only way there. Jesus taught it all the way through the Gospels, and then it's preached on through in the New Testament.

And that's the importance of the message of the cross. It's the forgotten message in most revivals that we study recently. In the last hundred years or so, they all came out of the doctrine of the teaching of the cross.

But don't stop there, pastor. Don't stop teaching your people just the cross. You'll put them in a very morbid stage if you don't get them on to the resurrection.

Amen? The cross is not the stopping place. I can testify to that in my own life. I didn't have any other one to teach me.

When I left seminary, I thought I was the only one thinking this way, and so I went to Nashville to start a church. And I just sort of hid myself down there so that no one would know I was crazy. I really thought I was crazy, but yet something inside told me that I wasn't.

So I hid myself there for years, and my song for a long time was beneath the cross. It took me two or three years to go on into resurrection because I had no one to lead me or teach me. Oh, God, I think was blessing me my own ignorance and my own heart, but I had no one to care.

I think I was filled with the Spirit, but I had no one to tell me and teach me of the resurrection. And my song was beneath the cross. A couple of cautions before we move on.

Just a couple of things I think I need to caution you with that I've seen in the last 10 or 12 years in ministering to church leaders and pastors, the revival conferences, and different things like this. I want to caution you with something. It's very easy in going to meetings like these, being around men who testify and ladies who testify of the cross, to agree with that, to make a mental assent, and to even to get on your knees and to accept that message is true, and to walk away thinking you've come to the cross and you're deceived and blinded.

Only the Lord can show that to you in your life, but I have seen that happen so often to people, so often to people. So I want to caution you. The reason why I want to spend about 20 minutes in the message today

on showing you the results of the cross in your heart when it's been applied is so you may first determine, have I truly come to the cross? I want to show you the hearts of some men who were deeply committed to God, who had never come to the cross, and I want to see that the hoping of the Lord will help us see.

I think the Lord has really burned my heart the last two or three weeks as I've tried to pray fervently about what the Lord would want me to share in this message. And I feel that this is the point that God's Holy Spirit has made, that there will be many sitting here who think they've come to the cross, who have a knowledge of the cross, and they really have not come to the cross at all. And so I want to bring out of the gospels a 15 or 20 minute teaching that will deal with the inner heart of you and will give you indication, have you burst forth from the cross into resurrection heart attitudes and life.

Now let's go to Mark, if we wouldn't. I want to teach on the subject out of the gospels, the subject that burned in the heart of Christ, subject that he knew was not in the disciples. Mark in chapter 9, if you'd turn there with me, this burned in the heart of Christ for his disciples that followed him.

Quickly, I just want to read the first and then the second. Three times he preaches this message. These are days just prior to his crucifixion, months prior to that, and it's burning.

You can tell that it's burning in the heart of Christ, something he perceives in these, his disciples. Notice, if you would, in verse 23 of Mark, or 33 of Mark 9, when he came to Capernaum, being in the house, he asked them, what was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? Christ, apparently, as Christ was walking along, the disciples often would perhaps be a little bit behind him, and they would be talking among themselves. And Christ, even though he hadn't heard it with the physical ears, he had heard it with his spiritual ears, and they had been disputing over something.

Now, verse 34, but they held their peace. Now that was their problem. Christ would have perhaps been able to help them if they hadn't held their peace.

And let me beg you in these days, do not hold your peace. If nothing else, just stand up somewhere and just shout, please, somebody help me. And if that doesn't get somebody's attention, run up here and get on a mic and say, please, somebody help me.

I can't go on. I'm, my, personally, in my relationship with God, and my wife, and my children, and as a pastor, as a Christian leader, a worker, there's nothing there. Do not hold your peace in these days.

God will meet you just where you are. But they held their peace. They didn't tell him.

They should have shared. They held their peace. They should have shared what they were talking about, but they didn't.

For by the way, they had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest, who should be the greatest. Now, Christ knew that. By his answer, we know that he knew that.

But it's interesting, Christ knew their problem. He knew their need. But they wouldn't open up and share it.

So he simply gives them some teaching, and then they walk away. Now, you need to understand, they walked away thinking they were living what he had said. But they didn't know that they weren't, because they'd never open up their heart to Jesus.

They held their peace. So he says to them in verse 35, and he saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, and that's what they were talking about, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. Now, I want to read the other two passages, and then we're going to comment on them just a little.

Go into Mark 10. Christ's heart's still burdened for this. It's obvious in these chapters prior to his death and burial and resurrection that he's trying to get this last message across to his disciples, because he understands that they'll never be used of God to see the kingdom expand, the very kingdom that he is going to die and be buried and risen for.

They'll never expand until these disciples come to this point in their own hearts and lives. Remember the story of the rich young ruler? Well, we're going to pick up right after that story in Mark 10. The rich young ruler is gone, and Jesus has made the statement that with men things are impossible, but not with God.

For with God all things are possible in verse 27. Then in 1028, Peter, you know, Christ says, God can do anything, and so Peter sort of stands up with a little pride there, the leader of the bunch, and he began to say unto him, lo, we have left all and have followed thee. And the next couple of verses he talks about all that they've left, and Jesus mentions all that they have left.

In verse 31, but he comes right back with the same teaching again, but many that are first shall be last, and the last first. So I want to say that the cross is much, much more than you forsaking everything and selling your houses and your properties and quitting your job and going into the ministry and becoming a church leader. It is much, much more than forsaking your mom and dad and your children.

They had done that, but there was still, they had not come to the cross. I want to show you, I do not know if this is theologically correct, but I find it and experience, practically experience, generally the case in those that I have spoken with. When you are saved, you might want to jot this down, when you are saved, you might want to take the word salvation and put under that two words, lordship and the cross.

Now positionally, when a man is saved, Jesus is positionally his Lord, amen, you agree? If he's not, he's not saved. And positionally, the man has already come, or the cross is already within him, for he is indwelled by the treasure of God. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.

What treasure, you might say? For death worketh in us, but life in you. You see, not only is the resurrection, are you indwelled with resurrection, you are indwelled with death. You are indwelled with all of the life of Christ, not only the death of Christ, but the life of Christ.

And actually the application of the cross is nothing more than what you already are indwelled by, you considering it a treasure, yielding to that and allowing what is already in you to flood your very being and inner being and put all to death in you that is contrary to God. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that then there's the dying, you bearing it about day by day, moment by moment, by an act of faith in you will, you're bearing it about, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus might be manifested in our mortal flesh.

This kingdom life might be experienced inwardly and manifested through us, and as death then is working in us, then life in you passes. That's what you need when you go to the podium. When you go to the podium and death is working in you, then life will work in your congregation.

But nothing less than that will get you to resurrection life. But you see the disciples here had forsaken everything. You're probably gaining by now there's one thing they hadn't forsaken.

Themselves. Themselves. So Jesus burdened with this message, and the latter part of 10 comes again.

Some time has passed now, a day or so. It's the next day. James and John in verse 28, and the mother of the other Gospels tells us, comes and says to Jesus, Jesus, could James and John one sit on one hand and one on the other? And by the way, Jesus never rebukes them for wanting to sit one on the left and one on the right.

A holy ambition. There's nothing wrong with a holy ambition. There's nothing wrong with a spiritual covetousness.

Paul says covet the best gifts. He never rebukes them, he just simply says to them, can you be baptized with my baptism? As it says there in verse 38, can you be baptized with my baptism? There's the death again. Can you? What you think is only in those two, but the next couple of verses tell us that the ten had the same problem in verse 41, and when the ten heard it, they began to be much disputing or displeased with James and John.

All twelve of them had the same problem. They had never come to the cross. Now they had forsaken everything that you could list on a sheet of paper, but they hadn't come to the cross.

Now the doctrinal point that I want to make here is that I found that many come to Lordship and then to the cross later. Many come to Lordship and then to the cross, and what I mean by that, many in the light that God gives them surrenders to the Lordship like the disciples. They had surrendered to Jesus as Lord.

They had surrendered to Jesus as Lord based on the life that God was to give them, but later in one's life, when they come to Lordship, later generally in one's life, God will bring them after Lordship to a place of dryness again and spiritual destitution, and he'll show them what Lordship is all about, and Lordship is nothing more than death unto life. Now that, I don't know that you can theologially prove that that is theologially correct. It's true in the disciples life.

It was true in my own life, and everyone I've ever talked to, unless they came at the cross and Lordship at the same time because they had the right teaching, generally that is the case. And one of the things I am finding often in those who are touched by revival in the sense that they recognize the need of it, and they've read a lot of books, and they put the two together and think because they've forsaken mom and dad and houses and lands and children and everything for the cause of Christ that they have come to the cross, and that is not necessarily so. For you see, the real problem in the disciples was this.

Now listen, the real problem in the disciples was this, is that they were following in the kingdom of God, and they were coming into the kingdom of God, and they were looking for nothing more than a selfish ambition. They were looking for Jesus to set up a physical kingdom, and when he set up a physical kingdom, they were looking for places of prestige and places of honor and places of recognition in that kingdom. They were following God for self.

And oh, let me share with you, brothers and sisters, it's quite a time of breaking in one's life who has given himself to God and thinks he's honoring God and thinks he's glorifying God, and then God through the power of the Holy Ghost falls upon him and shows him that everything that he or she has been doing has been for a selfish purpose and a selfish ambition. I remember when the Lord did that work in my life, and it

was, and I'll share that, I'll wait to the end to share that, how it happened in my life and what God was doing, leading me up to that. One of the things I want you to understand is that God under lordship can bless you some.

He can bless you some. He'll use you some there. He did me, he did the disciples here in the Gospels, he used them, didn't he? But there comes a point that God will no longer use you under lordship until you come to true, what I would like to term true lordship, or the cross.

For no better terminology there, true lordship. I don't want to say the cross is something beyond lordship. I want to say it's lordship from God's viewpoint, not man's viewpoint.

But generally, man comes to lordship from his own viewpoint as he sees in the lives of others. Now, the message of servanship, if you would, if you would, I want to take the time to show you out of the Bible the heart of a servant, so that you may compare as we take a study through a parable that Christ said, that you can compare your heart to the true heart of a servant and see, is this heart developing in you? Now, all I'm going to share, I'm not perfected in my own life, but I can say by the grace of God, it is becoming more and more real in me. I'm going to share the heart of Christ as a servant, not mine, okay? I don't want to preach anywhere beyond where I'm at.

I want you to know I am not sharing Brother Al's heart. I am sharing the heart of Christ concerning this issue of servanship. You say, how important is this issue to Christ? Notice what he says here in the next verses, 42, 43, and 44, 45.

Jesus called them to him and he said unto them, you know that they which are accounted the rule of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them, but so shall it not be among you. That's positive enough. My dear brethren and sisters, Jesus Christ will not let it be among you.

If this is true among you, that you're seeking and following the Lord and even have surrendered to God, and the root problem with all of that is self and the selfish nature, God will not let it continue. He'll not let it be among you. For he, it says here, but whosoever shall be great among you shall be your minister.

Whosoever will be chiefest among you, verse 44, shall be, there it is, servant of all. For even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many. And there it is, there's the cross again.

It's when you give your life a ransom for many. I didn't intend to say this, but let me give you a definition of what it truly means to surrender to the Lord. Many of you have surrendered your lives to God, but I ask you a question, have you surrendered your lives for God? There's a difference in the two.

To God is directional. One who has surrendered his life to God can simply still be trying to gain from God and his energy and his power that which would bring him gain. But one has given his life for God.

He says, Lord, whatever you need me for, that's what I am for. Those who have given their life for God, if Jesus was to appear right now and say, I need a volunteer, I need someone to die, right? I need someone to die. I've got a group of people who would come and be saved if I had someone who could die in a certain situation.

Those who had given their life for God would stand up and say, please God, let me, let me, that's what I'm for. If you need somebody to die, that's what I'm for, God. That's what I'm for.

Are you given to God? Or are you a ransom for God? A ransom for many. You see, when you give your life for God, then God will say, now give your life for my people. For my people.

In Luke, in chapter 17, a little parable told here. A little story that Jesus tells his disciples. It's interesting what it comes on the brink of a question they ask.

What he tells doesn't seem to have anything to do with the question they ask, but I think that it does have much to do with that question. It wouldn't seem at first glance, but it does. Notice the question in verse 5, for the request of God.

In Luke 17, 5. And I'm going to hurry through. I'm going to give you the five hearts of a servant quickly here. Let the Lord use, I want this time to be a time that the Holy Spirit deals with your heart concerning the five marks of the servant that Jesus was speaking about.

Notice here in verse 1, and I'll list them so you won't miss them. I'll give them one, two, three, four, five. You'll know when I come to them.

And the apostle said unto the Lord, increase our faith. Now the next verse, he simply says something like this. If you had just a little bit of faith, you could say to a sycamine tree, be thou plucked up and cast into the sea.

They've asked, Lord, increase our faith. I think what the Lord is saying here, it doesn't, faith, you don't need a whole lot of faith, disciples. If you had just a little faith, you could say to a sycamine tree, be thou plucked up and cast into the sea.

But I think the premise of the teaching here is this. They're asking for faith. And the premise is, do you want faith, disciples, so you'll be able to say to a sycamine tree, be thou plucked up and cast into the sea? All of us would like that kind of faith, wouldn't we? Because that kind of faith would bring us quite a bit of attention, wouldn't it? And then he tells a little parable in the next verses, and I really believe he's not stopping his train of thought.

I really think what he is saying is, do you want faith so you can say something or do something that would cause men's attention to be drawn to you? Or do you want faith to become a servant? You see, we go to the Lord, we say, Lord, give me faith. We say, Lord, give me power. Lord, give me wisdom.

Oh God, give me these things. And I think the Lord often responds to me, I'd love to. I want to give them to you more desperately than you want them.

But if I gave them to you, you would only use them for the building of your own kingdom. And that's what he's saying here to these disciples. He knows their heart.

They've not come to the cross yet. Oh, they're surrendered as deeply as any man has ever been surrendered, as far as the surrender is concerned, but they've not come to the cross. The ultimate surrender to death.

And so here he gives a little parable, verse 7 through 10. But which of you having a servant, there's the word servant again, let's stop there. Let me give you in my, the definition the Lord has given me of a

servant.

I'm going to write this down. I hope you're taking notes. Meditating through the life of Christ as a servant, setting this out in other passages, I jotted down one day, I feel like the Lord was leading in the definition he wanted me to have a servanship.

This might be a blessing to you. A servant is one who is willing to become a failure that others might be a success. A servant is one who is willing to become a failure that others might be a success.

If we took an example of a servant in a local church, say the servant was a pianist and she noticed that another pianist had just joined the church and she had heard this other pianist play. Pianist would be the one who would be approaching the pastor and the pastor would have to approach her. She'd be approaching the pastor, pastor won't you let this other dear sister play.

She's willing not to be known and even lay down her own opportunity to serve that another might serve and be able to be used of the Lord. Oh, we'd have that kind of spirit in our churches, wouldn't we? A spirit of a willingness to be a failure. Now Christ is our example.

Jesus Christ in the eyes of all of mankind became a failure that you and I might become a success. Aren't you glad? Now because of that God is going to work for one day, God is going to highly exalt and give him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. But I'll tell you brothers and sisters, he didn't come the first time Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

He came as a servant, lowly lamb, a lamb under slaughter. He went down and he spiraled down in Philippians in chapter 2. It's a spiral down and there's a great message in that spiral down of coming even to the death, the death of the cross and you'll have to take the same spiral down. It's a great message there of how one spirals down even unto death, the death of the cross.

And Philippians chapter 3 is nothing more than Paul's personal testimony. He first uses Christ as an example to the Church of Philippi that needs to be filled with the Spirit and come to the cross. And he used Christ as an example and then Philippians 3 is nothing more after say showing Christ spiraling down.

Then he shows how he who was a Pharisee and a Benjamite, how he spiraled and counted everything but dung for the excellency of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. The same pattern in his own life. He yearns and is burdened for the Church of Philippi that they would come to the same place and be filled with the Spirit of God.

So here we have the mark of a servant. Which of you having a servant plowing or feeding cattle was saying to him by and by when he has come from the field go and sit down to meet. Would not rather say unto him make ready wherewith I may sup and gird thyself and serve me till I have eaten and drunken and afterward you shall eat and drink.

The first mark of a servant. Quickly I'm just going to give you these real quickly out of this parable. Number one he is willing to have thing on top of thing put upon him.

The first mark of a servant he is willing to have thing on top of thing put upon him. Here's a servant now. Here's a servant who went to the field and work hard all day.

I was raised on the farm. We got up at 430 in the morning. We went to milk the cows.

We'd be done about 630. We'd eat breakfast and we'd finish breakfast about 7. And in the summer when I wasn't going to school, in the spring sometimes my dad would even get me out of school and I'd get on the tractor. Would go out and plow in the field and start early in the morning plowing in the field and the tractor would never stop all day long.

There'd be somebody there to take. He'd come out generally and and bring some lunch. If somebody had come by and bring some lunch I'd just stop the tractor long enough for someone else to get on in the field plowing.

I'd quickly eat my lunch and I'd get back on. And generally then in the afternoon and through the evening and whatever kind of plowing that was going on it would even go right on up to dark to the last minute that we could plow and it would come in worn out and tired all after a hard day's work. Well here we have a servant who's done that and then once he's come in a master says now cook me a meal and come and serve me and feed me.

And the servant says nothing about it. He is willing to have thing on top of thing put upon him and never complain. Never complain.

Jesus Christ there at the cross had thing upon top of thing and to finally he had all of the sins of all the world put upon him and he opened not his mouth neither was guile found therein. He never murmured. He never complained.

Oh how we how God had to deal with my own heart. My family was hurting.

I'd go out and serve hard all day long in the ministry and I'd come in tired and I didn't realize it till later I was making a decision between the car and the front door almost every evening I'd when I'd come in and that decision was it's over with now I'm going to go lay down and have some time for myself and I was making a selfish decision and the Lord showed me that when I got out of my car I needed to go toward the house and say Lord thank you that I had the privilege to serve the sheep all day now God I have the opportunity to serve a greater calling and that's my wife and my children Lord give me strength now I'm going into the house and I want to walk in a servant I want to walk in a servant by God's grace I can testify I have not perfected that but by God's grace I'm getting

better at that that heart of Christ is developing in me to serve willing to have thing on top of thing put upon me now again I don't want to teach here overloading yourself in church work that's not what I'm saying so that you become burned out the true servant is willing to have thing on top of thing come upon him and not complain that's the key and not complain often we're active in the church and we're doing it but we're complaining about it that's not a servant mark two verse nine doth he thank the servant because he did the things that were commanded him I think not number two after he served and had thing upon top of thing put upon him he's willing to be unthanked for it the second mark he's willing to be unthanked for it now with us oh I'm not I'm not teaching again that we

shouldn't show appreciation in our church oh God knows how much more that we need and how we ought to be thankful and so appreciation to those who are working and serving and laboring but a true servant is willing to labor and have thing each of these are going to be a one upon or have thing up on top of thing put upon him and then not be thanked and again you're going to notice again we're going to always say he

doesn't murmur or complain he goes unthanked nobody ever sees or nobody ever gives him any recognition or thanksgiving and he's willing to serve and not be thanked the third mark here so likewise ye when you shall have done all these things which are commanded you say you're unprofitable servants we've done that only which is our duty to do the third mark here I think we have to

infer something here I would say that the thought could easily come in about this master here well surely he's not too good of a master but the third mark is that even though he's not been thanked and even though he's had thing up on top of thing put upon him he doesn't charge the others with selfishness is it interesting about this servant he had every right to went back in his room and murmur and complain and say well my selfish master why didn't he get up and fix a meal and why didn't he do this so why didn't he do that but he's willing not only to be go unthanked but then he's willing not to charge others who are not doing what he's doing with selfishness how often do we find in our churches even in the pastors and church leaders that they're constantly talking around that is

constantly conversation among them about those who are not serving and it's critical and they say well they're just so selfish but a true servant is willing to serve and have thing up on top of thing put up on him go unthanked and then not condemn others or say others are selfish or self-centered or charge others with selfishness and then fourthly and I'm going through these quickly after that he takes no place of pride or self congratulations but rather he says I am unprofitable mercy I ought to be burning in hell ought to be being judged right now it's an act of mercy God that you even let me serve and then the fifth mark and having done all of that having had thing upon top of thing but upon him having gone unthanked and being unthanked and having not charged anyone else with

selfishness and having fallen on his face and claimed himself as unprofitable then he says I have only done that which was my duty to do he proclaims that he has not done one stitch more than he ought to have done I'll tell you we talk of holiness Christ surely must be holy you think about those five things oh I don't want to be like that so much and by God's grace I know I care but this is what Jesus was looking for in those disciples lives it wasn't there it wasn't there a servant a servant you say brother Al what's the result of the cross in a church leader's life a servant's heart a servant's heart and that's the result now praise God we're moving on to perfection and someday we're going to be just like that that's holiness isn't it that's what holiness is holiness is the ability and

love of God is the ability to tear out those five things in the heart you see how fruitful and how foolish it would be for anyone sitting here today to ever perceive you could ever do that on your own you can't the only way to ever do it is to die and let the one who has already done it live and reign in your life and heart live and reign in your own life and heart well we don't have much time to teach on the cross the doctrine of the cross but perhaps you know sufficient about that you say brother what I do don't go on your knees and say oh God I'm going to change don't go to your knees somewhere and say Lord I'm going to try to live this out go get someplace on your face before God and say oh God I see what you want me to be I see what Christ was God I can't do it but I want to and Lord

I pray oh God by faith and yieldedness by reckoning it by faith I confess my sin my selfishness and all of this self that is here and God I exercise faith that right now you're applying the cross into my own heart and life I met God in revival in 1975 about 12 years ago serenity is lordship and I use that as the point of revival not the point of meeting God at the cross as revival because that's when revival began and I came to the cross about three or four years later about four years later after that but I had taken all of the light that God had given me and I was yielding to it and so God was blessing me but I didn't know the message

of the cross other than I simply knew I had applied it even in 1975 I'd not used the term cross but I'd used the term surrender to his lordship when I was

God was beginning to give me spiritual insight to things and I went to school and to college and I went off to college and going off to college I went there and and I began to perceive that things weren't it just didn't seem to line up God was blessing and God was using and people being converted and I don't want to belittle anything but I didn't see things lining up with what I was seeing New Testament Christianity so I began to develop a prayer life that's all I knew to do is to go pray and see God I didn't know that was the right thing to do praise the Lord he leads the foolish amen praise the Lord he leads the blind by a path that they know not amen and who is blind but thy servant who is deaf but thy messenger never stop confessing that before God oh when I think of leading our

church there I constantly give them a face I say oh God who is blind but thy servant who is deaf but thy messenger but Lord I don't I'm not defeated in my own blindness and deafness God because I praise you that you're queer and I'm weak there you're great and you're going to lead the blind by a path that they know not but I remember my heart to surrender to God was such that even after being in school about three or four months I was reading in the life of Abraham and I didn't know much about the Bible but Abraham every time I read in Abraham everywhere he'd stop he'd he'd do two things he'd build an altar and pitch a tent so I was out in the woods praying and spending time in the woods daily and prayer before the Lord and basically just seeking his face and reading and I kept reading

about this altar and I began to memorize Romans 12 1 and 2 and there was a little bed creek down it dried up and so I began to take rocks out of that creek and I built an altar I didn't I knew the altar didn't mean anything the only thing it meant was that to me was I wanted to God to have a visible outward picture of what was happening inside of me but I finished that altar just uh oh just a stone high just big enough for me to get up I laid up on that altar and I didn't even lay up face toward heaven but I laid there face down to the ground and I said God I'm not even worthy to look up to you but Lord this is a picture right here this is a picture of what's happening in my heart oh God Lord I give myself as a living sacrifice unto thee and I place myself on this altar oh God and whether

it be through life or death or health or sickness or God whether no one ever knows I exist or word Lord you use me to minister to thousands I don't care God I just want to glorify Jesus and Lord I die well I had heard none of the teachings of the cross and I didn't know I used those terms in those days but I was preaching much the lordship of Christ well being in school I picked up a message like much like this be a champion for Christ I picked up a message of of a pastor that the bible teaching was that I was to go to church with a vision and a burden and I was to preach to those people that God has given me a vision and a burden and I want you to come and join hands with me and and then and labor with me that we might see this vision and this burden become a reality when the latter part

of my third year in seminary just before graduation I begin to study some of romans 6 and begin to memorize romans 6 I went into the ministry preaching that message about two years into the ministry this had been about two and a half years of just my private study of romans chapter 6 I went to the podium one sunday morning and I preached that message that I just shared it was a long message in length and I preached the vision that God had given us for our church and I preached that God had given me this vision and I wanted the people of the church and God wanted the people of the church to come and to serve and to join me and and in seeing this vision become a reality all the time I preached that morning there seemed to be no power and the cross had become a real thought in my life and

heart I knew something was wrong and so I just my wife went on home and I went to my office before the Lord and then I said God show me something's wrong there's a coldness here oh God something's wrong so I went back over the message and the Lord took the message of servanthip and he said brother Al what you just preached is not servanthip you see servanthip is going to your people and saying to them when you were saved God's got a purpose for every one of your lives God's given every one of you individually a vision and God's given you a desire to be used and I have simply been here to serve you I want to know what your vision is and what God's calling on your life is and what the Lord wants to do you and you come to me and I'll serve you instead of me asking you to serve me and what

God's called me to do then I'll serve you and there in that afternoon after I repented and got right before the Lord he never shows you resurrection much until you get right and after I repented and got right before the Lord and I was filled again with his spirit then the Lord showed me that if I took the summation of all the people he was going to bring to our church and the summation of their vision it would be the vision that God had given me but the only way to ever see it become is not to call upon people to follow me as a leader but call upon them to allow me to serve them so that afternoon there on my face I'd never seen myself so ugly before I'd never seen myself here in a pure heart I thought I was serving God and I believe I did have a pure heart but he just had not shown me

these things that were there and now God was showing me these things and I cannot tell you it took me three years because I again had no one that's what I meant by being beneath the cross I had no one it took the birth of my third child being born and with birth defects for me to understand that I again was pleasing to God that's how destitute and how miserable I saw myself before God prior to that time I was able to stand and preach with such a freedom and I am again now you probably sense that but prior to that time I'd had such freedom but for the next three years after coming to the cross I didn't have any freedom because I didn't have anybody like Ralph and Lucetira to say hey get on out from under the cross that's not the stopping point get on into the resurrection I remember I'd go

to the platform and I'd be so afraid I was going to get in God's way I many times just sort of wanted to get down behind the podium and speak so nobody had seen me because I had seen nothing more than a wretch a miserable wretch that afternoon who was trying to serve God but had done much of it for self-glory and so I know what Paul means when he says the cross is a treasure oh what a treasure it has freed me from that old wretched man that I am an old wicked man that I am that I might serve my God and glorify my God and honor him praise the Lord he that is dead is free I mean that's the message of Romans 6 it's a message of death but the praise of Romans 6 is that you are free and all dear brothers and sisters I went that night before the church and I wept and I apologize I said church

please forgive me please forgive me and all this last five years have been blessed years and they've been years of trials and years of struggle but have been very fruitful years very blessed years they're anointed years of the power of God you know what I'm afraid of my life sometimes I beg God oh God don't let me ever lose my destitution oh God please Lord don't give me grace I pray for as much grace to I pray more for I believe I pray more for grace to stay destitute than I pray for the filling of the spirit of God I just don't want to ever get in his way again and I have in these five years and God shows me praise the Lord I praise God for conviction that he shows me and I can go make it right again before him but all my dear brothers and sisters going back to the beginning of the

message only when kingdom life is pouring out of you like fountains of living water will you have a church that becomes a fountain of living water you say brother I want to do I can't help you but I know one who

can I know one who can three things that help you when you go to the prayer room if some of you may go I don't know three things you need to know when you go there there's the power of the blood go first and meet the blood of Christ the power of the blood is sufficient enough to forgive you and cleanse you and justify you then once you've dealt with the blood of Christ then secondly deal with the cross there's power of the cross the blood cleanses you and forgives you but that's not sufficient you need the application of the cross to your self-life yourself and lust and pride and

ambition to be and so then exercise faith and the power of the cross to put you and all that is in you to death but don't stop there then go to the power of the resurrection and ask the holy spirit to fill you and energize you and restore you to kingdom life now that's the gospel that's the message of revival is Jesus there's power in the blood power in the cross and power in the resurrection and the gospel that's the gospel isn't it amen so you know I'm not theologically off that's the gospel and romans 1 says the power of the gospel there's sufficient power in the gospel to save us to save us not only from eternal damnation but to save us day by day amen that's the gospel I'm not varying from the message of the new testament just the gospel go to the blood let me tell you brothers and

sisters you don't need a lord you need a lamb whose blood is flowing then you need a lamb who died in your place and with you that you might die with him and then once across then you need a resurrected lord amen go meet Jesus go get on your face and meet Jesus and meet him as blood and cross and holy spirit as bower heads together brother Lou just comes to the instrument and just begins to play softly someone comes and just plays softly for us if they would the instrument anyone who could come the cross a little song must Jesus bear the cross alone just to play that softly if you would now father I pray you'd have your will and way right now in this place oh god we're so helpless lord we can't even repent oh god lord we've by your spirit we've seen our need today now god we know that you

did that now lord we need to repent to exercise faith and we need your holy spirit to help us in those matters too lord we're so helpless at every point we turn we need you so father would you pour out your spirit now humble the hearts of men and women and do your work in them just in the quietness of the moment the prayer room is open you may want to just cover the altar here go to the prayer room make that pew an altar right now as god's leading and working in your own heart and life you go god speak into your heart just obey the lord right now and go go god speak of your heart obey him and go be like the blind Bartimaeus cry cry oh thou son of david have mercy on me oh god go jesus is waiting to meet you but you must go meet him the place of prayer so the invitation is given the prayer

room is open join those who are already there

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/19/SID19757.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/al-henson/the-church-leader-and-the-cross/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net