

Embrace the Cross

by Al Whittinghill

The cross is the answer to our greatest need, the remedy for who we are, and the way to true freedom.

Duration: 1:09:52

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 2:1

Topics: "Cross of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker describes the story of Barabbas, a criminal who was sentenced to be crucified. The speaker vividly portrays the fear and agony Barabbas experienced as he awaited his execution. However, to Barabbas' surprise, he hears the warden proclaiming good news instead of carrying out his sentence. The speaker then explains that the self-life and pride hinder us from experiencing the presence of Jesus Christ. He encourages the audience to let go of their self-centeredness and embrace the freedom and love that comes from surrendering to Jesus.

Transcript

There was a little sign on my father's mirror in his bathroom. They live in Chapel Hill still. He's 87.

And I was cleaning his sink on a trip home, and I was looking on his mirror. He loves little sage sayings. And this particular saying really grabbed me.

And it was this. It says, It's what you learn after you know it all that counts. Well, it was a cold and a clammy and a dark night.

And the condemned prisoner sat over in the corner of his dungeon. And he had a terrible night. You see, he knew it was his last night to be alive on the earth.

His last crime had been committed and he had been condemned. And now he was waiting execution. And it was a night of doom and fear.

And so he crouched over in the corner. He rehearsed what would happen the next morning. He knew what would happen the next morning.

He would hear those footsteps coming down the hall, down that long hall. And outside his door, he'd hear the keys come out clanking. And he'd hear that big key slapping that big lock.

The big bolt would slide back and the door would open. There'd be a burst of air coming in. And he would then be bound with the rope and drug out to a dreaded spot like an animal.

And then he'd be nailed to a cross. It was hours of agony for him as he spent that night. He could just anticipate the jeers and the crowd.

Little boys would get flints and try to put the eyes out of the men hanging on the cross to see who could hit the eye. They did that. And he dreaded that.

And he was doomed. He had to pay for his crimes. Well, the morning did come and he did hear those footsteps and the keys rattling in the bolt.

And as the door opened and that air came in, the blood was hammering in his head. And there was this silence. And then in terror, as he crouched over in the corner, drawing back, he heard these words.

Barabbas, have you heard the good news? What good news? You come to execute me. No, Barabbas, you haven't heard, have you? Someone is dying for you. Someone's taking your place.

What do you mean? Come, I'll show you. And so out the door by the arm, not by the neck, by a rope, but by the arm. This warden took Barabbas out through this dreaded corridor, out through the prison gates, out into the busy Passover streets of Jerusalem, out beyond the city gate.

And there they stopped. And Barabbas had dungeon eyes, you know, and he wasn't used to this kind of light. And so is that warden pointed his arm toward this slope.

He said, do you see that hill and those three crosses? And Barabbas blinked because his eyes weren't used to light like this. Nobody's arm. And as he looked, they said, yes, there are three.

But Barabbas, do you see that middle cross? The one in the middle? Yes, yes, I see. Well, that man there is taking your place. That cross was custom made just for you.

You were supposed to have been there. He's taking your penalty and your crimes. You mean that man there is actually taking my place? He's dying for me and my place.

Yes, yes. That's what I told you, Barabbas. That's what I. But Barabbas didn't hear a word, you see, because his mind was lost in amazement as he looked at that man.

He thought, can it be possible? I don't understand that he could be being executed for my crimes and he didn't really understand it. But somehow he knew it was true. And the warden said, yes, Barabbas, you're free to start a whole new life.

You can start all over. But Barabbas didn't even hear because his mind was so caught up in that deep inward identification. As he looked at that man, something hard melted on the inside.

He didn't know what happened, but he was drawn to him in some strange way. And he knew he would never be the same again because that man on the middle cross. Well, let me tell you, some of you in this room are in a dungeon and you dread every single day.

You like conferences like this. But when you go back to work, you dread every day you're you get up and you say, oh, no, here's another day. It's a prison.

It's not brick. It's not bars, but it's invisible prison. And you know it.

If nobody else does, you're captured in there and you rest. You're haunted by your past. You're intimidated by your future and you're troubled by your present.

And every day is a is a prison and you dread what you don't know is going to happen to you. And so if you listen tonight, you can hear the footsteps of the warden because you see he has the key to your door and he'll pause there. And when he opens that door, you'll feel a burst of air like you've never felt before.

And you may be afraid, but he will take you out beyond the camp of man, out beyond the Passover streets. And he will point his arm down through the ages, down toward a hill called Calvary. And you won't be used to this kind of light.

Your eyes will blink and you'll say, I've never seen anything like this before. And he will say to you, do you see that man on that middle cross? I think I see. You see, not everybody that looks sees the blind man can look through a telescope and he sees nothing.

Do you see that man on the middle cross? Yes, I do see. Well, that cross was meant to be your cross. It wasn't just the cross of all humanity.

It was custom made just for you. And your crimes are paid for there. And he's getting what you deserve.

And as you look and meditate on that man on the middle cross, something hard will melt on the inside and walls will fall down and chains will be disappearing. And and you will never be the same again. You will be free to start over a whole new life of the cross.

It's the blessed work of the cross, the word of the cross, the way of the cross, the wonder of the cross. And it's the place of true blessing. Look at First Corinthians chapter one.

I want to look there with you at the word of the cross, not just a revelation of the cross, but we need a realization of the cross in our life. We need to experience what God had in mind when he called us to take up the cross, his cross, a specific purpose in our Christian life without the cross. All that we've heard will not be operative in your life.

You will not have the ability to lay aside the past and all the rest without the cross in your life. First Corinthians chapter one. Paul is writing to a church surrounded by commerce and materialism, just like our church in America.

And he says to this church in verse 17, Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. But the preaching for the preaching of the word of the cross is to those that are perishing foolishness. But unto us, which are saved, it is the power, the dynamite, the dunamis of God to those who don't understand the heart of God, who do not fear the Lord.

The cross seems like a foolish thing, like some of the things in the previous talk by Raleigh, how he said this seems weird to the world. It always will. But to us, which are saved by the power of God, it is the very blessed word of the cross to us.

Over in chapter two, you see Paul again saying verse one, I brothers, when I came to you, I didn't come with excellency of speech, homiletics, hermeneutics, gesticulation, all the rest. Although he could have

declaring this testimony of God to you, I determined I fixed it not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.

And my speech and my preaching was not with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but rather in a demonstration of the spirit and of power. Why so that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. We need to see the gospel proclaimed in such a way in our day that it gets beyond just the desire to hear the speaker on an enticing way.

But it has an impact on our life that gives us the credibility and the power to stand and pledge allegiance no matter what. Lions, guillotines, jobs we hate, marriages that are difficult, situations that happen that we don't anticipate. Breakdowns in communication, no matter what we can walk through it victoriously because we've been to the cross and something hard has melted.

You see, his word to a church pressured by the world, the place of liberty, the answer for the problems in the church in America, the racial melting point, the starting point of all revival, the place of continuous revival, the place God takes you and leaves you after revival is the old rugged cross. You say, well, brother, you need to get beyond the cross to the upper room. You're right about that.

But after the upper room, where does he take you back to the cross, back to the cross? We'll lay this cross down one day, but it will be in your open grave. And the cross that you carried on Earth will carry you into the sky right to the very bosom of the Lord Jesus. It is no wonder that Paul exclaimed in a amazement.

He said in Galatians 6:14, God forbid that I should boast, have confidence in anything save the cross of Jesus Christ, by whom I am crucified to the world and the world to me. There's a bridge that once I used to try to go back and forth across back to safety, but God burned that bridge and now I can't get back to the world. God forbid that I should place confidence in anything.

Now, tonight, I want to ask you this. If you ask your best friend, what is so and so's confidence about you, your confidence? What would he say? Or if you ask your enemy, what is this man's confidence? I wonder what he would say. Well, the real important thing, though, is what you would say.

You see, my attitude toward the cross of the Lord Jesus is either my greatest blessing or either my greatest sin. As long as the church, when the cross of Christ is discarded, then the message of the church will be discredited. We've got to get back to the old rugged cross.

Now, perhaps you've been saved for some time now. You've been a believer in Jesus. You've prayed and you've given your heart and life to him.

You know that he's forgiven your sins. You're under the blood. You're sincere.

You love the Lord in your heart. You pray. You study.

You give. You try to obey God with all your heart. But deep down inside, you feel like a muzzle dog.

Any kind of dog, Doberman, whatever else, but you feel like a muzzle dog and you feel like you're you're just not living that victorious life. That the Lord Jesus died, you know, he died to give to you, not just to escape from judgment, but to be brought into victory. And you're frustrated down deep.

And you know that you're not experiencing that despite all the wonderful teaching of your pastor and the men around you that are walking in dedication. And you plan carefully. There's a lack of power in your life

and you know it.

You can't forgive and you can't have faith and you can't walk. Multitudes in our country want to know how to live a victorious life and they seem to be locked outside the door and they don't know how the word promises perfect grace and faith that overcomes the world and joy unspeakable. But we don't know how to obtain it.

But tonight we're going to lay it out. It's a doorway that God wants you to go through. It's a narrow door because only that which is the Lord Jesus can go through it.

But the Holy Spirit tonight wants to point us with his long arm back to that cross where Jesus died, the fixed point of all the ages where we said Friday night, this cross was in the heart of God before sin was ever in the heart of man. This was an eternal purpose. This was what he was after.

I wonder if you've ever faced and really encountered the crisis of a personal cross where the cross has become your cross. It must be more than what you see and understand. It must be embraced and realized.

In fact, the cross for a Christian is only come to be known on God's anvil. He has to put you on his anvil and teach you about the cross like that. So here's what happens to a lot of people.

It happens to me, happens to you. It has happened. I become a Christian and I trust the power of Jesus and the blood to save me to cover my sins.

All that I've done and all that I'll ever do under the blood of Jesus Christ. But soon I discover as a Christian that I've got a bigger problem than what I've done wrong and the things that I do wrong. I have a greater need because I need more than just mercy for my crimes.

I need a remedy for who I am. I need something to take the power of this production of sin my life away. You see, there seems to be something wrong inside the fortress of my soul.

What is this enemy, this traitor that is in me that keeps having me fight against the very things I love the most? Something is needed to free me from this selfishness that makes me treat my children a certain way and my wife a certain way. This grip of the visible, this prisoner of time, this this power of the just the noise around me. Well, you see, sell the self life is the great hindrance to experiencing the Savior's life, the glorious presence of Jesus Christ.

The big guy crowds out the great I am. You see, only when the big guy in the middle of pride becomes a zero. Can you really experience freedom only when the big guy in the middle of S.I.N. becomes a zero? Is there really the S.O.N.? Only when the big guy in L.I.V.E. becomes a zero.

Can you really be free to L.O.V.E. like we've been hearing from dear brother Raleigh? Only then you can if you're waiting to measure the love for your for your neighbor as you love yourself, you'll never get anywhere. You got to forget yourself because you see, it's not self-love that's the measure. It's forgetting yourself.

That's the measure. Like Jesus didn't mark his own self. So the wonderful good news is that when the Lord Jesus took my sins to the cross, he just didn't take my sins.

He took the sinner, too. He took the sinner, too. And this is the glorious thing.

You see that it's that there's two things we need to grip and lay hold of. It's great. If you've never read that book, the normal Christian life by watchman, either as first two chapters, the first chapter is on the blood.

The second chapter is on the cross. And these two things are what every Christian man needs to understand. We talk about the blood and I'm not the least bit minimizing the power of the blood.

My favorite preaching is on the blood almost. But we need more than the blood of Jesus Christ that shed for what we've done. See, the blood of Jesus Christ is shed for my sins, plural, what I have done and my conduct.

The cross of Jesus Christ is God's answer for my sin, my principle that's operating in me. And this is who I am. This is my condition.

I need the blood for my conduct, what I've done wrong, and I need the cross to settle and change my condition. You see, one deals with the penalty of sin. That's the blood.

And the cross deals with the power of sin, the sin factory that keeps on making us weep and cry over the same old thing. I need more than mercy for my crimes. I need a remedy for who I am.

You see, the blood does not deal with the flesh. The blood deals with my sins, the flesh is Satan's workshop, even in the Christian. And the flesh cannot be cleansed.

The flesh must be crucified. God's remedy for my flesh is not correction. It's crucifixion.

No flesh can ever glory in his presence. Now, I'm going to tell you something. Humanism hates this truth.

They always hope there's a little spark, a divine spark. God, the father of all. Fan it enough and divinity and men will awaken.

This is the whole New Age idea. But I'm going to tell you what you can look a long time before you ever find a spark in Adam. Unless it's fool's fire, only God can bring a man to life.

Thank God he will free me from the penalty of my sin and the power of sin. It says be from sin, the double cure and the old him when they used to understand theology and write great hymns and sing about it. You see, no man is free who still drags a chain around.

Doesn't matter whether you change or gold or whether they're iron. There's still a chain. They're still holding you just the same.

They can be rich change or poor change. There's still change. Have you ever wondered why you have to deal with the same thing over and over again, whether it's lust or whatever it is? And and you fail and fall, maybe in some area you thought you said, Lord, I thought this was settled.

You see, it's not just a matter of doing. It's a matter of being. It's a matter of being.

And God wants to settle that in us tonight. Let me give you an illustration about the power of the blood and the power of the cross. Let's suppose that I moved out in the suburbs of Chicago.

Raleigh found me a nice house out there and kind of the farm area. And I'm out there and and all these houses have nice bar a barn out behind them. And I'm sitting out there.

My wife and I are enjoying breakfast one morning and out in back of our house as we're there. We see this crazy neighbor that his name is Barney Burns, and he's out there in our backyard with a blowtorch and he is setting my barn on fire with his blowtorch. And my wife says, honey, honey, look, look, look, Barney Burns is burning down our barn.

And I say, oh, oh, and I run over to the phone and I and I know it's my I see flames begin to erupt. And I say, who do I call? So I call the fire department and out they come with their red coats and their sirens and they push and they put out the barn. But in the meantime, Barney Burns has gone to my neighbor's barn barn Raleigh.

I don't know where he lives, but I suppose he has a barn and he's setting Raleigh's barn on fire. And the firemen look over and say, oh, another fire. And they run and push.

They're putting it out. In the meantime, Barney's gone down to the next house and he's putting that barn on fire to see who do you call? Do you call the fire department or the police department? You need both. You need the fire department to put out the results of Barney Burns's crime, which is arson.

And you need the police department to take the blowtorch from Barney Burns hand. You see, it's an amazing thing because we need the blood of Jesus Christ to take away the power of what we've done and the results of it. But we need the power of the cross to take the blowtorch out of Adam's hand.

Let's give another illustration. Let's suppose in my laundry room, there's a nice faucet there, a spigot that my wife used to fill up a bucket. One day I come home, there's water all over the floor.

And I say, oh, no, my spigot is leaking. And so I go in and I get a mop and I mop it up perfectly. And it's dry as a bone.

And I said, I should take care of that. I come back the next day and lo and behold, there's water there again. And I say, oh, no.

And so I go to the store. I say, I must not have been careful enough. I buy a manual on mopping and and I come home and I use a more clever technique and better form and mopping.

I keep my back straight and move out just right. And I make it perfect. And that takes care of that.

Well, I come back the next day and there's still water there. And I say, well, this just is not working. I'm going to I'm going to go to Bill Muppet and I go to Bill Muppet moppings class.

And I learn all about mopping skillfully and big red manual about mopping. It should work. And I come home and it's still it's still wet the next day.

So I call it Acme Mopping Company, bring in specialists and they mop and do all these things. And the next day there's still water on the floor. Finally, you know, women can do this.

And I just hate this about women. I got to be honest. You know, your wife walks by.

She says, honey, have you ever thought about putting a new washer in there? You know, it's so simple. And I'm sitting there doing all these busy things, you know, and I got by a 25 cent washer, put it in that faucet and it stops the drip. You see, I've been so busy mopping up sins that I haven't been stopping the drip.

And you see, a lot of Christians are like that. They're so busy. They're so busy mopping up sin that they haven't ever stopped the leak.

And they're still dripping. And there's a sound of drip, drip, drip in their life. We need to deal with the source of the problem, not just the result.

I mean, we go from counselor to counselor and they tell us all these God loves you and comfort you. And the drip is still there. We leave a slow drip and this is big puddle there.

See, too many people are just mopping up sins instead of mortifying self. And quit mopping up sin to start getting to the cause of the of the problem that's causing the symptoms. You see, God's way of salvaging me as a sinner is not to just improve me.

It's not to mend me. It's to end me. We don't like to hear that.

His remedy for a sinner is to liquidate him, liquid to get rid of him. You say, well, how how do you find that? Well, it says no more. I, but Christ, I am crucified with Christ to get beyond simple rededication and rededication to what it says renunciation of self.

And you can never get to reconciliation in the body of Christ until the members of the body of Christ get to renunciation of self. Before you can ever melt together, you've got to renounce the things and renounce self that keeps men apart. It's not just an improved life.

It's a totally new one that God wants to give to me. And not just a new leaf that I turn over in this whole matter, but a new life that God gives to me, the very nature and mind of Christ. So the cross, you see, was God saying to Adam and all of man, I am through with the old Adam Improvement Society.

I am tired of men trying to be better than he could ever be. There's none righteous. No, not one.

They're all together become as an unclean thing. There's no hope for improvement. Jesus said it this way.

The flesh profits nothing. It's the spirit that gives life that which is flesh is flesh. What is flesh? Well, flesh, if you if you spell it backwards and knock off the H, you'll find out what it is itself.

That's exactly what it is. It's everything good and bad that I was born with when I was born. It's not just a sin.

It's the whole self-life, the whole me. It's it's what God wants to deal with. And it's the enmity of a carnal mind.

Now, Romans six takes the blowtorch from Adam's hand, and I want to go there to Romans six. And I want to just look at that tonight, because I believe that God wants to take some blowtorches from some people's hearts and hands tonight. And in some fire starters that have been going on for a long time, you see, here's what we think, brother, each of us believe this kind of deceptive thought.

We say I'm going to another Bible conference. If I could just discover the key to being holy, I'm sure if I could discover it, I would do it immediately. And so we think that our problem is a lack of information or a lack of some hidden key.

And so we're trying to find more and more key. We quickly do it. But you see, I'm going to tell you something, brother.

The Bible says our problem is not ignorance. Our problem is depravity. You can't put a tuxedo on a pig and take him to the prom.

He's still a pig. And the flesh life, the self-life, God says, I want to knock Adam off his pedestal, his ivory pedestal. And I put him in the dirt before he belongs.

That's where he came from. And that's where he'll find his truest meaning, worshiping me in the beauty of holiness. Romans chapter six in those first 18 verses, God gives two things.

He gives a fact that is done, which is the work of the cross. It's complete. And then he gives, starting in verse 11, something to take by faith.

So the first eight verses deal, the first 10 verses deal with the fact, the revelation of the cross that I am crucified with Christ. And then after that, it shows how to realize that fact to walk by faith. It says, what shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid.

God's norm, you see, is he shall save his people out of their sins. How shall we that are dead or died to sin live any longer therein? No, ye not. In other words, it says, are you ignorant that as many of us that were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? This is a fact.

It's a fact. Therefore, we are entombed, buried with him by baptism into death, that in the same way as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the father. Even so, we also should walk in newness of life, resurrection life.

It means for since or if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, which we just heard, we were we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection. Here it is again. Knowing this is something you've got to know that that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed.

We might be released from it. It means that from henceforth we would not be serving yielded to it says sin for he that is dead. He that's been buried, meaning with Christ, is freed from sin.

Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe we shall also live with him. Here's something else. Knowing you got to know this, Christ being raised in the dead dies no more.

Death has no more dominion over him. He died. He died to sin once.

But in that he lives, he lives under God. All that's a fact. It is an absolute work of the cross.

It's past tense. It's complete. You'll never have to add anything to it.

It's done forever. If you're a Christian tonight, you were crucified with Christ. The self-life was taken to the cross and God sees you as dead.

Verse 11, though, deals with realizing that fact something you have to appropriate. The first part, all you have to do is acknowledge, but the second part you have to appropriate by faith. And in verse 11, it says, likewise, in the same way as Christ, reckon yourselves also to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Jesus Christ.

Our Lord do not let sin keep on lording it over your mortal body or reigning, taking control of your mortal body so that you should keep on obeying it. In the lusts thereof, do not be yielding your members as instruments of unrighteousness under sin, but yield at one point in time forever. Always, it says yield at one point in time.

An heiress imperative. Do it now forever. Yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive now from the dead on the other side of the grave.

Your faith has taken you. Your members are instruments of righteousness unto God for sin shall not have dominion over you. Say that for sin shall not have dominion over you.

Do you believe that you got to appropriate that you see the three key words in this passage? And the first key word, if you're really going to know if you're really going to experience the victory of the cross is knowing three key words. The first one is knowing. And that's in verse six.

We read that. And in verse nine, we got to know this. And this then says it's a present participle.

It says this, that you must know this is a fact. Colossians says you are dead and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Just as real as if tonight there was a firing squad out here for every one of us as we left this room and then lined us up and shot us all right between the eyes with a submachine gun.

You'd be dead. How much trouble would you have with lust tomorrow? How much trouble would you have with smoking? As my little boy says smoking, how much trouble would you have with that? You wouldn't have any trouble with that smoking like that because you'd be dead. But you've got to know this.

You see, most of us don't believe we're dead, but we must continually know that I am dead. Death is a past tense fact for Christians. Now, see, but you got to take that by faith if you're going to experience it, but you've got to know this.

It is a fact. But you see, after you know this, the second word is you must reckon. That's the second word.

Verse 11, it says, likewise, reckon you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin. So reckon here is a second person present imperative. It actually means this.

It means that you must count it. So you must take up your cross. You must say yes to the cross and you must own it.

There was a man at a men's conference here one time who we were talking about how this one fellow really had victory and he gave his wife an imaginary gun. He gave her the gun and he says, every time you see me walk in what you consider to be flesh, I want you to take out this imaginary gun and go. Bang, you're dead, you have to say it, but just bang, you're dead.

And he the next conference came back and he said he said that was a great thing for me, because when I start getting in my flesh. You start letting my own self take over and don't let the Lord Jesus love my wife. All she has to do is get this little twinkle in her eye.

This is suicide, brother, and this little smile on her face. And she just kind of goes like this, like, bang, you're dead because I have to keep reminding myself. I must know that it is so that I am dead and I must then agree with God and and and trust him that this is so.

This is a willing on my part in accordance with facts. It's what it means over in Romans eight, when it says in verse 13, it says, for if you live after the flesh, you will die. But if you through the Holy Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you will live.

Let me tell you something. A mortician doesn't kill anybody. If he did, he'd go to jail.

A mortician only makes more perfect than a death that's already there. The person that's there and that's the sense of that you are dead. And if you mortify the behavior by the Holy Spirit, you yield your will to the Holy Spirit.

And you say, I reckon that what God says about me is true. I am dead. I don't have to defend myself.

I don't have to run to my rescue. I don't have to save anything. Stand up for my rights in the name of Jesus.

I am dead. I'm identified with him. I count it.

So I reckon it. So I'm dead to sin. Let me tell you something.

You'll never overcome sin. The Bible says died of sin. So we get it backwards.

We try to overcome sin and die to the world. The Bible says we're to overcome the world, but died of sin. You keep trying to I like the illustration where, you know, when sin comes to the door, you send Jesus to answer.

And you'll find nobody's there. But if you answer the door, oh, God, here comes that temptation again. And you come and say, you hear this sin out there and you open the door.

He'll reach in there and grab you out of the car and just grab you and pull you right to the door and just smash your face. And boy, you'll wish you hadn't answered the door. But I tell you what, he just beats you to a pulp.

But you send Jesus. I remember in seminary, I was a single man and I was struggling with it. All single men struggle with.

I was I was trying to keep myself pure, but I was struggling before just all the barrage of the visible. And I would I would I would fall and I would with private immorality. I'm just being blunt with you.

I'd struggle and I would fall and I would cry. And I think I think my sorrow for that was enough to offer God to the next time I was tempted. But I knew in my spirit I was quenching the Holy Ghost in my life.

And I began to seek a drift in the anointing on the street ministry. We had I wasn't the same. I wasn't having those divine appointments.

God was trying to get my attention. And I remember I I would say, oh, God, here comes that temptation again. I can just feel it because, you know, when the devil's setting the table, don't you? Don't you? I'm don't you? You don't want to admit it, but you do.

You know, when the devil's met, if the Lord prepares a banqueting table, let me tell you, the devil does, too. And, you know, you can hear the silverware tinkling when he's getting out of the dishwasher. What he's planning to have you sit down at, you know, you know.

Don't play dumb, you want to be dumb, you know, I just don't know what the Bible says about this. Oh, yes, you do. You do.

And I remember I was praying. I said, God, here comes that temptation again. Oh, God, give me the power.

And the Lord says, Al, are you tired of trying to overcome sin? I said, I'm so tired. I failed so many times. He said, I'm glad you're trying to overcome sin because you can't overcome sin.

I said, what? I mean, it was too smart to be from my thoughts. I'm telling you, it was God. It's what you learn after you know it all that counts.

He said, listen, he said, you can't overcome sin. I'm the sin overcomer. Only Jesus can overcome sin.

Your problem is, you see, you don't have to overcome sin. You just need to let me overcome you. I saw it.

When trouble knocks at your door instead of you answering, you send Jesus to the door and you'll find that what God says about you is true, that you are more than a conqueror through Christ who loves you and gave himself for you. But you see, it's more than just knowing that it's true and saying, God, I know it's true. I died at Calvary when you died.

I died. You didn't just take my sins. You took me and I'm out of the way.

Thank God that thing doesn't have power over me because I'm on the other side of the grave. But then there's a positive, a great positive. And that's in verse 13, where it says, do not be yielding or giving over your bodily members as weapons of unrighteousness resulting in sin.

But yield. It's this great word yield. It's an heiress imperative, and it's meaning at one point in time you present the same word that's over in chapter 12, verse one.

It's the presentation of a pleasing sacrifice to God. It's an acceptable holy sacrifice, a sacrifice that's been cleansed by the blood. It's sinless in the sense.

And you come and you say now once and for all, I give this to you and no takes back as the child would say at one point in time, the point of reality. I remember being in Korea and I preached one night on the cross and this Korean people told me they said the Koreans are not emotional people. And I said, well, you know, the Holy Ghost is more powerful than culture.

And at the end of that service that night, I gave them the opportunity. I said, I want to turn these these chairs. We have into an altar.

I talked about a presentation of your members as a living sacrifice to the Lord Jesus Christ to say from now on, these hands belong to you. I'm not my own. I'm bought with the price and I give these hands to you and they will touch nothing that you and the flesh on Earth would not touch.

These eyeballs are your eyeballs. And by the grace of God, I will not let them feast on anything that you would not look at if you were here. This tongue, all these members belong to you and this chair you're in young Korean is an altar.

And I want you to get down and get on it as an act of consecration, have a funeral for you and have a coronation for Jesus. You see, you know that you're dead and you reckon it. So and you yield yourself to God once and for all.

And I'll never forget that these young people begin to go down to their knees and this corporate this wailing began to come from deep down in the spirit. This deep moving from down inside and this whale began to go up and and some of the leaders, we were the Korean leaders. They weren't used to this.

We didn't know what to do. And so I said, Lord, what do we do? It went on for about an hour. These people just moaning before God doing business with God.

And finally, we just said, well, if God did it, God will take care of and we just left him there for the whole afternoon. And God, God did a wonderful thing. God did a wonderful thing as they just moaned and God set them free and they just got right with God.

They began to know that they really are dead. This is not you see, it's the work of the cross. You are dead in your life is hidden with Christ in God.

And it's the way of the cross reckoning, daily reckoning, taking up the cross, counting it. So and a walk of the cross yield yourself to God. Keep on on the other side of the grave.

It's really a giving of yourself away, a faith choice, living out of that first once and for all commitment that you present your body. It's an it's an act at one point in time that you live out of and in like a glorious seed. You're planted with him at that moment of the cross.

So you see, it's not just knowing this. It's the application of truth that sets you free, not just the acquiring of it. You can have a notebook full of great truth and still be carnal as the day is long.

If you're not really trusting Jesus, I love this poem here. It's called well, just listen to the poem. Oh, the bitter pain and sorrow that a time could ever be when I proudly said to Jesus all of self and none of the yet he found me and I beheld him bleeding on the accursed tree and my wistful heart said faintly some of self and some of the day by day.

His tender mercy, healing, helping, full and free bought me lower while I whispered less of self, more of the higher than the highest heavens, deeper than the deepest sea. Lord, at last I love has conquered none of self and all of the all of the all of the that's the heart of victory. And as we do that, confirmed by an attitude that goes on, God's victory begins to come forth.

Brother, have you ever come to the place in your life where you've realized that you can't be improved? God doesn't want to improve you. He wants to impart himself, but you've got to embrace the cross. You see, our pride is hurt.

It's painful to take out your wallet and take out your card card carrying member old Adam Improvement Society. Cut it up, burn it, throw it away. Adam will never get better.

It's not just the bad things that Jesus takes. It's not just your smoking, drinking, lying and sleeping around that he wants to take. It's the good things, too.

You see, because goods all relative when it comes to flesh, you see, God says no flesh can glory. You see, dead men are worth their weight in gold. They're hard to find, they're hard to find sober minded dead

men, and humanism just treat this like a cold water coming in their face.

They don't like it. And you see, this is an offense to a churchy society when the world is churchy and the church is worldly. It's just an offense because you see, when when the church has the mentality that Jesus is just another way to get blessed, this kind of stuff they won't listen to.

But you see, everything that's natural is of Adam. There is a foe of hidden power. The Christian will may fear more subtle far than outward sin to the heart more dear.

It's the power of selfishness that proud and willful I and before my Lord can reign in me, my very self must die. So see, I'm not called to just give up things for Jesus. It's not a partial thing.

It's all of me. See, conversion is a birth. But let me tell you something.

Sanctification is a daily death. Conversion is a new birth, but as we are born, then there's a daily dying, like Paul. Paul said in first Corinthians fifteen fifty one.

He said, I die daily. And he would say this amazing thing. He lived like this.

Look at first Corinthians chapter one and second Corinthians chapter one. And it's an amazing thing. In verse eight, he reminds the Corinthian church of trouble that came upon them while they were in Asia.

He says to this church, he's saying this is how we had victory over impossible circumstances. Second Corinthians chapter one, verse eight. We would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came upon us in Asia.

We were pressed out of measure above our own strength in so much that we despaired even of our life. They hated it, but we had the sentence of death in ourselves. See, he knew that he was a dead man.

He knew his life had been given over to God at Calvary and that all rights for safety and everything else were surrendered at that point. We have the sense of death in ourselves. We're dead at any moment.

You want to act it out in practical application. That's right. Because to be absent from the bodies, to be present with the Lord, to be with Christ is far better.

If we have to stay here for a glorious, privileged ministry, we'll do it. But if we had our brothers, we'd rather go home. We had the sentence of death in ourselves so that we wouldn't trust in ourselves.

But in God, who keeps on raising the dead, he delivered us from so great a death. And he does deliver us. And we trust that he will yet deliver us.

See, that's a man who's got eternity on his spiritual retina, like a flashbulb burns on your eyeballs for everything you see. You see a blue dot and everything you look at, you see through. You don't look at.

We don't look at the things that are seen. We see the things that are not seen. We see through.

We don't look at. We don't just see the outer. We see, Lord, what are you doing here? I've got to set my human ability aside and lose my life to experience his.

Let me say this. The resurrection life, the resurrection life of the Lord Jesus Christ will be experienced in the direct proportion that I am willing to forego my own life. I will experience his resurrection in the in the

depth that I let go of my own life.

You see, he Jesus is the undertaker. That's right. He'll undertake for me, but he only undertakes for dead men only.

Resurrection life is for dead men only. And I've got to take my death on the cross and appropriate his life in me. And after I say the faith, yes, to him, I realize it's his life coming through.

It must be no more. I but Christ. Now, to those who receive this truth, it's the power of God unto salvation.

When the world is no longer rebuked by our lives, then what's happened is we've compromised. You see, you can it's all right to wear a cross as long as it has diamonds in it. And the night we live in a day when a Christian man can sing in a nightclub.

If he wants to, he can wear a diamond studded cross that catches the nightclub lights like anybody else. And it's OK to sing the world songs as long as you throw in at the end. I'd rather have Jesus.

But I'm going to tell you something. It's a far cry from what the Bible says is really taking up the cross. The cross represents rejection and reproach and separation from society.

There are a lot of people who spare themselves in in the church. Five times the Lord Jesus Christ said more than anything else. He said these five times he said this in like in Matthew 16, 24 and five, when he says, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.

Then what do you say? For whosoever will seek to save his life will lose it. But whosoever will lose his life for my sake and the Gospels, he shall keep it or he shall find it. He says that in Matthew 16 and Mark eight and Mark 10 and in Luke nine, he adds one word.

He says, you must take up his cross every day and follow me. It's a daily death he's talking about. What's he saying by that to seek to save our own life? I think it means this.

We're in a situation at home or at work. And like Raleigh described, and there's this chance to save ourselves, to come to our own rescue and defend all that we stand for. And the Lord Jesus says, if you seek to save your own life, you're going to miss the real deal here.

But if you will lose your life like we heard what Raleigh did for my sake and the gospel, if we'll let go and let the Lord Jesus have the glory in our own humiliation, if it's necessary, whatever it takes to be conformed to the image of his death, we let go. Then the Lord Jesus can bring rectification and show who he is. May take a while like it did for him, but he will always it may be at the judgment seat of Christ or the resurrection of the just.

But the day is coming where all will be restored and rectified. You see, God says, if you seek to to surrender, if you seek to defend yourself, if you seek to walk by sight, if you seek to hold on to your own personality, brother, are you sharing your faith? No, I'm just not a very talkative person. Well, take that silent person to the cross and humble yourself and let the Lord Jesus speak through you because he has a word to say to that neighbor of yours.

Well, are you going to spend time in prayer? I'm just not very, very eloquent in prayer. Well, take that slumbering, lazy person to the cross. I'm speaking to myself.

You see, the person that won't do the carnal mind that won't do can't do chooses not to do what God says the remedy is not waiting on him, but taking him to the cross and saying it's not I that matters. It's Christ. Quit evaluating your Christian future by your pagan past.

Quit evaluating your potential in the Lord Jesus by your own personality and your own intellect and your own abilities and say, Lord, it's your ability. It's not by power. It's not by might, but it's by your spirit.

See, there's two kinds of men in this room. There are examples of the cross. And there are the enemies of the cross.

I want you to take Philippians three Philippians, chapter three Philippians, chapter three. And we see in that same chapter that was preached in earlier, when Paul put aside every credential of men, the credentials that make of average man's mouth water, he put aside and counted. But Dong, it says in the original refuse.

And he put it behind him, and then he says in verse 17. Be followers or be imitators, mimic her is the word in the Greek mimic me and mark those who walk in the same way so that you have us for a two bus, a type, an example. Mark the men that have taken up their cross, mark the men that that exemplify this attitude and follow us for an example.

Paul is saying for who he's saying about himself, follow me, follow those who are like me. That's what Paul is saying. And then he says, but there are a lot of people that aren't like that.

Verse 18, you see, Paul's an example of the cross, but then now he's going to give an example of the other kind for many walk of whom I've told you often and now tell you even weeping that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. Apparently, these people were in Philippi, Philippi. The letter here doesn't say one word about sin.

It's the only epistle that I know that doesn't say a thing about sin directly. It's written to the church that gave out of their poverty. They were socially aware.

They were an amazing church. But in that church were many who were the enemies of the cross of Christ, many. Who they could choose to follow, and Paul was weeping about this.

Well, how do you know who they are? First, he says, verse 19, these people's end is destruction. It's a violent word. And here it says, here's how you know who they are.

Their God is their belly. What does that mean? Well, it's over in another place. He says meats for the belly and the belly for meats.

It's saying these people live to satisfy their own desires. Their their God is their belly. If the stomach says eat, they eat.

If their emotions say do this, they do that. They live by their natural senses. That's what he's saying there.

Their God is their belly. That's the first characteristic. Secondly, it says whose glory is in their shame.

These people's confidence, their boasting are in the things that if they really knew the cross, they'd be ashamed of. He said it in a in another chapter of Corinthians, he says, listen, I protest about you. He says, look, you're supposed to be the leaders.

You don't have many followers and fathers in Christ. He says some of you are strong. We are weak.

You are built up, but we are the Ajax were the off scouring of all things and we die daily. He's comparing a cross with a profitable outer life. And he's saying, listen, he's saying he says some people's God is their belly.

Others boast about the things that if they were really taking up their cross, it would bring them conviction and shame if they really understood what the cross means. Only a Cadillac for the king's kids. I would tell you something.

Jesus didn't come to a palace on Earth to have a Cadillac. He became as the least of the least. I'm not saying there's anything wrong with Cadillacs, I'm not saying there's anything wrong with BMWs, but I'm saying this, you shouldn't boast about them because there's no virtue in them at all.

And if you understand the cross, you'll realize that if you boast on those things, then it's really a shame. Third thing, it says they mind earthly things. The whole focus of their attention and their mind are on the temporal and the things that are happening all around them.

Contrast our conversation. Our life is in heaven from whence also we're looking for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. And when he comes, he will change our vile body, this body of humiliation so that it can be just like his glorious body, according to the workings whereby he is able to subdue everything to himself.

You see, I want to ask you, are you an enemy of the cross? He didn't say they're the enemy of Jesus. If you ask these people, are you the enemy of Jesus Christ? They would have said, oh, no, we love Jesus. He said they're the enemy of the cross of Jesus.

Can you say to the brothers around you, imitate me, brother? Follow me. You do the same thing. Is your kind of Christianity you live in your house worth sending to the mission field and telling a Muslim imitate my faith? And it's worth dying for if they kill you and your family disowns you.

If you can be like what I'm living, it's worth it. Is your kind of Christianity the kind that's worth sending to the mission field? Future shock is that the people who are the enemies of the cross of Christ, their end is destruction. That's what Jesus said when he says, look, you're going to have to take up your cross and follow me every day.

And those who are ashamed of these words, when my father comes, their end will be destruction. There are a lot of people who don't really love the cross. Brother, the fire is coming.

The fire is coming to this earth that God will purge and God's wrath against all who know not God and who obey not the gospel. Judgment is racing on this earth. I heard a story about Canada, a big prairie up in Canada years ago before they had cars.

There was this man who was taking his family across a big prairie in Canada. They had big broom sage kind of straw grass about maybe seven feet high. And so as he was sitting on this wagon, his wife and kids and all his possessions in this wagon, he saw out in the middle.

He was in the middle of this big prairie, maybe 20 miles across giant prairies they have up there. He was making his way across. He saw on the horizon something that every pioneer feared in those days, smoke billows at a distance, big black smoke.

And then he saw deer coming by him running through the bush and he knew what it meant. It meant there was a grass fire and these animals were running to get away. They would sweep over the prairie, perhaps 50 miles an hour.

Nobody could ever get out of their way. It just come and just burn you alive. And he knew that in a matter of moments, the fire would come racing upon them and it would burn them all to a cinder.

So what did he do? This man got out of the wagon and he got down and he lit a match at the base of the wagon and he built a controlled fire and it began to burn the grass around the wagon. And he let it get out and it burned out in an ever growing black circle. His wagon was in the middle and the black circle as it burned out grew bigger and bigger.

And then he dug what looked like a grave and he put wet blankets over his wife and children and himself and they got down on this kind of grave. And as the fire came racing down upon them at about 50 miles an hour, it hit that black circle and went around them like that. He saved their life.

You know how he did it? He got in the middle of where the fire had already been. You see, the fire is coming. The Bible tells us over and over.

The fire is coming. It's going to judge the world in God's righteousness and it's going to be a day that's going to burn like an oven. And, yea, all that are ungodly will be burned utterly up.

All the chaff and everything else flee from the wrath to come, said John the baptizer, who can stand in the day of his coming? Well, the only person that could ever stand is the one who's been to the place where the fire has already been. Let me tell you, only one time before in history, one time has God's wrath ever really come to earth in pure revelation. It wasn't in the flood because there were people spared in the flood.

There was mercy there. Noah found grace. But one time before God poured out his pure wrath upon he who became sin for me.

He drank a cup full of the sin of the world and he became the essence of his father's loathing. And there, as the Lord Jesus Christ hung between heaven and earth, all the fury of holy God was poured out upon him. All the demons in hell, it says in Psalm 22, gaped upon him like throwing your son to the dogs.

They wrestled upon him and it was like throwing out the one you love to the dogs. He was turned over to hell and hell had a party. The fury of God was released upon the Lord Jesus in unmitigated power.

And when it fell, it fell on a hill called Calvary on a cross. And that fire burned a big black circle there. And there's only one place, brother, to run from the wrath that's coming.

And it's right to the middle of that circle called Calvary to take up that cross and come right there to that place and to take that. I must decrease and he must increase as your very own and to learn to reckon and to risk the reckoning and to then rest and then watch as you rejoice in God showing himself. You go home, you know, you're a dead man.

And so you give your wife that spiritual gun and you go home and you say, I'm going to reckon myself dead indeed to sin, but alive to God. And then I'm going to risk that. I'm going to risk the losing of my own life.

I'm going to die daily. I'm going to have the sentence of death and myself. And when somebody insults me, I'm going to remind myself I'm already dead.

You can't insult a dead man. Oh, Vance Havner once said to me, he said, Al, just remember this. Your life is full of holes.

And if you're full of holes, you'll soon realize that people can't inflate you and they can't deflate you. You can't hold hot air and you can't let any out. It just you just full of holes.

And that's what you realize. You're just full of holes. And as long as I seek to hold on to my own reputation or my own life or my own standard of living or hold on to anything that I think is mine, then I will lose what God has.

But as I come to that cross and I say, Lord Jesus, nothing in my hands, I bring simply to thy cross. I cling naked, come to thee for dress foul. I do the fountain fly, wash me, Savior, or I die as I do that.

Then the power of God's resurrection life is released in me and I find in me. And it's a glorious thing. The things that I've never known before that are from him, the very nature of God.

I mean, somebody slaps you on the cheek and you want to just level them and every fiber of your being that that old man is there. And you say in the name of Jesus, Barney Burns, you're dead. And you take that blowtorch out and you come to that cross and you say, I'm dead, and you could go to a funeral home and slap a dead man around and he wouldn't have a problem with hitting you back.

And in Jesus name, I'm dead. Now, Lord, I just feel my members to you and the Lord Jesus, the Lord Jesus, you won't, but he will. He will do what's necessary to that person.

And see, even Paul did that when he was striped and he says, why do you strike me? You white wall talk this way to the high priest. I'm sorry, I didn't know. He humbled himself right there because as he was moving in that reality where you say, OK, I've heard all this before.

My preachers preached on this. I've tried to make it real. This doesn't work for me.

Instead of in spite of all the books, it hasn't brought victory for me. I'm not fulfilled. What's wrong with me, me, me? Selfishness is so deep within us.

We're all concerned with getting all God has for me, discovering our spiritual gifts and and cultivating this sense of of all the bigness that we are in God and scrambling over one another for position in the body of Christ. It's amazing how much God can do when we don't care who gets the credit. Have you seen what's going on around us, that there's a crossless Christianity being preached in our country and millions are flocking to it, but you see, it cannot save and it cannot sanctify and it cannot let you finish.

It can't deliver the people that it seduces. The world is still saying, if you're Jesus Christ, come down from the cross. Let me tell you, the devil would always prefer the esoteric Jesus and the philosopher and the moralist and the teacher.

But we must have this man to rule over us, the man on the cross. God forbid that we should know any except for him. This is the Christ that we must know, the Christ of the cross.

And and without a cross, all Christianity is left with is a challenging scheme of morals and philosophy. And it can't save. Maybe you believe a thousand things about the Bible, but you've never really appropriated the chief thing of all.

And that is that your very own life must be by choice, agreeing with God. I am crucified with Christ, just as you, when you were saved, should have realized this and surely didn't. You need to come and they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof.

Self must be rooted out. Now, what's your confidence tonight? Then as we come to the end of this night, I want to ask you, you've heard about the unchanging, unconditional love of God, his plan to make you into a family of God, member, a born child, godly man with the very nature of Christ. And you say your wife will know what it means to live with Jesus Christ in you.

Your children will know what it means to have Christ living in a godly daddy. What is your boast tonight? Is it the way you provide for your family? Is it your knowledge of the Bible? What's your confidence? There's one confidence that's safe. And that is that our life is over and that I am holding on to the cross and I'm not trying to hold on to my life.

But now from this day forward in Jesus name, Lord, let it happen to me what your word says. Maybe you're caught between two kingdoms tonight, the kingdom of self and the kingdom of God. And you're trying to hold on to both and you're getting torn to pieces.

Are you willing to be set free? Are you? I'm asking you to wake up one more time, brothers. Wake up one more time. Maybe you've been living from counselor to counselor.

Maybe you've been trying to have two people live in the same body. There's only room for one person in your body, and that's either you or Jesus. If self is not crucified, then self will crucify afresh the Lord Jesus Christ in daily experience.

What place does the cross of Jesus Christ have in your own life, in your family, in your work, in your relationships with your friends? Have you really faced the call to take up the cross and said, Lord, my prison cell, I'm free from that. Lay down your sword and realize that resurrection life is for dead men only. You're trying to experience the power of God, but you've never on the cross in real power.

There's no searchlight so bright as the one that comes from the top of Mount Calvary, and it puts it right on you and it shows you just like you are. It's a glowsome thing and it's humbling. And we fall down and say, oh, God, I'm so sorry.

He said, don't be surprised if you're ever surprised at sin in your life. It's because you've never repented as deep as God wants you to repent, because he always knew what was there, even though you're surprised. Get all the way down, go down to the bottom and get down in the light of that cross and and and get before him.

Barabbas, are you here? I know you're here. I know you're here, Barabbas. And I know you're in a prison cell.

And I know that God tonight is saying, hey, have you seen that man on the middle cross? You're free to start a whole new life. You just didn't know it. You didn't know it.

You were crucified. He's taking your death. It's just like he was you.

You're free now to live on the other side of the grave and newness of life. And so you come to the feet of Jesus tonight right here. We're going to open this altar in a minute.

And I'm asking those to make a free will choice once and for all to come quietly to the feet of Jesus Christ and condemn yourself as an unclean thing. Lord, I take my place at the foot of the cross. My self-life is flesh.

And I agree with you and your verdict. I am crucified with Christ. And I take that verdict by faith and by the power of Jesus Christ.

From this day forth, I'm giving you the freedom to make me into a love slave. My members, my house, all that I am make me a love slave of Jesus Christ. And it'll be a glorious moment.

Your wife will feel it. Some of you here that have never trusted Christ, it'll be your night to come here. And you realize that the blood was shed for your sins and the cross was to free you from them.

And you can do it all. One big stroke tonight. You can come.

We'll pray with you. People will be here with you. Come and drive down a stake and say, I'm tired of being a Billy Goat Christian.

Yes, but yes, but yes. But from now on, I'm just going to say, yes, Lord. And the place of real deliverance is when you come to the end of self.

That's where you find the beginning of God. Lord, I'm tired. Let your life go.

Lose it for his sake and say, Lord, empty hands, open heart, fullness of faith. I want you to breathe in me afresh tonight. It'll be hard for some of you dying together with Jesus.

This is the end of strife buried together with Jesus. This is the doorway to life tonight. I am buried together with Jesus Christ like I should have been when I was saved.

But I see it intelligently and I claim the freedom from sin's tyranny. And I'm going to quit evaluating the future in terms of my own self. Here are my loaves and fishes, Lord Jesus.

Take them and break them and make me yours at the foot of the cross. Two things you have tonight, a funeral, a funeral for AI. My life is over.

No more rights, no more demands now on life every day. It's a privilege, Lord, a gift from God, a funeral for me. And secondly, a coronation for the Lord Jesus.

Lord Jesus, you are my Lord. And I crown you gladly, willingly, fully as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Don't listen to yourself.

It'll whimper. Oh, don't go down there. Don't surrender.

Oh, I mean, he'll whimper all the way. The Amalekites always do. But take out the sword of God and cut him to shreds and offer that self-life at the cross where Jesus died with the Lord Jesus.

Hast thou no scar, no hidden scar on foot, nor side, nor hand? I heard you sung as mighty in the land. I hear them hail thy bright ascendant star. Hast thou no scar? Hast thou no wound? Yet I was wounded, says the Lord, by the archer's spin.

Lean me against the tree to die and rent by ravening beasts that surrounded me. I swooned. Hast thou no wound, no wound, no scar? Yet as the master shall the servant be and pierced are the feet that follow me.

But thine are whole. Can he have followed far who has no wound, no scar? I'm told in 325 A.D. The Council of Nicaea, where we get our great creeds from so many that that trust with the great men of God from around the world at that time. Three hundred and eighteen men that were the leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ from all over the world.

They came together in Nicaea in 325 A.D. And of those three hundred and eighteen men, only twelve of them were whole. They all had an eye gouged out by hot iron or they walk with a limp or they had something broken that was bent over, but they all bore in their body the marks of Christ Jesus. That day may or may not come for us, brother.

But I want to ask you, can you say with Paul, I bear in my life the marks of ownership, the stigmata, the ownership, branding marks of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ?

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