

# Who Do You Think You Are

by Alan Redpath

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*Alan Redpath emphasizes the transformative power of Christ's love and the necessity of obedience in the life of a believer to experience true revival and effective witness.*

**Duration:** 58:22

**Scripture:** 1 Chronicles 4:23, Matthew 6:33, 2 Corinthians 5:10-11, 2 Corinthians 5:15, Philippians 3:1, Philippians 4:7

**Topics:** "Christian Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker uses the analogy of a plane struggling to take off to illustrate the meaning of the gospel. He explains that the plane was held down by the law of gravity, but with emergency power and perseverance, it eventually took off. The speaker emphasizes that our lives as Christians should be different from the world, causing others to question and seek answers. He highlights the importance of repentance and belief in Jesus as the answer to what we should do. Additionally, the speaker discusses the love of Christ and the fellowship that should be evident in our daily lives as Christians.

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## Transcript

I've known Noam before it was, because when I was pastor at Moody Church, George was a student at NBI. We got to know each other very well. He used to come round and chat to me and I with him and we with the Lord together.

We became very close. We had several all-nights of prayer at that time at Moody Church. He came to all of them.

I don't know whether he got permission to do that, but he came anyway. And his presence at a prayer meeting, as you know, is apt to start the fire burning. And certainly, though geographically we've been separated, spiritually we're very close.

I'm very thankful to have the opportunity of ministering to a small group. It isn't the size of a meeting that makes a meeting. It's the sense of God's presence and the Lord working with his people.

And I'm very thankful for this privilege of sharing with you. I live in Birmingham now. There's nothing very attractive about it.

Two and a half million people live there, of whom one-third are Muslim and growing rapidly. I tremble to think what this country might be like in 10 years' time. Certainly not English and heading, I think, for

disaster unless a miracle takes place, and the Lord gives us spiritual revival.

I suppose 1984 would have seen the largest number of people hear the Gospel in this country than ever before in history, at Mission England and Louis Palau and so on. That was tremendous. I think about 90,000 people were one for Jesus.

That was great. The follow-through on churches, certainly in Birmingham, has not been too good. And I would just like to read an extract here from Finney, who says, Evangelism is one thing, revival is another.

Evangelism is the constant duty of the church, revival is a conviction of the spirit at work in a church. It is possible to have very successful evangelistic meetings without ever touching revival. The greatest evangelistic campaign leaves a city untouched, while revival sweeps the community.

Revival is the renewal of the first love of Christians, something resulting in the conversion of sinners to God. It presupposes that the church is backslidden, and revival means conviction of sin and searching of heart among God's people. Revival is nothing less than a new beginning of obedience to God, a breaking of heart, and getting down into the dust before him with deep humility and forsaking of sin.

Revival breaks the power of the world and of sin over Christians. The charm of the world is broken, and the power of sin is overcome. Truths to which our hearts are unresponsive suddenly become alive.

Whereas mind and conscience may ascend to truth, when revival comes, obedience to the truth is the one thing that matters. That last sentence really penetrates especially. Mind and conscience may ascend to truth, but when revival comes, obedience to the truth is the one thing that matters.

I think that it's not the primary thing that we should know more truth. The primary thing is that we should give a hundred percent obedience to what we already know. Because the Tarion call of the New Testament church was, we must obey God.

And that guaranteed the Holy Spirit getting into business. So this is a very personal matter, and this has been the burden I felt I ought to try and share with you in some way. Because I was told I would be speaking to a company of people who were not sort of first-termers with OM.

You've known something of the toughness and the testing, and all this involved in life where the action is in the front line of the battle. And it's such a privilege to speak with you, because this is essentially a personal thing. It has been said that the worthwhileness of any movement lies in its ability to mobilize its entire membership to propagate what it believes.

If you think that through, that's really New Testament living and witness to Christ. And that's where there's a tremendous breakdown today. Was it in Christianity today? I saw some time ago, I think it was.

In the average church role in Britain and America, of the total membership, five percent don't exist. Ten percent can't be found. Twenty-five percent never attend church.

Fifty percent have no mission or interest. Seventy-five percent never attend midweek service or prayer meeting. Ninety percent never win anybody to Christ.

If that's true, which I suspect it is, it's a shattering condemnation of the complete breakdown of New Testament church growth, and New Testament individual growth of Christian people. And that's our burden to share these days, because I'm sure the answer to it is the release of the Holy Spirit in his grace

and in his gifts, that everyone is using the gift that God has given them. Not the gift that somebody else has, the gift that God has given you.

So these are the things that burden me and concern me, and I would like you, if you will, to open your Bible this morning and to read with me a portion. I hope I'm talking loud enough. I don't know, but I could talk a lot louder.

I'm afraid that I might blast you out of the room if I get excited, so I won't do that. Second Corinthians, chapter five. Let me... There was a time when you could have the whole congregation read together.

It was marvelous. But now it's chaotic. I think everybody was speaking in tongues, and that would never do, but today I'm using the A.V. Ten years ago in this country, the R.S.D. was the edition that everybody used.

Now everybody's fought hook, line, and sinker for the N.I.V. Okay? That's the nearly indispensable version. Or I'd rather be inclined to call it the not infallible version. So at the moment I'm sticking with it, King James.

I'm not apologizing for so doing. Chapter five, I think, reading from verse ten. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Therefore, knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. But we are made manifest to God, and I trust also made manifest in your own consciences. For we commend not ourselves again to you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that you may have someone to answer them which glory in appearance and not in heart.

For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God. Whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constrained us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead.

And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live to themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. Therefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh. Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, it now henceforth know we him so no more.

Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. All things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new.

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us.

We pray you, in Christ's stead, be you reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Could we just have a word of prayer together? Just a moment quiet.

There's a chorus I'd like all to sing. I want to see Jesus, to reach out and touch him, and say that we love him. You know that one? Could you strike up the right tune to it for us? Open eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus, to reach out and touch him, and say that we love him.

Open eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus. Please, Lord, answer prayer. It will be a futile few days if we did not see him and touch him by faith, and move forward and onward and downward, deeper into the will of God for each one of our lives.

Have your own way. Without the potter, we are the clay. Hold us, make us after your will, while we are waiting, yielded and still.

Amen. I think verse 17 of this chapter is about, well, the most dynamic definition of a Christian to be found anywhere in the New Testament. I'll read it again to you.

Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new.

The RSV and the NIV, more or less the same, they put it this way. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he's a new creation. The old has gone, the new has come.

So, if anyone, that is not only a few people who decide to live according to one standard and others to another, but if anyone, if anyone in whose life is in Christ, in whose life the great miracle of the new birth has taken place, and they've been born again, and like the branches in the vine, and the life of the vine is in the branch, he's a new creation. New, that is not in a sense you get a new culture, replace an old one, but new, a different kind of person altogether. The Living Bible paraphrase, I think, puts it very strongly.

When anyone becomes a Christian, he becomes a brand new person inside. Not the same anymore. A new life has begun.

In other words, at our new, new birth, some, we, because of that, we are governed by new principles, move in different directions, with new motives, and so on. And not just we've added a few new things to the old ones, not just to change a few practices, but completely different kind of people. In other words, the Holy Spirit has come to indwell us, not to produce a few super deluxe Christians per generation, and leave all the rest of us third class.

He's come to enable us, as he says, to live a normal Christian life. And that's a tremendous challenge to me. And it makes me ask myself a question, in his name, to all of us.

What kind of people are we? What sort of person am I? How would we line up with that description of a Christian? You notice that that verse begins with the word, therefore. Well, you have that word, of course, you find out what it's there for. And in defining the terms of what a Christian is, Paul comes to the conclusion that there are certain evidences, clearly, in his life, which characteristics, which give him away.

Things you don't have to argue for, verse 11. What we are is known to God, and I trust also to your own consciences. In other words, some things about us that are so self-evident, that they give us away.

And we're not boasting, but we're asking you to see in our lives something that's founded on reality, not merely outward appearances. At Pentecost, it always strikes me, the crowd asked two questions. One was, what's all this mean? The other was, what do we do about it? That must have made evangelism very easy.

When the crowd start asking questions, what does this mean? And something should be apparent in your life and mine, which gives us away, as belonging to the Lord. How we react, how we behave in certain

circumstances, which is totally different, and they don't understand it. They have to ask, how? And the answer is, of course, what do we do? And the answer to that word is, repent and believe.

And so Paul says, there are these characteristics and evidences, and why are they there? How is it possible? Well, he says in verse 14, there's a fervor in my heart, which didn't exist previously. Verse 14, the love of Christ constrains us. The love of Christ, not my love for Jesus, but the love of Christ in me.

I find it very hard to say in human language, ordinary language, what that means. The love of Christ, it was long before the foundation of the world, had no beginning, no ending. Jesus had nothing to gain from that stoop, from the throne to a manger.

He made himself nothing. You know, he went on loving, though those to whom he came didn't love him, and didn't respond at all. Yet, one day the love of Jesus took him to Calvary, and the sword of God's justice buried itself in his heart, as he went to the cross for us, through all the spitting and the shame and everything.

And the love of Christ, the last verse sums it up in wonderful language. Again, I quote from living letters, God took the sinless Jesus and poured into him all our sin. And in exchange, he poured all God's goodness into us.

You can't really, as you think that through, get to the bottom of it. I must just say it again. It's so breathtaking, really.

God took the sinless Christ and poured into him all our sin. And in exchange, he poured all God's goodness into us. In other words, the life of a Christian is an exchange life, exchange life.

It's not trying to be better, trying to be good, trying to make myself more holy, is Jesus. The only good thing about any of us is Jesus. A life of complete exchange.

The love of Christ constrained, now that word constrained, it's a bit difficult to translate it into English. Of course, it has many sort of meanings. The RSV says the love of Christ controls us.

The NIV, the love of Christ compels us. If you use the illustration of a horse that is held back by a rein, the rein keeps it in check, directs it onto which road it should go, along the right path, around the right bend. And Paul says, the love of Christ has so got hold of me, that that love keeps me from doing something of which I'd be utterly ashamed.

I can't do it now, not because I try to stop myself doing it, not because I fight with temptation and that, but I can't do it because of the love of Jesus. It would be a disgrace upon him. I sometimes use commentary still.

I've got a bit tired of some of the comment on everything except the thing I'm looking for. But the commentary of Jameson, Fawcett and Brown is good on this verse. It says this, there is an irresistible object which so controls the life of a Christian that he lives with one objective in view, to the elimination of any other possible consideration.

You know, that needs thinking about. Just let me read it again. An irresistible object which has so controlled the life of a Christian that he lives with one objective in view, to the elimination of any other possible consideration.

Just like a river that's in flood is dammed up and restrained and put into one channel, and its power increases in flow and everything until it bursts into the ocean. The love of Christ grips me like this, controls me. And so if any man be in Christ, he's a totally different kind of person.

The world says he's a fanatic, a fool. Now you may be saying to me, some of you, I don't know, but you might, that's going too far, because a Christian, it's faith that saves him. Well, but faith is held by love and works by love.

And unless my faith in Jesus is gripped in some measure, grips me by a love like that, it isn't saving faith. I'm safe in quoting C. H. Spurgeon here, see, where he says, um, unless your faith radically alters your behavior, it will never change your destiny. That's pretty shattering.

We don't often hear that preached these days. Unless your faith radically changes your behavior, it will never change your destiny. The love of Christ, does that, says Paul.

That's the fervor that's revealed in his life. And of course, it's true, obviously, isn't it, that whether people are good or bad, it's men that are controlled by one principle that make an impact, either for good or ill. People who are under the control of one for a few minutes and others for another, like the jet stream that comes out of a plane, they don't come for anything.

They don't lust for anything at all. But a man who's controlled by one principle, that's why you've got, um, Caesars and Napoleons, Mussolini's, Hitler's, Khrushchev's and all the rest of them, bad men. That's also why you have Whitfield's, Dale Moody's, C. G. Studd's, Hudson Taylor's.

And if I may be so tactless as to go to the present generation, that's why you have George Verver's, Billy Graham's. But more than that, I never forget one of my early trips abroad was to Ethiopia. And I went there to visit one of our missionaries.

There she was. She was 70 years of age at the time and had a little mud cottage in a very isolated position. And she was translating the Bible into two different languages.

She'd been at the job for years and years. She was nearly completing it. And I said to her, when, when you're getting your next furlough, and just looked at me, she said, in heaven, that kind of person will never get a write-up in Buzz magazine.

Never be heard of in family, or any of them. But I tell you, this will be some remarkable reverses of form when we get to glory. People have never been heard of.

The love of Christ constrains. That's it. And Paul had looked with the Holy Spirit in his eyes and looked into the heart of God.

And the love of Jesus gripped him and compelled him to the exclusion of any possible attraction. Some people might say, now that must be awful bondage for a Christian. I mean, it means you never have a day off.

No, you don't, for Christian living. But it wasn't bondage, that was freedom. Slavery to Jesus is perfect freedom.

And it's God who works in us to will and to do, his good pleasure. It's the Spirit of God in us who makes us want and long for that in our lives. And so he's governed by that principle, seven days a week, there's no

room for anything else, no rivals.

But how did that happen? It wasn't merely a sort of emotional thing, wasn't that? It was based upon facts. Two tremendous facts in the Christian faith which radically change our lives. One I'm sure we're all happy about, the fact of substitution, the substitutionary death of Jesus for us all.

The other, identification with him, I'm not so sure whether we all do understand and rejoice in that. Bearing shame and scoffing root, in my place condemned he stood, sealed my pardon with his blood, hallelujah, he's my savior. Isaiah 53, he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement which procured our peace was laid upon him.

The great fact of the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ is the thing which starts the fire burning in our heart, kindled as a flame, and as we accept it day by day, we have perfect peace with God. But that's not the only fact, there's this one. He, if he died for all, says Paul here, then the all are dead.

And here Paul is saying, I see in the cross something else, that just as by my first birth I was involved in condemnation, guilt, sin and judgment, I wasn't responsible for that, but inevitably I was involved in it, so by my second birth I was involved in something else I wasn't responsible for. Because I received a new life in my heart, which had already been through death and arisen again from the tomb and ascended to heaven. And that life received from the Lord adequate resources in the Holy Spirit, the right for me to live in him.

And so when Jesus died, well I was died there too, and was buried with him, and rose, and ascended to heaven. And while my feet are on the ground, my heart's in heaven, and I have within me an old life which is absolutely hopeless, and will never be any good, it is never changed, till my dying day, I also have a new life. A new life which has died, and risen, ascended, and I have that life living in me right now.

And Paul realized that, therefore, oh I mustn't get too excited about this, it's tremendous to know isn't it, that Jesus is exactly the opposite to all that I am, precisely. So I don't spend five minutes a day trying to make myself better, because if you do that, you're on a sticky wicket, you're on a losing wicket, trying to improve myself. There's no sin on earth which I'm not capable of committing, two minutes if I get out of here, but to the grace of God.

That's the only good thing about me. Therefore, why spend two moments trying to improve myself, when the Lord isn't in that business at all? He doesn't improve me, he gives his life instead of me, that he might live through me in his power. If you're unholy, he's holy.

If you're impatient, he's patient. If you're lacking in love, he's love. Whatever you are, he's the opposite.

So don't try and improve yourself, but take the opposite. Every moment of every day, just taking Jesus to be in you, which you can't do yourself. Doing the thing that I know I can't do, in the power that he gives me to do it, when I'm willing, when I'm really wanting and longing him for his victory and his power.

Oh yes, I'm no different from that day when I was converted, potentially a lot worse. Though it's wonderful in Jesus to be free. Let me illustrate Do you like flying? I don't.

I used to like to go over to the States by ship, take four days off, and no jet lag, and perfect peace and quietness. I loved it. Now, you can't do that.

And I don't like it very much. I've had too many incidents, not accidents, but incidents, and one of them I shall never forget. It stays with me.

I was flying at the time from Johannesburg to London, British Airways, forgive the commercial. And I got into this plane about 10 o'clock at night, and it was packed, absolutely packed. And I got into it, I thought to myself, Lord, this weighs about a million and a half pounds, fully loaded, there's an awful lot to take off the ground.

And I sat on the one empty seat I could find, it was my lotter to me. And next to me was a steward, one of the crew. And I thought I'd be chatting with him, unusual for an Englishman.

And so I said, do you like flying these planes? He said, not much, sir. Oh, I said, why? Oh, he said, they're too often going wrong. Oh, yes, he said, this one has been taken out of service three times in two weeks because of engine failure.

It was put right yesterday, and we believe it's okay now. So I looked at the back of the captain's head away, and I said, oh, bless him tonight. And we went along the runway, you know, the usual formalities and so on.

And then the engines began to roar, and off we went. But then you know exactly the sort of person I am. I have a little stopwatch thing, and I know that a Boeing 747, fully loaded, 430 passengers, with gas and everything, takes 46 seconds to get off the ground.

It may take a second or two more with wind speed and so on. But we went off. I watched my watch going round, and at 35 seconds, it suddenly slowed down.

And there was a strange silence throughout the plane. No talking. And I followed my watch.

40 seconds, 46. Oh, long way short of required speed for takeoff. 150 knots.

50 seconds, 55 seconds. Oh, Lord, how long is this runway? And we went on and on and on, and at 62 seconds, it made it, and whoop! Just at the moment where the white line marking the end of the runway went underneath the plane, and it went off. And the engines were vibrating like nothing of nobody's business.

The whole plane shook as those engines just shook with it. And everybody was very quiet. Half an hour went by.

Still passenger seat, safety belts still on, no smoking. Also, that didn't bother me, but the sound remained on. And we went on and on, and in about 40 minutes, the captain came onto the intercom.

He had a very Oxford accent. And he said, Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I am sorry I've had no time to speak with you.

I have some rather sad news. I've lost an engine. I don't know how you'd react to that, but I reacted stupidly in my mind.

He didn't worry about that at all, but I'd gladly jump out and get it for you. I knew that wasn't what he meant. He'd lost the power of the engine.

An engine had cut on him. And he said, Our next stop is Nairobi. But with three engines and a full load, I don't think we'll make it.

So with your permission, how unnecessary. With your permission, we'll turn around, and we'll land at Joburg again, and you'll be put on another flight. Well, obviously, or else I wouldn't be here.

We were. But I've never forgotten that, because for one reason, it's such a tremendous illustration of the meaning of the Gospel. You see, that plane was going along a runway, and it was bound, held in the grip of the law of gravity, holding it down.

At thirty-five seconds, an engine cut, three engines are put on emergency power, and in the end, the whole plane vibrates, as it went on, harder and harder and harder. Sixty-two seconds, he made it. And he, I was going to say, well, what he did was, tilted the nose of the plane up into the air, and pulls the stick, and turns his nose up into the air.

And then in a minute, in a second, it's grabbed by another law, the law of aerodynamics, which takes over from the law of gravity, and carries up and up and up and up, till it gets to thirty thousand feet. Oh, there's no condemnation of those who are in Christ Jesus. For whereas once we were bound by the law of sin, now another law has taken over, the law of the spirit of life in Christ.

Do you know something of the lift of the Holy Spirit? It lifts you up above all the downward drag of self, and lifts you up into the life of Jesus. There seems sometimes, there may be quite a bit of vibration, sometimes some shocks, but he holds you in his grip. Oh, that makes the Christian life something exciting, it really does.

It's not really emotion, therefore. A Christian is held. He's reconciled to God by the blood, and saved by the life of Jesus.

Romans 5, 10. I'm sure that all of us know what it is to be reconciled by his blood. I'm not so sure that we've all learned what it is to be saved by his life.

Two empty hands stretch out to God. That's a Christian life. Then the one, I receive forgiveness on the ground of his death.

And the other, I receive life by his Holy Spirit. I stretch out the one hand, or else I wouldn't be saved at all. What have I done in a second? Filled it up with Christian work? Filled it up with activity? Filled it up with business? I haven't time to stop.

So rushed, so pressed. Get my priorities all wrong, family gets neglected. Who was the dear man who came for me yesterday? Andrew, was it? Was it? Where is he? Oh, isn't he in now? Oh, what a dear chap, what a chap we have.

And, you know, he's asking me questions and so on. And he said to me, what's been the biggest battle in your Christian life? And to learn, I said, to learn that I must never undertake more work for the Lord than I can cover in believing prayer. If I do that, I'm out of my own.

How well I remember in Chicago days, we lived at first, for the first five years there, out in the suburbs. Some of you who know that area, Lincoln Woods, Skokie Way, about 10 miles from where it is. I left home every morning at seven.

I never, well, I would better hesitate on that one. Very rarely, more, not more than once in a couple of months, did I get home before ten at night. We had 31 committees at Moody Church.

Help. And I was chairman of them all. How stupid.

And morning, noon, and night. Work, work, work. Seven days a week.

On the occasions when I did come home, about once in two months, what did I see as I came up the road? Two little girls looking. And they'd come out to me and say, Daddy, are you going out to another meeting tonight? And I was ashamed to say yes. Our marriage suffered from that.

Oh, never been anything wrong with it, but my wife and I weren't close enough. Watch it. Watch it.

When I left business, I was a C.A., one of the chief arguments I put in favor of going into the ministry was, much more time to read my Bible and pray. I would never put that, no. I've never had one day in 50 years in which I've had time to read my Bible and pray.

I've had to make it. And in making it, I had to drop something that seemed absolutely important. But nothing, as any substitute ever can be, for the time spent alone with God.

If you'll excuse me again, I'll be through shortly. Chicago days taught me a lot. I learned so much from A. W. Tozer.

Thank you for the mention you made, by the way, of my books. I haven't read any of them myself. But I've preached them.

But I've devoured A. W. Tozer's. And I recommend that to you. In Pursuit of God.

Tremendous book. But I knew him well. It was a great privilege, because soon after I arrived there, he called me and said, you probably have a pretty difficult time in Moody Church.

It's rather dispensational, etc. But if you'd like time in prayer, I'd love to have prayer with you. So I said, oh my, I would love it.

But when? And where? Well, he said, I go every day between April and October to the south shore of Lake Michigan at five o'clock in the morning. And I stay there till eight. So if you can join me at that time, I'd love to.

Well, I mean, it was 15 miles away from where I lived. It was very early. I didn't go too often.

Perhaps I made an excuse and said, well, it's really holy ground. But you know, whenever I got there, there was A. W. Tozer, flat on his face on the sands with an open Bible, talking to the Lord. Three hours.

I shall never forget those tremendous times with him. A real man of God. I used to hear him preach, preach sometimes at NBI and, phew, didn't bless it.

And did I ever hear a man speak with such authority? Very rarely. Just, he was clothed with Holy Spirit power. I knew why.

Because he gave the best hours of the day to God. I wish I could live it again. But I would say there's no substitute for that.

And when you put Christian work before it, well, sometimes, sometimes read 1 Chronicles chapter 4. Don't both look up now. I think in verse 23, it says there were certain members of the tribe of Judah who lived among ditches and hedges. Not much glamour in that.

And there they dwelt with the king for his work. And the thing that flashed into my mind was, do I dwell with the work for the king, or do I dwell with the king for the work? It's all the difference. If I dwell with the work for the king, I'm shut up to my own limitations.

If I dwell with the king for the work, I'm receiving day by day his sufficiency, his strength, his adequacy. So I would beg of you most of all to keep your priorities right. Forgive me for all that.

Let me say to you in conclusion, though I'm very comforted to remind myself that Paul said, finally brethren, in writing to the Philippian church, when he was only halfway through and began the third chapter, finally brethren. He said it again in chapter 4 verse 7, so just indication he was getting his second wind, I suppose. But just in conclusion, there's a fellowship, not only this tremendous fervor and these facts that are basic, but a fellowship that is recognized by Paul in daily life.

Read 15 and 16. He died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh, yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, henceforth now know we him no more.

The RSV I think puts it very clearly, we regard no one from a human point of view. Now there's, if you notice the significance there of those verses, there's a fellowship that is recognized in the life of man who's a new creation, and a fellowship that's horizontal, and a fellowship that's vertical, with heaven. Now I've got to be careful here, because you see, the love of Jesus for us is answered from our hearts, in our hearts, by the love of Christ burning like a fire through me.

Not my love for him, but the Holy Spirit has come in me to reproduce the life of heaven. And that means fellowship with the Spirit and with the Father in my heart. His love burning in me.

The love of Christ shed abroad brings a response. Love knows no limit to its endurance, no end to its trust, no end to its fading. It can outlast anything.

It is one thing that still stands when everything else has fallen, that's 1 Corinthians 13. So in the life that is born again, I want to get this in my own heart, because it's so wonderful, there's a reaction and a response, because the Holy Spirit in me responds to the love of God for me. F. W. Faber writes a lovely hymn, I don't know if you've ever heard it.

It says this, O Jesus, Jesus, dearest Lord, forgive me if I say, for very love thy sacred name a thousand times a day. I love thee so, I know not how my transport to control. Thy love is like a burning fire within my very soul.

Burn, burn, O love, within my heart. Burn fiercely night and day, till all the dross of earthly care is burned and burned away. O Jesus, Jesus, sweetest Lord, who art thou not to me? Each hour brings joy before unknown, each day new liberty.

Is there in my heart a fellowship like that? Love has answered love. Deep has called to deep. In the life which is barren, cold and dead, the Holy Spirit has kindled a flame.

It's not that my old nature is loving God, because it can't. If you say to me my heart is in love, and there's warmth in it, and I really love Jesus, just be careful you don't get spiritually proud, because you can't do that. What you're doing is letting the Holy Spirit free, letting him loose, letting him love the Father in your heart.

My Jesus, I love thee, I know thou art mine, for thee all the follies of sin I resign. That's a heavenly fellowship in your heart today. It's the strength of all your Christian living.

But this fellowship should be revealed earthward too. From now on we regard no one from the human point of view, my word, if the church today could only get hold of this. The things that used to mark our friendships and our fellowship, our likes and dislikes for people, our barriers, our forbidden areas, distinction of color, distinction of race, distinction of nationality.

Henceforth, I no regard no one from the human point of view, Paul says. And to strengthen that whole argument, you notice he uses an example in the life of Christ. There was a day, he says, when our wonderful Lord, referring to his crucifixion, looked into the faces of his disciples and said, it is better for you that I go away.

I can imagine him saying, Lord, that takes some believing. We talked with you, walked with you, been to your college for three years. How can that be? If I do not depart, the Comforter, the Spirit, will not come to you.

But if I depart, I will send him to you. And in that day you shall know that I am in my Father, you are in me, and I in you. Therefore we know not Christ after the flesh.

Not again, not again like that. But we know him far greater, far richer, in a far deeper fellowship than ever. And therefore I'm not going to love people because one is white, another is black, because somebody is nice, or somebody is not so nice.

Because this love of Jesus has brought to the ground that kind of fellowship. Not only nice people. Do you ever ask the Lord, Lord, make me humble? But please choose somebody, somebody nice to do it.

You'll find he doesn't. Somebody you don't like. At Moody Church, every Sunday morning at one time, at five minutes to eleven, a man, one of our trustees, poked his head through the door of the study where I was waiting for the service.

He looked at me and said, hopeless pastor, church half empty again today. Shut it, shut the door. Well that didn't help.

As you know, the church, well you don't know, seated four thousand people. Two thousand wasn't a bad count. But two thousand, two thousand empty seats to look at every day, and two thousand little devils hopped out to them and said, you're no use.

So didn't need that chap to come and tell me. And then two minutes later another one came, he was an elder. And he came right across the floor, put his arm around my shoulder and said, pastor, wonderful, church is half full today.

Which was it easier for me to love? I don't need to answer the question. My reaction to man number one was exactly the opposite to everything I preached in the pulpit. And so I said, I'm going to get rid of that

fellow.

I wrote him a letter. And it really burnt up. Get out of here to some other fundamental church in Chicago.

Go and do your thing there, you're no use here. We can never have blessing with men like you around, etc, etc. And I left that letter on my desk, and my wife saw it.

Now you know exactly, don't you, that every good wife knows exactly what her husband is thinking. And she said, she saw it like that, she said, don't you think we'd better have some prayer together before you send that letter? Oh, I said, rather, I'd love it. Do, let's, let's have it.

I've prayed a lot about it, of course. But then it is, and let's pray. But you pray, will you? So she went on down and prayed together.

I'll never have gotten the next 15 minutes when she prayed, not for the man, but for her husband. And something happened in the church that day. It happened in the pulpit.

The Lord had broken my heart. I never forgotten since that day that the chorus which we sing so glibly, Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me, the first request it makes is break me, melt me, mould me, and fill me. And that's the costly thing.

That letter was never sent. But I tell you, we had a breath of Holy Spirit revival. I hardly needed to preach for a Sunday or two.

George Virgo would tell you romantically, so he didn't know the detail. I didn't have to make an invitation for people to come forward, they just came and knelt down, broken. And God had broken through.

A Christian fellowship never reaches higher ground or deeper ground than its leadership. Therefore, what a responsibility we all have. And that leads me in conclusion just to ask again the question that I ask myself, what sort of people are we? I think this country, speaking for Britain, is in grave peril.

Unless there is a revival of New Testament Christian living, and in many areas, I think we've got to stop playing church and really get out where the action is, and in the name of Jesus, take up the attack. Because today, I don't want to be critical, you know, Christians can do almost anything. You can jump around and shout and dance and all that.

That's fine, I'd probably do the same myself, but half a minute of that would send me to heaven. And so, I don't do it, but I'm thankful for the enthusiasm that's revealed in those who do. Wonderful.

But, when John saw Jesus on the island of Baton Rouge, I saw him. And his face was shining as the sun, in unclouded brilliance, and when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And that's the effect of seeing Jesus.

A brokenness, a death. No longer living to ourselves, but to him. You may read the magazine of the OMF.

Some time ago, there was an article in it by Leslie Lyall. Telling of it, the work in China, under the CIM, Chinese Admission, in 1950 onwards. Telling how the breakthrough of Communism came with a promise of self-government, self-propagation, and self-support for the church.

And together with complete religious freedom. Well, for a while it worked, but not for long. And he soon discovered that that meant total allegiance to the Communist regime.

And Leslie Lyall says that for the next 10 years, if there was a Christian in China who was true to the word, he was either killed, or put in prison, or banished to some climate that would kill him before long. And in that little group of people, who were brainwashed until they were nearly mad, they were those who trusted the Lord. And when they met each other in the street, they used to say, goodbye, see you inside next time.

That meant in prison. And one girl who was arrested, a story I told in the book, that when they came to put the handcuffs on her, she held out her arms with her wrists held together, and said, Lord, I'm not worthy. The love of Christ can strengthen.

Of course, you know the difference now. I mean, whole tribes come into Jesus. Great measure of millions who turn to Christ.

But that revival kind of thing, that kind of event doesn't happen without a crucifixion. And in the busy church in Britain, I just pray God that we won't miss it. Because I question whether we'd have another chance.

I think, oh yes, the end must come. I was reading only this morning again, and I haven't, I haven't really chewed it over. But let you chew it over with me.

Because the chapter finishes, when we, then we're ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you, in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God. That's a tremendous thing.

I mean, when two people have a quarrel, or two groups have a quarrel, who's responsible for putting it right? Surely, the person who's responsible for causing it. But not here. For this chapter leaves me seeing Jesus.

As though God did beseech you by us, it's Jesus on his knees before a rebel humanity. We pray you, in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God. That's how I ought to preach.

That's how we ought to too. Knowing it is Jesus in us, begging people to be reconciled to God. The love of Christ constrains us.

Let's pray. Jesus, Jesus, thine all-victorious love, shed in my heart abroad. In my heart shall no longer rove, rooted and fixed in God.

Oh, that in me the sacred fire might now begin to blow, to burn, burn up the dross of base desire, and make the mountains throw. Oh, thou who at Pentecost is full, do thou my, let my spirit come. We want all that you have for us, Lord, and therefore we would just now, in our hearts, hold out our hands and say, Lord, put the handcuffs on.

May we be thy slaves, happy slaves, because in there is perfect freedom. Thank you, Lord. We pray to you for all that you're waiting to do to a life that's totally obedient.

Have your way. For your name's sake. Amen.

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