

Christ Our Life - Part 1

by Art Katz

To live as Christ means to embody the reality of his life, to be dead and hidden with him, and to trust in his power and glory.

Duration: 59:27

Scripture: Genesis 6:14, Exodus 20:3, Isaiah 63:10, Matthew 16:24, John 15:4, Colossians 1:27-28

Topics: "Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his personal experience of preparing for a speaking engagement. He describes how he fasted for five days in order to seek God's guidance and inspiration for his message. Despite feeling inadequate and haunted by past criticisms, he ultimately learns to trust in God's enablement. The speaker emphasizes the importance of availing oneself of God's power and not relying solely on human effort.

Transcript

For me to live as Christ is not a little option, or some airy reference to some imagined reality, but the very heart of the reality of that apostle, and needs to become our heart, our reality, and that's the subject for tonight. Turn to the book of Colossians. I have never before ever sought to explicate, I've almost been keeping it as a private secret, but I'll tell you this, nothing has earned for me more reproach, more censure, more opposition from Christians than my insistence upon the Christ life.

It's almost like to cry, come down from the cross and we'll believe you. Come down from this presumptuous attitude, cats, that for you to live as Christ, you sound too much like for Brooklyn for us to believe that. You need to be where we are, live and serve God in the same basis that we are, out of your own humanity.

Then you'll not be a threatening alternative. So can you understand that? Especially a man whose marriage has been checkered, I'm using the most discreet language, more likely to say it's been a 40 year scandal, and so many rush in with counsel. If only you would do this, if only you would do that, if only, only, if you only act humanly, then the situation would be resolved and you would be the marriage at off.

But there's something in me, willing rather to suffer the scandal of an unresolved marriage that I should initiate out of my own life of ability or wisdom, an answer. Because the issue is not domestic compatibility, the issue is the glory of God forever. And if he wants to take 40 years or more to bring his own answer, I'm

willing to wait on that and suffer the reproach that is continually in our teeth because of my prominence.

What? You're a leader and your marriage is this, yours is that? How come? Why don't you do, do, do, do? Why don't you, you, you? You understand folks? I'm sharing private things because of my jealousy for the life of God that needs to be waited for and Paul sums up brilliantly in a very great verse in chapter 3, beginning with what if you then be risen with Christ, all depending on those who have first been crucified and buried with him, seek those things which are above where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things upon the earth. Isn't that remarkable? The verbs of activation, of participation are quite lucid and quite clear and yet we're called to abide in Christ, dwell in Christ, his life, and yet you seek, you set your affections, you initiate you, but it's not you independent of that life, it's you by that life, for you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.

When Christ who is your life shall appear, then your marriage will become not a scandal but an eternal praise to his glory. When his life will appear, not when you think it's time, not when you've had a gutful of reproach or you're tired of the strain, it's when his life will appear. You can't come and fear his life.

You're dead until his life will appear. And this is the whole nub and nexus of the whole genius of apostolic reality, is to wait upon the operation of that life. It's an excruciating wait in which the synonym for waiting is dying.

This is the heart of priestliness that waits. And while you're waiting, you catch the reproach. While you're waiting, there's a whole host of critics who are living from their natural life and succeeding admirably, whose marriages are showcase trophies and are telling you what you ought to be doing that you might be as they.

But why do you stubbornly resist? Why do you insist upon waiting? And so I say, for no other issue have I suffered greater reproach than this insistence upon being dead and hit with Christ. But I tell you, dear saints, that when his life is revealed, *mamma mia*, it was worth waiting for. So if you have any ambition, you need to be seen, you need to be recognized, you need to be admired, you're disqualified.

When he says dead, he means dead. So this is a great maxim. How shall I say it? When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, that is full of eschatological meaning, because in his appearing and his actual second coming, we shall be raised with him and appear with him in glory.

But like every other eschatological promise, there's a portent for a present application. So any appearing of the Lord is the issue of his glory. And unless we're jealous for that glory, we'll not be willing for the waiting and for the dying until he appears.

Paul was willing. The remarkable thing that Paul had ever and always before him, an alternative, his own brilliance, his own Talmudic and Judaic learning, his own character, his own courage, his own erudition. He could always have lapsed back and drawn from this great source.

When Paul says, I am determined not to know anything, but to Christ and him crucified, he's declaring death on all of the options that are continually available to him in the natural, which had he availed himself, he would have found a much greater acceptance among his Jewish kinsmen. The thing that vexed them so much with Paul is that he was so ostensibly the visible statement of the life of Christ. If only he could have compromised, if only he could have mixed a little bit of the Judaic human life with the ultimate life, they may have not been as vehement in his death, but because he was so exclusively the expression of

that life that was so totally unacceptable and threatening to them that their conclusion was, this man is not fit to live.

There's something about the life of Christ, however much is the issue of glory, and we rejoice in its expression, is equally an abomination in the sight of the world. You cannot read the book of Psalms and not see the continual references in David to, they are out after my life, they want to extinguish my life, because to extinguish the life of God, the life of David, is to diminish the life of God. The world hates God, hates his life, and we need to understand that the word life is much more than biological activity or energy, although it's supremely that, it's infinite in its power, and your glory all the more when it comes out of your weakness.

You couldn't put two cents together, you could hardly remember your own name, your tongue sticks to the roof of your mouth, and yet when that life flows, you are energized, as you guys have had occasion to witness, and maybe even now. So I don't want to deprecate the issue of its power, but I want also to remind you that it includes much more. The life of God is the nature of God, it's the character of God, it's what he is in himself.

That's why humility cannot be imitated, there's no more counterfeit thing than to seek to be self-effacing, humble, it's so clearly a fraud. Because humility is not an affectation, humility is what God is in himself. And we hope to take the subject of servanthood as not something that Jesus took upon himself in the fulfillment of his calling as the son of God, but it was the expression of what is ever and always intrinsic to God by nature.

God is by nature a servant, can you believe that? The creator is by nature a servant. And the only way that we will express that true servanthood is not by imitating it, but by expressing it, when his life will be revealed. Know this also, that when his life will be revealed, it will not always be to your liking.

I don't know how many Jews I've insulted, I don't know how many Christians I've insulted, not because I'm a mean old guy, but somehow when the Lord jabs and reaches in a way that's unsuspecting, it's salutary, it's a life-giving thing, they gasp, so it's not that I'm cleverly employing devices of that kind, it issues. I'm often surprised if not astounded or astonished what comes out of my mouth, but the thing is I will never suppress it, because it offends my sensibility or my moral standards. That's why the greatest hindrance to the operation of this life is your spirituality.

The image, your image of your spirituality, and so long as you want to protect that, you'll find yourself in conflict with the issue of the operation of this life, because you can't know how far God will go. Remember Elijah taunting the false prophets of Baal? Where is your God? Maybe he's on the john. What we're reading is a King James domesticated version of the scripture, but the naked and the original scriptures are quite insulting.

Where did he get that? Was it because he's that kind of a perverse character? He got it by the same God who said, build an altar and saturate it with twelve barrels of water, I'll consume it by fire. If I've done these things according to your wording, oh God, he cried, then now come and show these people that you're God. By the same God who gave him that pattern is the same God who gave him that insult.

We mustn't limit the Lord, because the Lord's great admonition and injunction against Israel, you have limited the Holy One of Israel. And in my observation, 42 years in the faith, the greatest limitation that comes from the church is its own image of itself, its own concern for its spirituality, its own self-esteem and

acceptance on the basis of how it likes to perceive itself. So long as that's a criterion, you'll find yourself not expressing the life if the life chooses to be insulting in any particular moment.

I think I've done more for Jews with insult than with any accommodation or compliment. They flew me in once to some place to meet with a Jewish businessman who's supposed to be quite an opinionated and informed man who has been reducing the local believers to dust, and now he will have met his match with me. And so we met in the restaurant, and he was continually blabbing, I was quietly eating, I had not said a word.

Finally we came to the end of the time, he says, Have you nothing to say? I said, All I can say is that I find this the most expensive lunch I've ever eaten. My silence was more important than my answer. Another time a woman brought her Jewish husband to a meeting, I saw his face as we came to the end, turned off.

But lo and behold, I was taken out to eat, and there they were at the same restaurant. So I took my plate, knife and fork, and I moved right up to his table. And we had a conversation, he was a lawyer, a philanthropist, a humanist, telling me of all of his good works and what he had done for Israel, that if there's a God, surely he recognizes his virtues.

And we went on like that, and finally at the end when we stood apart and shook hands, I said something like, So long as I have breath in my body, and have opportunity, I will contend against your self-satisfaction. For if you continue in it, you will surely make yourself a candidate for hell. The guy drew back.

One statement out of the life of God will not return to him void. But will you make that statement? Or will you find it offensive? Because you're more concerned to find approval and acceptance among Jews, and not to excite their disapproval. Because you need that acceptance.

Why? Because you're not yet quite dead, and hid with Christ and God. What's the Latin word for an absolutely essential condition? The sine qua non of the apostolic life is to be dead. Only death will free you from that inordinate need to be recognized, to be admired, to be approved, if not only by others, but equally by yourself.

Death is that complete separation from that need, where you can suffer reproach, indifference, rejection. It's all the same. And then, his life will be revealed when he chooses.

And when it will be revealed, it will be revealed unto glory. For it's never given as an expedient. It's never given to ease our distress or our embarrassment, or to take us out of a situation.

It's to serve his purpose. It's ultimate. It's the issue of his glory.

Can you imagine a whole church living like this? And living like this consistently? Not just in the great issues that are before it, but in the everyday issues that are before it. Because, listen, who's capable of being a father? Who's capable of being a husband or a wife? Who's capable of being a brother in the church? Who's capable of being a minister? Is there any aspect of that for which we are called, for which we are sufficient in ourselves? Maybe yes, in a get-by way, but the issue is not get-by. The issue is the glory of God forever.

So we need to consciously desist from just falling into responses and answers that are mediated out of our own humanity. Always there to be drawn upon, and convenient, familiar, trustworthy, tested. But to trust

the life is the risk.

It's a death. If it will come, when it will come, what expression will it take at that time? So it's a continual reiteration of death and resurrection. What happened to the waters today establishes for all time the reality.

But the reiteration of that reality, the reckoning of yourself dead, is the tension of faith into which every baptized believer believes when he's continuing to live. For every issue before him is a choosing of reckoning dead himself, dead alive unto God, or falling back again on that very available human sufficiency. Okay.

I don't want to rush this. We want to, what's the word, dwell or juriate in this. Let us sink in.

This is not a little patsy icing on the cake. This is really the cake. So, if you want to look back at the chapter one of Colossians, such a great book.

How come great? How come eloquent? How come deep? Because the text itself issued out of the life. The remarkable thing about Paul is that he never ever dreamed that any of his epistles, merely written to affect the issues of the life of the church of his time, would one day become part of the Holy Writ, and be considered as valid and as holy as any aspect of the Bible. So that Paul's writing is completely, what shall I say, spontaneous, unselfconscious.

And for that reason all the more glorious. And yet the beauty of it, the depth of it, the richness of it, you don't feel a man who's deliberating saying, huge generations will be pondering what I'm now going to write. This has got to be so expertly expressed.

It's just a man responding to the demands of his apostolic life, giving answer to the church out of the grit of the realities that it has to face, and in that answer, out of the life, making statements that have illuminated and encouraged and inspired believers of all generations, including our own. The text itself issuing out of the life. And so the scholars still debate whether the book of Ephesians is written by Paul, because it doesn't bear the conspicuous marks of his authorship.

It seems perhaps someone else had adopted his name. In those days there were schools of Paul, and maybe some disciples had composed a book and attributed it to him, because they don't see the same necessary evidences. But what compels Paul to write always the same? Do you speak always the same? Do you sound always the same? Can Paul express himself one way in Colossians, another way in the Philippians epistle, and another way in Ephesians, as the life is expressed? I believe that.

Paul is so much the expression of that. So in chapter one, talking about the redemption in his blood in verse 14, even the forgiveness of sins, who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers.

All things were created by him and for him. How does he know that? How does he have so incisive a grasp of the genius of the faith, as the principal apostle? Because what he's communicating is not just mere opinion, this is definitive statement of the faith for every generation, and it's written as artlessly and unselfconsciously as a man who is just dictating a recipe for something. His statements are an astonishment.

His life is an astonishment. His courage is an astonishment. He faces every threat, whether it comes from Jews, whether the vexations of the church, whether in shipwreck or beatings, with the same magnanimity, the same grace, the same life.

Because for Paul, for me to live is Christ. In him I live and move and have my being. I'm crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I. So we mustn't look upon Paul as some aberration.

How curious that a man has found this distinctive pattern good for him. No, we need to look upon Paul as the paradigm for all the church. What else is an apostle? What else is the chief apostle, but not only the one who foments and sets forth the classic doctrines of the faith, but is himself the very exploitation, the embodiment and the expression.

He's the foundation. So therefore we need to study, approve, agree and desire to come into the same reality. And it does not mean that you're going to sound like some mock imitation of Paul.

You will be distinctly yourself. You'll speak with a Brooklyn accent or a French or whatever it is or the uniqueness of your personality. But what issues through that is not of yourself.

Neither your thought nor the expression. And it needs to come forth because God has uniquely intended it. So, all things are created by him and for him.

He's before all things and by him all things consist. He's the head of the body, the church, who's the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence. If we lapse into ourselves and speak out of our own humanity because we're afraid of the failure, we're faced with a new predicament we've never been called upon to speak like this before a congregation of this size or a situation this critical and rather than take the risk that his life would be made available we rather opt for the security of speaking out of our own religious and human understanding and well-meaning intention.

And you know what? People will find that acceptable. You'll be saved from embarrassment. You'll be acknowledged, but you'll have missed the glory.

I was a seminary student for two or three years in the Lutheran seminary and we had a weekly chapel service. I don't remember a single speaking either from faculty or administrator in three years and yet every one of those speakings were biblical. Everyone knew the day in which they would be called upon.

They had weeks and months to prepare themselves and did so to the hilt. Why? Because their great concern was speaking before not only the student body, but their own colleagues who are theologians and so they have to be letter perfect and they were so established out of their own minds and will that however biblical the message was, it was not life-giving. There was no room for the Lord because man was too jealous for his own reputation and acceptance than to take the risk of trusting God in the spontaneity of the moment that the Lord would form his own word, his own expression that life might go forth.

What's the word for that, saints? The word for that is religion. That's religion. Religion is the activity of men well-meaning, well-intended, biblically Bible-employed but falling short of the glory because it issues from and has at its end not the glory of God, but the advantage of men the acceptance of men.

It's powerful. Who could there be that resists it? Who can survive the seminary environment and obtain tenure and security as a professor of theology if you're not playing the game? If you dare take the risks of resurrection, you'll come quickly to the attention of your colleagues and you'll find yourself in an abrasive

situation in which they're looking a stance upon you critically because you're upsetting the apple cart. You're establishing an option that is threatening.

The resurrection life is despised. And the church, let alone the world and the psalmists are full as I've said they are after my life. They cannot abide my life because my life is the life of God.

And if they can extinguish it through crucifying me, they think that they have nullified Him. So we need to be jealous for that life because it's all-sufficient, glorious for it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell. So how shall all the fullness of the Gentiles come in? Except by this fullness that dwells in Him and which we access when we are in Him.

Because what phrase is more reiterated by Paul than the simple phrase in Christ? Where else do you read that? Peter doesn't refer to it like that. If at all. I don't know of any other apostolic writer but Paul, I don't know how many times you can count it in Christ, in Him, in, we'll see it here, in, in, in, in, in.

When he says in, he means in. That there's a reality, there's a realm of reality of an ultimate kind reserved in one place only, in Christ, for those who are in Him. And dwell in Him and live in Him and through Him and unto Him and for Him.

There's a fullness. There's no situation however unpredictable or demanding for which His life will not be sufficient. And yet He may not choose to answer and leave you with your face sticking out embarrassed.

What? You've been a believer that long and you can't answer this predicament, that question? And it's not in me. There's a wonderful example in Watchman Nee. He was on his way walking past the home of a believer who needed to be encouraged in the faith, who's been going through great trials.

And indeed, out of his own understanding of Scripture, he could have brought that comfort. So he came to the man's door and raised his arm to knock and his arm went dead. He could no more knock than to turn the world over.

The life had gone out of his arm and out of his body. Why? Because the life of God was not in bringing that word at that time. Have you ever experienced that? It's not comfortable saints.

Just when we think we should have something from God because listen, our reputation is up for grabs right now. People are looking to us with expectancy and there you are bereft without answer, without ability. You're like a dead man.

But unless you're willing for that you'll forfeit the great glory. It's the suffering saints. Faith is a suffering.

Trust is a suffering. Waiting and dying is a suffering. The only reason you'll bear it is that when his life is revealed, it's revealed unto glory.

Because in that life is all the fullness. Not only for an answer but for the character of God, the nature of God, the sweetness of the Lord, the beauty of his holiness. I'd much rather forfeit trying to be a nice guy and then look upon as some kind of, I don't know what, ogre that my sweetness when it comes is his.

I cannot boast of it, take credit for it. If there's any flavor of Christ, it's his life. It's what's intrinsic to that life.

That all-encompassing life. So I'm grateful that people who have known me over the years say, finally in your 42nd year I'm seeing a tenderness that was not there before. I said, oh praise God.

It's not by any self-conscious intention on my part. In fact, I'm all the more delighted to hear it when I'm not aware of it. Because self-conscious spirituality is our undoing.

So let his life have its working. Paul prevailed that Christ be formed in you. And it's not an overnight quickie.

And until he's formed in you, you're going to exhibit other things that are embarrassing. But as it's formed and comes forth it's the very fragrance of Christ. It's the knowledge of him in every place.

Something of the substance, the spirit, the quality of that uniqueness of the life of God that was raised from the dead and has ascension glory. Somehow that life was passed through crucifixion suffering, takes on its marks, its coloration its experience, was raised from the dead in the uniqueness of resurrection and ascended to the throne and it was that life poured out by the spirit on the day of Pentecost. It's the sum and substance of all for which he has passed as son, both in his suffering and in his glory.

To have an option like that and to discard it and choose to live from our natural life is hardly short of insult. It's presumption, what shall we say, it's impertinence that I insist upon living out of my humanity so I can count on that rather than take the risk of waiting upon his life and yet we have that freedom to choose that option for Paul there was no option I'm crucified, it's no longer I that live I've determined not to know so easy for me to know. My mind is very accessible to knowledge, there are things of a sophisticated kind that are always at my fingertips if I would but condescend to it.

Now listen you dear saints if the enemy can have your mind he's got you and though you're no longer poring over what's the magazine, sexy magazine Playboy or sport magazines or whatever it was before or other material if he can still occupy your thoughts still engage your mind as your thoughts then it's nothing for him in a moment even to move from what seems to be legitimate religious or spiritual thoughts into realms of thought that will shock and embarrass you so what's our safety that we're dead even to our own thought let the wicked man forsake his way Isaiah 55 and the unrighteous man his thoughts, his own thoughts and I will receive him sayeth the Lord well I always thought unrighteous thoughts must be perverse sickly, sensual, earthly, carnal, no if the enemy cannot engage you at

that level you've graduated, he'll engage you with spiritual thoughts so long as he will engage you and have your mind to race and to run as your own operation to forsake your thought is death because our esteem, our self esteem our appearance has so much to do with our ability to think and to be clever, to be original, to say the last thing to be forsaken is the operation of our minds but if you'll forfeit, forsake and ask him for his thoughts which are higher than our thoughts he'll give you something else to deliberate upon and you'll be uniquely different so maybe I'm an extremist in this regard but it's my position so verse 27 famous familiar scripture to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of the mystery among the Gentiles which is Christ in you the hope of

glory whom we preach warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus not alongside, not drawing occasionally as the moment may require but in, in abiding and dwelling that you might not, it's not an exaggeration to say for me to live is Christ, we're careful to insist upon this in the place of ministry but when we get home after three months of giving ourselves out incessantly and seeing the glory of God being made manifest we relax and don't feel that it's imperative now as much to be in Christ as home as it was at the University of Bielefeld or Geneva or wherever we were before and then we fall back again into our own humanity we fail to maintain the consistency of abiding in Christ thinking that it's only a provision for

ministry but it's rather than a provision for all life so it needs to be a consistent abiding and dwelling a consistent awareness that for in me is no good thing at all, without him I can do nothing, I have no value when you open your eyes in the morning your first breath is his blood the renewing of his life communion, I was a dead man, Lord I can't even open, as I said the other day, spiritual chambers, I have not even the stamina the spiritual energy to enter into your devotions until your life has first been renewed and revived in me by the taking again of your body and blood, but in my opinion nothing less nor other than the power of the life of God reiterated and renewed every day in eating and drinking at today's very commencement the very infrequency of our coming to the Lord's

table in the church today once a month once a year is a statement of how little we see the necessity for his life and indeed in most church services what do you see a human religious production from the preaching, to the singing to the fundraising, to every activity it's a human phenomenon we had a relationship in Brooklyn, you can pray for it it's momentarily snapped, why? because I brought a caustic word that the wife of the pastor and the other leading spiritual woman found so offensive that it parted the relationship, but it's a congregation smack dab in the heart of a growing Jewish community in a certain neighborhood of Brooklyn and the Lord had given me a precious relationship with this Pentecostal French, Italian, Canadian pastor and I listened to him one day speaking out of

Hebrews on the rest of God and we're walking to the restaurant after the service and I turned to him on the sidewalk and I said, did you speak the message on the rest of God, out of the rest of God the guy staggered and choked and spluttered, because he had not he'd spoken out of his own incessant drivenness to succeed and so the conversation continued over the Italian lunch table, the waiter came to bring us coffee, I said, let's go to your place I said to his wife, you make a good cup of coffee I knew the Lord wanted something more that could not be publicly expressed and over his own table in his t-shirt he acknowledged that there came a moment when he was preaching that morning when the Lord said, let go let go of your notes, let go of your trust your confidence, take a risk and let

me be, I said what did you do in that moment, nothing he said I continued on, I was afraid to let go, because ever since the beginning of my ministry, I had a Pentecostal uncle who said, you don't have what it takes, you'll never make it, you'll never be a success, I'm haunted by the drivenness and necessity of proving myself and performing it, I was afraid to let go he cried, and that scene is replicated a hundred thousand, ten hundred thousand times over in churchianity throughout the world of people listening to correct biblical messages that lacks the life, because men are unwilling to risk and trust ok, chapter 3, verse 2 Paul speaks of the riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God and of the father of Christ in whom are hid all the

treasures of wisdom and knowledge so what condition can we meet however unforeseen, however unpracticed, however unknown in our experience in which his wisdom and knowledge will not suffice if he chooses, this I say lest any man should beguile you with enticing words speak action to the flesh with you in the spirit and so forth observing your steadfastness of faith as you have therefore received Jesus Christ the Lord, so walk ye in him if you remove these references in Christ and in him from Paul, you remove Paul if we only sink into an attitude of casual condescension that this is a stylistic device, this is Pauline rhetoric it's a phrase that he uses, we will have lost the game, this is the issue, in Christ that's where the wisdom and the treasure is to be found that's where the courage

is, that's where the humility is that's where the sweetness is, that's where the power is in him, in him, in him but if you're in yourself you forfeit that prospect, but rooted and built up in him, this repetition this

insistence, established in the faith you have been thought about it with thanksgiving, lest any man should spoil you through philosophy, faith, deceit and the tradition of man, and the rudiments of the world but after Christ, for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and you are complete in him which is the head of all principality and power, in whom also you are circumcised in the circumcision made without hands, and coming off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ bearing with him, in baptism wherewith also you are risen with

him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead and you being dead in your sins, the uncircumcision of the flesh, as he put it together with him having forgiven you all trespasses I'm just reading this by faith, I don't have any clever commentary, I don't have any commentary maybe in a certain sense it's in a realm beyond bringing anything additional but just to dwell on the weight of these statements, as only Paul knows them in the depth of his own apostolic experience in life, and warning the believer not to lapse back into philosophy not to lapse back into your humanity not to play the game that is acceptable to men, to ruthlessly distance yourself, let alone to make that a dependency, and to be confident and trust in the life, in which is all the

fullness of the Godhead bodily because you're buried with him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead.

I would suppose the operation of the power that raised Jesus from the dead this is the single distinctive event in the history of the world is the power that raised Jesus from the dead we can't even begin to estimate, it's much more than it's voltage, it's the primal act of God, the impartation of that life, that indestructible life that broke every fetter of death a death that was so apparent, so depressing that the two disciples on the road to Emmaus were dejected and crestfallen, and Jesus had to tease them and say why are your faces so fallen, why are you looking so dejected, what are you estranged around here, don't you know that this Jesus of Nazareth, a prophet, mighty in word and deed who did great works, was taken by the wicked hands of men and slain, and we've seen his cadaver if you've ever seen the great Holy Ghost masterpiece of the crucified Christ that is in Colmar, France you haven't seen our true depiction of the crucified Christ you've never saw a more ugly, gnarled twisted, broken piece of death than the figure of Jesus, you wonder are you looking at a man or some animal, his bones are so distended his feet are, his jaw is agape, the lips are white, there's things impaled in his flesh from his flagellation, it's an utter picture of the desolation of death can anything come out of that?

Not just amelioration not just resuscitation, but when you walk around this larger than life painting in Colmar, France as I've had the privilege to do, the other side is the resurrection and in every place in the body of the crucified side, where there's been impaled, stricken, pierced beams of light and glory are pouring out as Jesus breaks forth out from the tomb and the Roman centurions get a skill to guide him are toppling over, their helmets falling off the artist had captured this moment and so the answer to Simon's question something came in that moment in the power of God, as powerful and perhaps, what shall I say, eclipsing in significance in terms of his eternal glory, even the initial acts of creation, it's God, very God in his essential power, defeating death through life and

it's that life and that moment vivendi, modus vivendi that is our enablement but how many are availing ourselves will you do it before 4,000 people? and when I spoke the holocaust message before 2,000 people after 5 days of fasting for one having spoken on the holocaust I myself suggested this subject and they gave it to me at this big charismatic full gospel conference and I was brought into my room upon arrival and I had a table from window to window and I strew out my pieces of envelope, my papers, my

scraps my articles, accumulated for years waiting for the first occasion somehow to assemble and make a statement and when I saw the breadth of all of this I staggered, who's capable of summing up and finding the essence of this issue to communicate in such a conference where the tape of

the message will circulate worldwide and subsequently become a book and so I didn't eat that morning and I was at that table for 8 hours, no lunch, no dinner and I realized I'm not to eat and for 5 days I fasted for that message, came back every evening from the conference, picked up my yellow legal pad, looked at my bare outline it was pitiful and it was dead I couldn't add a word, waiting for the lord to embellish this skeleton of a framework until the final Saturday morning came when it was time to speak and the man with whom I was to share the speaking occasion his wife had a baby 4 o'clock that morning and he was required to fly out, so I was given the entire speaking part and stood up when my time came with my yellow pad you never saw a more pathetic figure talk about death and the

heck of it was, I read it I read it in a monotone and a man who was used to liberty of utterance and unctious, it was not there to be had the lord kept me in such a place of death that all there was was this mechanical, monotonous reading of a skeleton of an outline before 2000 people and 200 messianic Jews who looked at me at that time as being the principal mouthpiece among the Jewish believers, and here comes this disappointing, stunted, mechanical monotonous, red presentation I sat down there was a dead silence, well it's clear that silence was the statement of massive human disappointment and you're eating this every moment death is not a little rhetorical word death is an experience, we suffer multiple deaths, I still remember the death Reggie was there, I was sitting on that

platform and listening to the silence that clearly condemned me and the evil one at my elbows you really missed it, look at this not a whimper, not an amen not a sign of anything, and while I'm waiting there two men are coming down the main principal aisle of that auditorium and beckoning me to the apron of this platform, and one brother I know is Ern Baxter's young man, he said, Art, this man with me is a Jewish prophet, he has a word for you from the Lord, I said, oh yes he said, yes, thus sayeth the Lord you have missed the mind of Christ you have done incalculable damage to the body of Christ you need to go back to the microphone and recant your message, and it was like a knife into the heart with the hilt being twisted, how would you like to experience that, you manby-pandy sissies

nice for you to observe but don't want to be the participant why am I taking pains to elaborate all this, not to make myself a focus of attention, but because I know that to one degree or another, before this age concludes, you will be faced with ultimate issues of this kind, and I want to encourage you by the experiences through which I have passed that there's a death that's really a death, and you have to taste it it comes as humiliation, is there anything more painful than to disappoint Christians is there anything more doubly painful than to disappoint Jewish Christians, who look to you especially as the leading mouthpiece, and all you've brought come up with is this little stunted mechanical marathon and now you're being accused, even in speaking it of having made a mistake and done

grievous damage to the body of Christ, exactly the same words that I received in Washington D.C. when I spoke on UNED for Christ's sake another Jewish prophet, where did they come from to tell me exactly the same thing with a knife in my heart and he might have been right that's the heck of it you dear saints you can't say, hey, I'm a Catholic, I've got a history with God I've been led by the spirit, you may have been until then, but what keeps you from erring five days of fasting is no guarantee of anything, he may well be right and unless you're willing to consider the prospect that he's right you yourself are in danger of becoming false, and so there's an anguish I went from Washington D.C. to Denmark and lived in Inge's

country for months and the Lord had not said, forget it, don't be

anxious you obeyed me, that was my word a complete silence, you want to be a bearer of the word of God in the last days you'll be so through a baptism of fire to handle the word of God God is no cheapie, he'll test you and you'll pass through humiliations of this kind that he's not quick to alleviate and he'll allow you to languish in it like a dog licking his wounds because this guy was not content just to accuse me in Washington D.C. long distance phone calls to Denmark telegrams, you need to use the voice magazine and to nullify the statement you made because your statement on unit for price was offensive but one day, three months or so, I don't know how much longer I was up there in that little loft in Denmark saying Lord I'll never again want to speak to you who am I?

I'm a high school teacher, where do I come off to make major addresses and I've had it, forget it, and I'm not qualified and look at the debacle of this situation at a time like that I was reading Watchman Me a spiritual man and I came to a reference where he uses exactly the same verses that I had cited in that message in Washington and he goes on to say if you miss this by the spirit it is the greatest source of offense and all of a sudden the burden was lifted it just went off of me as if you were right and be at peace you have served the Lord, though you have paid for it in an anguish of soul until now and so he gave me that message at the holocaust theater you have missed the mind of what you have done you need to recant your message right now over the microphone this guy might well

be right and before I could go further all of a sudden a shriek Rachel will document what I'm saying if anything I am understating what happened that afternoon in the 1970s, a shriek a cry, a breaking, a bellowing like nothing I have ever before heard or have heard since the deepest repentant expression in the body, people were toppling out of their seats the message was a delayed action bomb and at the very moment where I was excruciatingly having to face the issue, I had missed the Lord here was the confirmation that it was the Lord and it was his word and was now having its effect breaking and crying at such depth as I have not before ever seen somebody sent up water for foot washing and we were washing one another's feet and throwing the wet towels out into the congregation and people

were putting them in their bodies and receiving healing it went on until two o'clock in the afternoon it was a historic occasion, we went home with that cassette tape in our hands like a pulsating thing that has subsequently become the book which is now in a third edition in German, French, Bulgarian, Russian Hebrew is it Hebrew? it's translated but not published that book is yet a potential blockbuster, Mike Snyder who was the first one to publish it has an esteem for that book as one of the most epical, potent statements ever made about the Jewish history's condition of the issues of the faith represented in the Holocaust that has ever come to print and I believe that his estimation is a true one born out of that fast born out of that excruciating context of feeling yourself having

missed the occasion disappointing many and eating the death of that terrible silence until the breakthrough of the cries came forth will God go that far? stretch out his servants to breaking allow them to eat death and suffer the humiliation of it and not being able to explain and even the humiliation of the prospect that the so called Jewish prophet might well be right and that he has to live in detention, always no matter how much he's prepared himself no matter how much he's sought God, no matter how much he thinks his own heart is earnest but sincere, he can be in error he can be deceived, he can miss it and he has always to live with that possibility that indeed he can and will that's a suffering saint, the word of God is not a chibi it's an event and it requires this matrix of

suffering to bring this forth verse 19 of chapter 2 not holding the head from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment minister increases with the increase of God wherefore if you be dead with Christ why is there an if? because it's not automatic you could have gone down even into baptism but without any intention of dying you just wanted to fulfill a religious ordinance you felt it would be an advantage but you never intended to forsake your life but if you went down unto death if you let go, if you forsook any intention for yourself or the future if you're willing to be a candidate for the kinds of things that I'm describing it was indeed a death from the rudiments of the world so Paul says don't be subject to its ordinances about touching tasting, handling the

commandments and doctrines of men which have a show of wisdom and will worship in humility in honor to the satisfying of the flesh this is religion, always a seductive prospect so attractive and you'll be applauded for it men will pat you on the back and you'll be honored and acknowledged because you're on the ground that they themselves occupy what they're saying is come down from the cross cats and we'll believe you come down from this presumptuous thought that for you to live as Christ that you could have the same essential reality that distinguished Paul and that you're willing to wait for that in your marriage and suffer the reproach not that it should finally be a reconciliation unto domestic satisfaction or the resumption of your sex life but unto him a glory forever come down

cats, live like us serve like us but your insistence is an offense it's the same cry that came to Jesus come down from the cross come down from this place of faith that is jealous to insist upon remaining and dwelling in him until his life is revealed if you then be risen with Christ chapter 3 coming full circle seek those things which are above where Christ sits on the right hand of God set your affection on things above not on things on the earth you couldn't even begin to have contemplations of this kind above would have no meaning unless you're out from that place of death for you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God when Christ who is our life shall appear then shall you appear with him in glory when Christ who is our life

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