

1982 Testimony

by Arthur Blessitt

Arthur Blessitt shares his powerful testimony of love and faith through his journey of carrying the cross around the world.

Duration: 59:08

Scripture: Matthew 5:41, Matthew 6:1-4, Matthew 7:12, Matthew 22:39, Matthew 25:35-40, Mark 12:30-31, Luke 9:23

Topics: "Testimony"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of trusting and loving the Lord. He uses the analogy of crossing deep washes and narrow rivers to illustrate the challenges we face in life. The preacher also highlights the significance of treating others with kindness and compassion, as Jesus taught. He shares a personal story of encountering a woman in need and being moved by the Holy Spirit to give her all his money. The sermon concludes with a call to settle matters with God and a reminder of the cross as a symbol of faith.

Transcript

This is going to be a glory night, and I'm so glad to be a part of it. I don't know whether I can stand it or not. It's going to be glorious.

I have a presentation to make to Arthur before he preaches. Arthur, come up here, will you? Where is that good brother that was here a minute ago? You know, he's traveled all over the world. He said he's only been to West Texas one time when he walked across Amarillo, and we don't really think that's West Texas.

And we felt like that he really wouldn't be a West Texan without a hat. And so you're not supposed to ever lay it down this way. You always lay it up like this.

Oh, okay, okay. Well, I just want us to stand together. Arthur, would you just stand for a minute? He's gone to preach God's Word to us, and, you know, it's a privilege for us to have had him come to our city.

Would you like for him to come back sometime? I feel that we need to join our hearts and our hands for just a minute, and I want us to pray for this man's ministry. I want us to pray for him. I thought about maybe having him kneel here and have everybody come by and lay hands on him, but we'd probably kill him if we did that.

So I want us just to join hands across those aisles, will you? And let's just take a minute and pray for this man. And I think some of you would like to make a covenant, a vow, a promise to the Lord to pray for his ministry in the future. Wouldn't you like to do that? Let's just bow our heads together, our hearts together.

Just take a few moments of silence. In your heart, would you pray for this man's ministry? Lord, we thank you for the love that you shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. And thank you for the love that we feel for this man of God, and we lift him to you.

We ask you to station your angels around him, protect him. We ask you to continue to fill him with your spirit and boldness and fire. We ask that the Lord Jesus would continue to shine through him.

In Jesus' name, amen. God bless you. Well, I finally made it if I'm a cowboy, right? It is really wonderful to be with you tonight.

And the pastor asked me if I would share again this evening. And I just somehow felt, and it's really strange with this much between me and you. I hope it doesn't bother you as much as it does me.

But I felt that I just wanted to share just a little bit this evening and have plenty of time to give an invitation. I wonder if I can make it out there. Can I? Somebody watch the cord and we'll ease out here, okay? All right, okay.

Hey, I'm with you now, all right. Hey, I'm almost a cowboy. You gave me a shirt.

I preached in it this morning. Did you notice that? And get that cowboy hat on, I'll be walking cock-headed, you know, carrying the cross and having to lean my head that way. But I just thought that I would read a scripture verse and share with you just a little bit about what carrying the cross and walking around the world has really done in my life and what it really means to me as a person.

I'd like to read a passage of scripture in Luke, the 13th chapter, the 33rd verse. And Jesus said these words, Nevertheless, I must walk today and tomorrow and the day following. I read that to you.

Jesus said, Nevertheless, I must walk today and tomorrow and the day following. And many, many times that is all that I've known is that I've got to walk today and tomorrow and the day following. And you see the cross.

Many of you can't see it. It's difficult because it's nowhere to get it around here today. But the cross that I've been carrying around the world.

Maybe, Joel, you'll just kind of lean it up there and stand by it, would you? You don't have to stand it all the way up. And just kind of keep it there. There's a lot of people I see looking around.

I think we've got a lot of visitors. How many of you have not been in any services yet? Raise your hand. First time here during the time I've been here.

That's why so many people are looking. There you go. Just set it up right there.

That cross and I have been walking now for 13 years around the world. And as I have carried the cross and walked down the roadsides, a few little things I'd like to share for just a few minutes. One of the things I'd like to share is that walking around the world, has God been able to teach me more about love? I don't know about you, but my mother and my dad love me.

My sister loves me. I love them. We've never had conflict on a personal basis.

I have seen and experienced love. But what God has taught me in my life is to love everybody. God had my wife and I, before I started carrying the cross, minister for two years in Nevada.

We started Bible studies at the gambling casinos and in the houses of prostitution in Elko. Seeing women converted, three became Sunday school teachers in our church. Going then to Hollywood and seeing Christ lead us into the streets and seeing young people, drug addicts, street gangs, underworld people, famous people, all giving their lives to Jesus and experiencing love and love toward people.

I sometimes have a problem with that expression, I love you in the Lord. It kind of makes me think they don't really love. It's conditional.

Let me tell you this, Christian, a lot of people love that don't even know Jesus Christ. We don't just love in the Lord. There is a new and a vast difference in knowing Jesus Christ that many people who are not Christians have loved.

I have been loved in the world. I have been loved by pagans who worship animist religion. I have been loved by Muslims.

I have been loved by Jews. I have been loved by Hindus. I have been loved by Buddhists.

Now I want to share Jesus with them that they may be saved and that they may know this life that Christ gives. And it's necessary to know Christ in order to get to heaven. But still I have found a world full of love.

If only people could love each other the way they've loved me. In Lebanon, in Beirut this summer. It was incredible.

I had the biggest problem I had. The biggest problem I had with the Israeli army was how to make it down the road when they kept tying food on the cross. They'd give me canned, you know, rations.

They'd give me fruit juice. They'd give me beans. They'd give me all kinds.

And they'd buy vegetables. The cross all the way down tied with food hanging on it. I couldn't even get it down the road.

I'd have to go down the road a ways and give it away to the Lebanese. They were giving me. I couldn't even carry it.

I have seen people so generous. I've learned that you can love everybody. Many people have said to me, Arthur, what's the most beautiful thing you've seen? I said, people.

And they don't like that. No, no. What's the most beautiful country you've been in? I say, well, every place is beautiful.

Some might fly into West Texas. They might, eh, not even a mountain around here, huh? But it's beautiful, right? I've learned to see the beauty in the desert. I've learned to see the beauty in flowers.

I've sat down so tired and watched the ants working away. And, you know, there's always a fly around. You're never alone.

If you don't believe it, get out in the middle of the desert. You think it's only you and God. Nobody's around for a hundred miles.

And there'll be a fly. There they are. People say, why do you walk down the road between towns? Why don't you just drive between them? You know what I found? On the open road, it's God's glory place.

There's some little farmer out there. There's some little shepherd tending one goat. There's some little woman out there picking up sticks and hauling them around on her head, trying to get firewood for tonight.

There's some car that'll stop out in the middle of that desert or out in the middle of that lonely road. And the man will say, man, I need help. I can't even tell you my name.

I don't want to. I just need to talk to somebody that doesn't know me and may never see me again. If you'd think of the cross as a portable confessional.

If you'd think of the cross as a mobile altar like the front of the church just carrying an altar down the highway. If you thought of that cross as being a portable church, put this church on wheels and roll it down the road, that is what the cross is. I've learned loving people of every background.

Whatever they say, I've learned not to receive that which is evil, but only that which is good. If somebody curses me, when it hits my brain, it's translated like a computer, and it says, praise the Lord, hallelujah, glory to God. And so, I mean, praise God! I have had people come with gasoline to burn the cross and to burn me and turn around and lead them to Jesus Christ and them testify in a church that night.

I have seen the amazing love. If you love people, I find that it comes back. I mean, you just love.

Don't be afraid of them. My backpack on the back, and in it my money and passport, everything I have, I walk into a desert town. I mean people with head wrap and looking at you, and they're not even the same religion.

And you would be afraid to even park your car where the window's locked. And I go up there, and some guy I walk up, I go, you know, like, do you, you know, something to drink? And they're sitting there smoking a happy bubbly, you know, tobacco and opium or whatever, sucking along there. And they hand me a cup, and I drink their water or their tea or their coffee.

And I mean the minute some guy there all grinning around, and they're wanting, most of them, you know, come up here, and they're wanting to show you their little oasis with their orange trees up there or whatever it is. And there's everything I've got, and they know it. And I just look at them and I say, could I just leave this here? Oh, yes.

And you go on, and I tell you, I've been around this world 13 years, hadn't even had a toothbrush stolen. If you trust people, if you go, I have eaten in villages where they're stoning the tourists who drive by, throwing rocks because the tourists drive by with cameras, roll their windows down, photograph them, and drive off. And they hate the tourists, but I'm eating with them, sleeping with them.

See, we're not called to tour the world. We're called to save the world. I remember one time in Portugal, walking down the road with a cross.

I saw a bus drive by. I had seen an old lady coming down the road in the distance. And you talk about women's liberation.

Most of the world is liberated far more than they want to be because here came a lady carrying a huge, heavy load on her head. And this bus, I could see the lights come on, and it pulled over, and I said, Oh, it can't be, it must be tourists, Christian tourists. And sure enough, the bus stopped, and she was carrying a big pot on her head.

And they unloaded. And everybody is taking pictures, and I can see everybody surrounding this old lady. Then somebody looks, sees me approaching.

And as I come up near her, they all turn and start running at me with those cameras. As they rush up with the cameras, Oh, Arthur, bless it, and your little cross. This is the highlight of our trip.

And they're ready to take pictures. I said, You can't take a picture of me. I'm not another little photo for your slide show back home.

There's an old lady you just met. You didn't give her one dime of money, didn't give her a Bible, didn't give her a prayer. Not one of you big men gave her a lift with a heavy load.

Why don't you turn that bus around and haul her where she's going? I said, You want to take a picture of me? Whatever religion you are, I'm not. I don't know what you believe, but I'm on the opposite side of that religion. And they stood in stunned suspense and finally left.

That is the burden of my heart. We have more people. I feel like preaching now.

We have more people going over to Israel whom we try to say we don't have relics, but we have made that dirt holy. And a shrine, if we get over there and pray or get baptized in the River Jordan or somehow pray in the old Upper Room, and it's not the same Upper Room anyway, and you get there, we're riding around on tour buses if every Christian didn't leave Israel until they got one saved, it'd be saved in one year. But we've gone around touring the world.

I remember in Kenya, we were out with the Maasai tribe and I'm walking across Kenya toward Tanzania. There's two Volkswagen buses stop of preachers and they're on a safari, little zebra-striped VW buses of all silly things, going to see Mount Kilimanjaro and Moragora Crater and they're going out there to look at the animals. They're on an all-expense mission tour of people's mission dollars and I got to witnessing to the drivers of the VW buses.

They were both Muslims and nobody had ever told them how to get saved. And they weren't out there preaching in those villages. They preached on Sunday and are out touring taking pictures of all the animals.

I tell you, in the world it seems to me so many times we've got so blind to people and their needs and the burden of God in our lives is to share with people here and everywhere. I've learned to love people. I mean to sleep in their house, to eat their food.

That's the only thing I regret about here. The only thing. It's been wonderful.

But I'd just love someday to come walking all the way through here and just spend the night with all the people. Though we've been up so late and getting up so early and going on, it's been right for here. I'm not saying anything wrong.

But I'd love to just eat and know you and talk. That's what I groove on. That's my life.

It's meeting somebody and they say, but what about this? And what about that? And what about this? And what about that? And I share and they invite their neighbors over. And you just share and preach. It is fantastic.

Remember when Jesus said, when His mother and His brothers were standing out and they said, call Him out. He was preaching. They thought something had gone wrong.

They thought He had gone mad. Jesus said, Who is My mother and My brothers? And He looked about into the crowd sitting around and said, It's these who do the will of their Father. See, the greatest, your family becomes everybody.

I pick up a little kid over in El Salvador or Hong Kong and that little baby is my baby. When I go to a country, they teach you, the mission programs most teach you, you're a visitor in this country. You're not a citizen.

You're a visitor and you'll never be. Whenever I cross the border to Mexico, yo es un Mexicano. No gringo.

Yo adoro a Jesucristo mucho. No estados unidos. Mexico es mi casa, you see.

And Mexico is my home. When I go to Egypt, I am an Egyptian. I'm not an American.

We've drawn all these lines. I carry a U.S. passport, but God has made all people of one blood, all nations of one blood. There's one faith, one baptism.

And so when I go there, I'm them. I love it there. And I don't feel like an outsider and a stranger.

That's my country. I'm a citizen of it. The head of that government's mine just as if I lived.

I love to just be and share. I love people. And I love them even if they don't know the Lord.

I love them. Jesus loved everybody. He loved.

He spent time with the lost. I don't draw a line and say, Well, the guy's saved. He can be my friend.

I don't do that. I love everybody. We want to spend time with those who don't love the Lord and they're drawn into the family of God.

Because I believe people need to be lifted up. They've already been stomped down enough. And they need life and hope.

As a matter of fact, I'll throw a little sideline in. In walking 13 years around the world, 60 countries and over 20,000 miles in more than half, I would say at least two-thirds of the churches where I arrive and no one knows who I am. And I'm arriving, going down the road and it's getting dark and I need to put my cross somewhere so I can go somewhere to spend the night or I'm going somewhere to spend the night or to meet somebody.

And I walk up as a total stranger, knock on the door and say, can I leave my cross here overnight? Over, well over half the time the answer has been no. I mean, is that a Baptist or a Catholic cross? What is your religion? What are your, I mean, it is the most amazing thing right in the heart, in the heart of, let me just share with you. Came into Montreal one day when the Montreal Canadiens had won the Olympics.

I mean, the Stanley Cup in 1976. Thousands lining the streets and it was raining and cold. And I walked into Montreal that day.

Came to a certain big church in town. As a matter of fact, they had a hallelujah banner hanging up right inside the church and they had a big wooden cross on the wall. Some of you would know that if you've been to Montreal.

It's the biggest one in town, but I won't get specific. And I arrived there and I needed to leave my cross because I was driving a van that I was sleeping in and carrying gospel material and it was about 20 miles down the road. And I needed to leave the cross and then, you know, get a ride back to where my truck was and I'd drive it up, spend the night, and walk in town.

As it was raining and so cold, no one would talk to me. Didn't get anybody to talk. And finally, I went up to the church, carried the cross around to where it said, Church Office.

Rang the buzzer and the lady looked out the door and I said, Ma'am, I said, I'm carrying the cross and I'd like to leave my cross. And I parked it here overnight, just a minute. And she came and there was the head preacher and three or four other preachers came up and looked out at it, backed away and started shaking their head and I said, I would like to leave my cross overnight.

Praise the Lord. I see your banner. Hallelujah.

I'm a hallelujah Christian. And he said, just shook his head. I said, Do you speak English? I thought they didn't speak English.

He said, I jolly well do. Oh, okay. But I said, I don't need any money.

All I need is a place to leave my cross I've got to go back and get my van. I'll be back in the morning and pick it up. He said, Sorry, we can't take excess baggage.

People, if we kept everything, people wanted to leave here, we wouldn't have room to have church. I said, No, it's just the cross. No baggage, anything.

Just, if I could just leave it overnight. I'm sorry. You'll have to find some other place.

We just can't keep people's baggage. And I stood there just, I was wet. I was cold.

The city had been cold. And here, just, I said, But you've got a big cross, wooden cross on your wall. Sorry.

And they closed the door. And I walked out onto the street. Tears just running down my cheek.

And I said, Oh, Lord. Oh, God. You know, what do I do? And I just crushed.

So hurt. And, and I started walking down the street. Went along the street, oh, two or three blocks, standing and waiting for the light to change.

And a black man walked up to me. And, and, and he said, May I ask you a question? I said, Yes. He said, Have you ever been to Kenya? I said, Yes.

He said, Have you been to Nairobi? I said, Yes. He said, You're the same man. I know it.

He said, When you came into Nairobi, there were thousands and thousands all around you. He said, How is it you're walking through Canada here in Montreal and nobody's talking to you? He said, I'm going to catch a plane. I'm a professor at the university.

I came over here wondering if I should come to Canada. I said, Stay in Nairobi, brother. Stay in Nairobi.

I said, They've got a love over there for the cross and for Jesus. A free love. Stay in Nairobi.

He said, Could I pray for you? And that beautiful man put his arms around me and prayed all over me. And then he flagged the cab down and went away. I start walking on down the street still, tears just streaming down.

Praise God, but my heart was hurt and it's getting dark. Don't know where I'll go. And all of a sudden, somebody grabs my pants.

I look down and there's a midget woman about this tall. Little midget in an old dress. And she looked up at me and she said, Yes, you're the one.

I said, What do you mean? She said, I was at my home over here and I was praying. And she said, God said, I want you to go out there on the main street. She said the name of the street.

I forget it. She said to go out on the main street. And she said, There's a man carrying a big cross and I saw your face.

And God said, Lay hands on him and bless him. He's mine. She looking up at me like that, this little midget.

I mean, I found a friend. I said, Ma'am, you can do anything you want to me. I said, Just pray, preach, sing, anything.

And I kneel down holding on to that cross and that little midget lady, she's praying and crying, wraps her arms around my head. And that elderly little old lady's praying for me and just weeping. Finally she finishes and I get up.

Man, I feel like I've been visited by, I mean, an angel of the Lord. I don't know. I was never so blessed.

I got up, looked at her and she's just beaming. I said, Do you need anything? She said, No, I'm just fine. But in my heart, I felt the prick of the Holy Spirit.

And the Lord said, Give her everything you've got. I thought, How do I get back to my van? I'm going to have to walk all the way back. Walked all day, 20 miles now, I'll walk all night.

The Lord said, Give her everything you've got. I reached in my pocket. I pulled out all my money.

I said, Ma'am, I can't help it. I don't know whether you need it or not, but all I know is God told me to give you everything I've got and here it is. And I put it in her hand.

She looked up at me and I'll never forget. Tears started running down her cheek. She said, Thank you.

She said, I did. I don't have anything at home. And she said, God met my need and yours too.

And I didn't ask her if I could go home or anything. Just stood there crying with her and she's crying. She goes down the street now.

I don't have any money to even get a room if I wanted one or anything else. So, praise God. Walked down the street and I'm going down, get down near a park and it's still raining and cold and nearly dark and a girl comes running up to me about 15 years old and she has a flower in her hand.

And she runs up and she said, Man, you are the most beautiful guy I've ever seen. She said, I'm an atheist. I don't even believe in God and you're hauling this cross.

What are you doing carrying it in the rain? But she said, I don't know. I was over there in the park. Your face is just glowing.

And I grabbed the flower. I want to give it to the most beautiful man I've ever seen. I put my arms around her.

I said, Sweetheart, you're about the third finest Christian I've met all day. I told her, I said, The only competition you've got is a black man from Kenya and a little midget woman. I said, I just visited the church down there and I missed them all but don't tell me you're an atheist.

You're too beautiful to be an atheist and bringing me flowers and we started talking. She said, Are you just going to stand here dripping in this rain? Where are you going? I said, Well, I don't know. I just gave my money to a midget back there and I just need a place to park my cross.

I've got to go back and get my truck. She said, Oh. She didn't know.

She thought it was just a few blocks down the road. She thought it was. She said, Well, what do you need? I said, A place to park my cross.

She said, Oh, we're atheists. Mom and Dad are too. You can bring it in our house.

Come on. That's the truth. We go two blocks over to her house.

She runs in. Out come Mom and Dad and they're looking, you know, and they say, Bring it inside. Don't keep it out there.

It'll get wet. I mean, it's been soaking wet. They don't leave it at the door.

We bring it in the living room. Put it down in the living room of that house. I said, Well, I need to go pick up my truck.

They give me something to eat. I knew if I asked them for money that they would give me enough to somehow get back there, but I just couldn't do that. And so, I go out and did you know I had to walk all night back, got back there just before sunup.

I'd walked it all day and then walked it all the way back in that night. Got in the van. Drove it up.

Parked it in front of the house. Took about an hour's nap. Woke up.

Went into the house that morning and that girl met me at the door. They had breakfast and finally I'm just ready to leave and I say, Sweetheart, I want to have prayer for you. I know you're an atheist and you don't

believe in God, but I said, I really need to practice.

I said, and I said, Since it won't hurt if there is no God, I just want to talk to him anyway. You know, she grabbed me and she looked up at me. Tears began to run down her cheeks.

She said, I'm not an atheist anymore. She said, You know what? Last night with that cross in our house I felt so good. I went and got a sleeping bag and laid it under the cross and slept under the cross with my hands on the cross.

She said, I want to know about Jesus. Just a letter to the Lord. What I'm sharing is there is goodness.

Wonderful. I'm never suffering. God's taught me to trust Him.

He's taught me to trust Him in every circumstance. In everything. If our God knows our needs, He knows how to meet the needs.

And I've really struggled. Really struggled. You want to know my biggest struggle? The most difficult struggle I've had has been to keep from being organized and have people try to make me into some kind of a religious organization or a promotion or a high.

I mean, I've had people come trying. I mean, every religious agency. You don't even know they're out there.

I pray you never do. It is so sick. Right, Brother Vestal? It is so sick.

So sick of everybody trying to come up with schemes and how to angle up and write up these newsletters and throw out these hooks and suckers and all I call it Jesus junk that they are offering you to get your money. And I've had every agency, every leading religious Christian agency, I mean, they've come up with everything from a cross with a wheel with wood ones for those who give \$100 to silver and \$500 and, you know, \$1,000, you know, little gold-plated, you know, 35-cent gold crosses for those who give a thousand. I say, I don't need it.

I don't want it. I don't. But they're hounding.

They're dragging. They're always pulling, always trying to get you. After, let us join you.

And everybody wants to join me and if they all join me, I'd have a processional instead of a witness. And I'm not running a tour group. I'm in a country trying to work with men and women with Jesus Christ.

When I go to Ghana, I only work with Ghana people. I'm going, when I go to Switzerland, I work with people in Switzerland. When I'm in Israel, I work with people in Israel.

And it is, it is such, it is so, I don't know, it's so corrupt. It's so messed up. So that's why I just, I just try to just bear it on the side.

That's why I said to the preacher, you know, all these not taken up offerings I'm talking about for me and all, just, just forget it. I just want to serve God. I want to follow Him.

What I desire in my life is the power of the Holy Spirit. My only need is to be like Jesus. I've learned to trust Him.

Whatever the circumstance, it's all right. It's okay. The other thing I've learned is that I love to do His will.

It doesn't take any enticement to get me to try to do the will of God. I just love. If the Lord even says to me, pick up trash, I'm jumping.

All I want to know is God speaking to me. I don't care what He says. I don't care where He wants me to go.

I just want to be in touch with God. Another thing about walking with a cross, it's been incredible for my prayer life. I mean, I get to walk and every time as I'm walking, I'm praying.

I, after having visited the heavens with God, walking down these roads is a minor thing. I mean, I go down the road talking with God, Him talking with me, talking about the next town up the road, praying for the last town behind. And I mean, if it's 30 miles between towns, by the time I hit it, I've been praying for Him for a day and they know it when I go into town.

And just go in and do it. I've also learned another thing. Don't ask anybody to do anything.

Just do it. And then if they don't want you, they'll try to stop you. But most of them are scared to do that.

Just go ahead. Just get in there. Just go.

But praying. And I found this, even when it's been so uncomfortable, I can't sleep. And I remember praying nearly every night for a month, all night long.

You'll never know how I lived to do it. Weeks going through the Darien jungle between Panama and Colombia, but I was in one pair of clothes. I wore it for six weeks, same pair of clothes.

It was rags when I got out the other side. But I'd have to hang in the tree at night in hammocks or in the villages. And my clothes were wet.

And in the jungle, for those of you who know, even in the tropics, it's warm kind of in the daytime, not really too hot because the sun can't get through. But at night, you nearly freeze. You're just shaking.

I'd lay there shaking all night, literally shaking like that. And I'd say, Thank You, Lord, I can stay awake all night and pray. And I'd just lay there listening to the mosquitoes going, Wong, Wong, Wong, Wong, Wong, Wong.

But the Lord, He gives guidance. You know, in walking around the world, there's been so many snakes, insects, ticks, bugs, red bugs, every kind of, you know, thing that itches you, scratches you, just chews you up. I'll tell you something.

One time, sitting in the middle of the jungle in the Amazon, I saw a tick crawling on my pants and I flipped him off. I mean, down in the jungles, and when I went through the training down there for the Green Berets and Rangers and the Panama Canals at the Jungle Survival School, they teach you you take socks and rags and you put salt up here and you wrap around because all the insects, everything's crawling up. And I've seen people that have been in only a few days or a few weeks and their ankles, I mean, everything exposed, you just chewed up.

I mean, just by the grace of God, just going on, one little tick flipped him off one day. Another thing is that I've found that in this world, on the highways, I've never, on any highway or road, never tripped or slipped

and fallen down carrying that cross. Day or night.

Down through the jungle in the Darien Jungle, going up and down those cliffs, and went down cliffs as high as this church here into deep washes, narrow rivers, and you've got to get down, get across it, and get up the other side. Now, I have slipped and fallen and, I mean, bound and whatever, you know, trying to get down those things. But it wasn't a road or even a trail.

God has just given His blessings every step. Another thing I've just learned in every way, to love the Lord, to love Him, to trust Him, and to express our love to Him is the way we treat others. Remember the words that Jesus said? He said, I was naked and you clothed me.

I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was hungry and you fed me. I was a stranger and you took me in.

I was in prison and you came to me. I was sick and you visited me. And they'll say, Lord, we never saw you in that condition and did that.

And He said what? As you've done it unto the least of these, you've done it unto me. I'd just like to remind you this, that the way you treat the person somehow that you may esteem to be the poorest or the most wicked or any other status that you want is the way you treat Jesus. He said it.

Am I right, Pastor? He said it. You can't get it out of the Bible. As you've done it unto the least of these, you've done it unto me.

You can pass the old wino by and say, he'll take advantage of me. It's okay. You know what the Lord said? Give to him that asketh.

And to him that lendeth, ask you to lend. Don't even ask him to return it. Somebody goes, ask you to go one mile, go with them two.

Give to he that asketh. We are to be taken advantage of. Do you know what? You can't take advantage of love.

You can't do it. Learn to love others. I've learned to live with other people.

I've learned that there's no stratagems in life. I don't believe it. I don't believe.

My dad, even before he came to the Lord, well, my dad wasn't even a Christian. I remember him saying to me, son, don't ever look up to anybody and don't ever look down to them. Look everybody in the eye.

Love them all the same. Treat every woman as though she's your mother. Every man like he's your dad.

Every girl like she's your sister or your own daughter. Well, that isn't even in the Bible. Well, it is in the Bible, but in different words from that.

That was just something my dad taught me about living. And I find that if we're on this life seeking to do good, the blessings, the goodness of God always comes our way. I've also learned not to fear.

I've learned that the greatest joy there is is to be chipped away and molded and put into the hands of Jesus to be like Him. One prayer I've prayed all my life since I was a little kid and it was, Lord, Lord, make me like Jesus. I want to think like Jesus.

I want to act like Him. I am such a poor example. Don't ever exalt me, I tell you.

But that is my desire. That is my passion. That is my heartbeat.

That is my thirst. That is my hunger. And that is my joy.

Another thing I've learned so wonderfully is the fellowship and relationship that I have with my children and my wife. How wonderful your home can be. How wonderful it can be with all the abundance and how it can be with literally, physically nothing.

Many times we've traveled. One time for a long time we lived in a Volkswagen bus in Europe. One VW bus was \$320 in Brussels, Belgium.

And I had to push it off to get it cranked. But it ran every day from then on. When we finished, we gave it with a mission.

They didn't need it, but they wanted the motor out of it. You know what we do? Every time we get through and finish something, I leave it with those Christians in the country and just give it to them. God one way or another gave it to us.

I just give it to them. And when I was down in Rhodesia, in Zimbabwe, and we arrived there, the army wanted my truck. The government wanted that Land Rover.

And I remember we took money. I mean we took everything. We had to.

Well, we took money. We didn't even have enough money to buy our tickets back. And Alitalia finally gave us the airline ticket back because I paid customs on that vehicle so I could give it to an African mission.

I said, that vehicle's been used for God and I'm not going to give it to the army. And that's God's truck. And we paid, oh, nearly \$2,000 customs on it.

I did because the Christians couldn't even pay the customs for me to give it to them. So I paid the customs and gave it to them so they'd have my truck for God. And you know, God always gives one back.

He always turns on another. He heads it. Hey, God, God's rich.

It's just an exchange anyway, isn't it? I mean, you got a little and you share a little. You got a little blessing and you give a little love. It's just having fun on this earth.

There's enough troubles in life without you stirring up some of your own, you know, or getting all worried and frustrated. If you and your wife, man, just seem to live together and have fun, it's a whole lot better than it is trying to unwind and rewind and do all this other stuff. You've got a home.

Thank God for everything you've got. And our heart's open to it. And let me tell you, we're rich, rich.

I am rich. I've tried to be poor sometimes, but I can't. You know, why? Because I can be in the middle of Africa.

And you may think, poor guy out there, but hey, there's somebody back here who's got enough money. If I get sick, they'll fly over there and get me out of that jungle, right? You know, see, I'm rich. Rich.

Got friends, got a place. We've got so much, no matter how poor we are. But I tell you, so many people don't have a thing.

I mean, Poland is hurting. Most of the world struggles for their meal today and tomorrow. Most of the world can't see beyond tomorrow's meal, beyond tomorrow's need.

I'm going to stop in just a moment. I'd just love to talk for hours and share with you how wonderful it is to live for Jesus Christ. It is so wonderful.

I don't understand. See, the first time I felt that I needed to be saved, I was seven. And immediately I wanted Jesus.

I don't know what it's like to live without Him. My mother sang gospel songs to me when I was a baby. And I gave my life to Jesus at seven.

When I was 15, Christ called me to preach. And I said, Okay, Lord, I've always been agreeable to head in the direction God's wanted. Some people said, You ain't never had any fun, have you? I said, I've had more fun than you ever dreamed of.

I hadn't met anybody. I'd never seen anybody that I believe is even having half of the fun I have. I really love living.

But I love the Lord and have never known why it is that people just make it so hard not wanting to be saved. I mean, if we were trying to sell you, you know, extra-strength Palinol, you might have a chance of getting ruined, you see. But, I mean, we kind of act like sometimes the preacher's up there trying to torment us and persecute us and rob us of all that God is chief enemy number one.

And you've got it all wrong. He is the one that's trying to give you everything good. I just don't understand why every time an invitation isn't given, I mean, before it even gets started, people are just wrong, right down, I mean, ready to go, climbing over the benches to get saved.

Instead of saying their well, they just, another verse, another one, and another, just pleading, holding on, trying to get you in, but you don't even want to get in. I just don't understand. I don't know.

I mean, I am really far from perfect, and I don't want to give that indication at all. But you know what it is? I tell you, when the Lord shows me something's wrong in me, it just nearly kills me. And it just eats at me and it's a rod in me.

I can't get to sleep. I mean, I feel, I mean, even if it's something little, it's just a, well, it's big because it's sin. It just ruins me.

Does it you that way? I mean, I've got no desire to try to live the rest of my life with that big old rod in me, eating me away. I mean, I just don't. I don't know about you.

I mean, I don't know why it is that when we know better, we just hang on to a mess of sin when it isn't doing us a bit of good. I mean, anything. So it's kind of astounding for me to get back and I think, well now, we've got to try to pull it out of them.

You know, better give a longer invitation because they're used to sitting there and hoping maybe after 33 verses they'll make up their mind. That's why you see me just go ahead and say, if you want to get right

with God, stand up because I figured we've sat around and moaned around and if you don't want to get in, you don't have to get in. If you don't want to be right with God, you don't have to be right with God.

He isn't going to drag you into heaven ticking. Only those who want to be there are going to go in. That's the way I believe.

And I don't mind asking anybody anywhere, I preach the gospel to them and ask them to give their life to Jesus Christ. Whatever religion, wherever it is, and I ask them to do it openly and clearly and I think it's biblical and I'm not embarrassed over it and I feel like now, before we have this beautiful celebration of music, that there are some of us that say, Lord, I've been listening, God's been dealing. See, now there's nothing wrong with sometimes considering decisions that you have to make because Jesus said no man starts to build a house if he doesn't count the cost.

You see, he doesn't go out to war unless he scouts out the enemy to see whether he can win or not. So yeah, I mean, some of you have been here night after night and you've been thinking and you've been considering. Now I ask you, is the life you hear about with Jesus Christ the life you want? It's not the one some of you have been living but it's the one you want.

Then you can join in that family and freedom today. I ask you, do you want to live without Jesus in the way you've been living or do you desire to say, Lord, I want to be saved. I want Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to live in me.

I want Him to forgive me and save me. I want to be His child tonight. If you do, in a moment, whether it's either of these commitments to be saved or to get right with God as a believer, in a moment I'm going to pray and then we're going to ask you to stand up.

And since this is covered for the orchestra and the music, what we're going to do is ask you to stand and we'll pray with you where you're standing. And then after that we'll ask those of you who want to slip around. We'll gather on another side over here and the music will go ahead and start.

And the pastor and I will leave with you and go back here and pray with you and share with you and then you can come back. Is that okay? And join the service of music and worship. But I just feel that's the way the Lord would like for us to do it tonight.

So since we don't have really an altar to stand out, in a moment we'll ask you to stand and then we'll just give a direction as to where to go and we'll go over that direction and we'll meet with you and pray with you and share with you while the music continues and then when we finish ministering together you can come back into your seat and we'll continue in worship. Let's bow together in prayer. Heavenly Father, I believe right now by Your Spirit that there are many in this place that need You, that need Your life, that need You that need Your salvation, that need Your victory in their Christian walk.

Now Father, I pray that You might do mighty works, the astounding work of only God's Spirit and only You can do it. We know it's not by the persuasiveness of music nor even by preaching but it's by the power of the Holy Spirit. Right now, I pray You would sweep through this auditorium and give people right now the liberty to be free to choose You and Your life.

That they'll call upon the name of Jesus to be saved. And that they will yield their lives to follow Christ whatever You have asked them to do. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Right now, in the name of Jesus, every one of you in your heart who says, now if you're right with God, stay seated. We don't want to make anybody think that if I'm not right with God, well, you know, if I love Jesus, I've got to stand up. No, we're going to presume you're right with God.

You stay seated. This is for those who need to be saved or those of you in this building who say, I need to get right with God. I've got the want to to be set free.

I've got the want to to do the will of God. God's given you a new want to. I mean, He's stirring in you.

You say, I'm ready. I want to be free. I want to be empowered by the Holy Spirit of God.

I need prayer and I want to pray with you, Arthur, and with you, Pastor Daniel, and we want to go back there and get right with God, filled up with the Holy Spirit so we can turn this city and world upside down. If you need to get saved or need to make that kind of commitment to Jesus, even if you're in the choir, you'll let them go. You may miss a note, but my friend, it's worth it to get right with God.

Right now, while we're praying, in the name of Jesus, Lord, release Thy Spirit in this fellowship in Jesus' name. Right now, those of you that need to make those kind of commitments to Jesus, in Jesus' name, stand up right now. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Just stand. No games, no tricks. I need to get right up in the balcony down here, all around, anybody.

I need Jesus and I need to get free. Amen. Praise God.

Anybody else? It's time for them to start in just a moment and we're not going to hesitate. He's calling. These are... Would you just keep standing back there, those of you who stood.

Would somebody stand with each of these who are standing? Some believer, stand with them so you can pray with them. Anybody else? Real quickly. God bless you.

God bless you. Amen. Thank you, Jesus.

Thank you, Lord. God bless you. Little children, whatever your age, whatever... Say, I give my life to Jesus.

I want to know Him. I want to be free. Praise God.

All around the building. We're fixing to pray right now. Anybody... We'll just wait.

Have you got just a song you can sing, one little... We'll just keep standing. Someone stand with these. I feel the Spirit of God moving.

God's going to give victory right now, right now. Just stand to your feet. I've decided to settle it with God.

Men, women, young people, children, stand to your feet right now. Oh, in each of us I surrender. Oh, in each of us I surrender.

Need to stand for this prayer? Please do right now. Let's pray together while you're standing. Our Heavenly Father, we pray for these standing on their feet at this moment, committing their life to Jesus

Christ, trusting the fullness of Jesus to meet their needs and to give them life and life more abundantly.

Father, we pray for that liberty in them and their lives to be in your hand. In Jesus' name I pray. Wherever you're standing around this auditorium, pray this prayer out loud with me and anybody else that wants to in the whole auditorium and just say, Dear God, I need you.

Jesus, set me free. Come into my heart. Make me a new person.

I want to be saved. I need to be filled with your Spirit. I welcome you to take control of my life.

And I'm not ashamed of you. In Jesus' name, I want to follow you. Amen.

Amen. Keep standing right now. Those of you standing, look at me just a moment.

Where do we need to go out? This side door? I know it may be a little difficult, so I just ask all of you that are standing and making a commitment to Jesus, we want to meet with you. Here's the pastor. I think those of you on this side, go out this door.

Those of you on this side, come right here and I'll go with you. The pastor will go with you. If others of you need to come down to this altar, let's just stand together right now and sing a chorus together.

Others of you need to be at this altar of prayer. Join these walking and I'll meet you and the pastor will meet you in the side. Just come on down this aisle and they'll direct you to the way.

I'll join you in a moment. Anybody, even if you didn't stand up, you say, but I need God. I need prayer.

I need to get right with Him. You can move it on out of the way, but just move it on out of the way. Anybody else need to meet up with this altar to pray, come on forward.

You don't have to wait. Let me just say this. There are some of you that would say, every night when I finish, there are many that are wanting to talk, wanting to pray, needing prayer, wanting to come up.

If you need us to pray for you, the pastor and I are going back. This time I'm going to leave so they can get started in the service. If you need prayer, you want us to pray for you, you need victory, you want to talk about getting right with God or whatever it is, meet us right now.

Just make your way to either side and they'll direct you back where the counseling room is. I love you. You all sing another chorus and then I'm stepping off the stage.

God bless you and praise the Lord. Amen. Very symbolic, isn't it? Let's sing it.

My cross I'll carry, till I see Jesus. My cross I'll carry, till I see Jesus. My cross I'll carry, till I see Jesus.

The burden He has on my back, the burden He has on my back. The world behind me, the world behind me, the world before me. It's an invitation.

And even in the midst of Christmas music or anything else, if God leads you through conviction of the Holy Spirit to make your way to stumble over people or whatever, this could be very well your last chance to hear the Gospel. God's Spirit sometimes says not another time. And see, the devil wants you to think it's not convenient tonight to make a decision because of all this stuff that's up here.

But if it's the Lord's will, you do it regardless of when it is in service.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/19/SID19728.mp3>
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