

The Joy of Preaching Your Own Funeral

by Carter Conlon

The joy of preaching your own funeral is the experience of dying to the old nature and being raised to new life in Christ.

Duration: 47:28

Scripture: Luke 7:11-15, Romans 7:24, Colossians 3:5-10

Topics: "Dead To Sin"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the transformation that occurs when a person encounters God and receives new life. He shares his own experience of being convicted and called by God to do things that were previously impossible for him. The speaker emphasizes the importance of hearing God's voice and reading His word in order to experience this transformation. He then turns to the passage in Colossians chapter 3, where the apostle Paul talks about putting off the old nature and putting on the new nature in Christ. The speaker highlights the need to desire true life in Christ, rather than just religious practices, and encourages the audience to let go of anger, revenge, blasphemy, and dishonesty, as they have put on the new nature in Christ.

Transcript

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You turn with me in the New Testament please to Colossians chapter 3. Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and then Colossians chapter 3. I want to talk to you tonight about the joy of preaching your own funeral. The joy of preaching your own funeral. I can promise you tonight something.

If you hear this, that you're going to walk out of here tonight preaching your own funeral. And you're going to be joyful about it. Father, I thank you that you will anoint, you already have anointed tonight with an incredible joy.

Lord, I'm asking you now for the power of the Holy Spirit to reach into the deepest darkness as Paul did in the inner prison. And to see those drawn out whom the enemy has convinced that life is hopeless. I pray God for true conversions to Jesus Christ in this house tonight.

I ask you Father in Jesus name that not a single person hearing this message would end up in hell. Break the power of darkness, break the power of false religion. Break all comfort that isn't God breathed and birthed.

Father, I thank you that you have come. You're a man of war and a man of mercy. God Almighty fight against our enemies and open the way to eternal life.

Give me the power to convey this. I ask it in Jesus name. The joy of preaching your own funeral.

Now, it's a very difficult thing to preach your own funeral if you're still alive. Who would take you seriously? Say you put a death notice in the paper and everybody arrived at the funeral parlor and there you are, preaching your own funeral. Hard for people to take a living person seriously.

When I was a police officer, I remember the one thing they taught me in training is that you have no authority to pronounce somebody dead. I remember it used to be such a strange thing. You'd get to an accident scene and it doesn't matter if the person's head is six feet from their body.

I had no authority to pronounce them dead. It had to be done a certain way. You firstly needed a certificate and that certificate had to be written by a hand that had the authority to write it.

Not just anybody can write that certificate and declare somebody dead. I'm very thankful for that. I hope you are, too, as well.

Or there'd be all kinds of people writing certificates all over New York City who didn't like you and declaring you dead. And then secondly, you needed a qualified witness. In the case of where I came from, it was a man or woman called a coroner.

This is a person who is authorized by the government to come and do what they had to do and pronounce a person dead. And that was the second part of the procedure. Then the third part of the procedure, which sadly I had to be part of quite often, is that there had to be a witness, a family and or acquaintances rather that are familiar with this particular person.

And I remember on occasions having to bring people to a morgue or a hospital and have to uncover the body. And then they would say, this this is so and so. And we can attest that this person was once alive and is now dead.

And these three witnesses had to be together before a person was officially pronounced to be dead. Now, Colossians 3, 3. Now, if tonight I'm going to be talking about the joy of preaching your own funeral, I have to prove to you that you are, in fact, dead and you have to agree with me. Now, Colossians 3, 3 is the certificate written by the hand of God.

If you believe this is a letter to you from God and that everything in here is absolute truth. Now, here's your death certificate. Colossians 3, 3 says what? For you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.

That's the first part. The certificate. This is what God says you are when you've come to Christ.

You have died. You've died to something. And it's very important to have experienced this death.

If you've not experienced this death, then you will never know the resurrected life of Christ that's on the other side of this. We'll sing about it tonight. You'll sing Jesus rose up and death walked out and all the rest of these things.

And you'll sing about it, but never fully understand it, never appreciate it, never experience it. In order to experience eternal life and resurrected life, you have to first go through a death. And God gives us the certificate.

And he tells us that if you are in Christ, you are dead. You're dead to something. Something has died.

You are officially dead in the sight of God. Now, secondly, you need a qualified witness. Now, in the case of the New Testament Christian, the qualified witness is the Holy Spirit.

Romans chapter 8. Now, keep a marker in Colossians 3 because we're going to come back there. Romans chapter 8 and verse 9. Here's the qualified witness. Bible tells us clearly that when we come to Christ, we die to an old way of living.

We die to an old way of thinking. And if we've not experienced this death, it's very doubtful that we have resurrected life within us. There's a change.

There's a metamorphosis that happens. We leave off an old way of thinking, an old way of living. And it's not a mental ascent to theological truth.

There is a supernatural spiritual transaction. The Bible calls it being born again. It's a new life.

I've died to this old way of living. I've died to this old way of thinking. And it's not just a concept.

It's an actual physical reality that I have died. But I need a witness, not only a certificate that tells me I am dead if I've come to Christ, but I need a witness. And that witness is the Holy Spirit.

And the Bible says the Holy Spirit comes into our life and he produces a cry within us. It's Abba, Father. It's the cry of a baby.

I was told one time that those are the first sounds that a child makes is the Abba sound. Abba, Father. There's a cry.

It's not just a petition to God, but it's an inner awareness that God is now my Father. I have been born again by the Spirit of God. I have a new life, a new DNA as it is, that's alive within me.

I have died to something, but I've also come back to life. And Romans 8, 9 says, But you are not in the flesh, chapter 8, verse 9, but in the Spirit. If so, be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of this. Now, it doesn't matter what we profess, what church we go to, or what name is on the door. If you don't have the Holy Spirit, you're not born again.

And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors not to the flesh to live after the flesh.

For if you live after the flesh, you shall die. But if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

You've not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear, but you've received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, what's our cry? Abba, Father. The Spirit itself, verse 16, bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. There's an inner witness.

It doesn't matter what any preacher says to you. You have to have the inner witness of the Holy Ghost that you are born again. There's a cry that God puts in you.

Abba, Father. That cry is an expectancy that God's going to feed me. God's going to clothe me.

God's going to nurture me. God's going to raise me. God's going to change me.

God's going to make me into something that I could never have made myself into. There's an inner cry that is birthed and born in the witness of the Spirit. I am concerned today that too many people in the professing church of Jesus Christ have simply been brought in to an agreement with the theological argument.

Now, they agree that they are sinners. They agree that God has a right to judge them. They agree that God became a man and died on the cross 2,000 years ago.

They agree that they shouldn't go to hell. And so, they agree and they pray a prayer. But there's no witness of the Spirit.

And the reason there's no witness of the Spirit is because they are still very much alive. They've never made a decision to lay down their old way of living. They've never made a decision, literally, to die.

They've never made a decision to experience, as it is this death of Christ, that they might know the life of Christ. And the death of Christ, of course, is manifested in several ways. But certainly, one of the most prominent for what I'm speaking about tonight is the fact that He died to His own will and yielded His life to the will of God, His Father.

And He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. And now, because of this, God has highly exalted Him. He seated Him at His own right hand and given Him a name that is above every other name.

We have to have the witness of the Holy Spirit. When I came to Christ, the day after I yielded my life to Him, there was an inner witness. I didn't understand any of this.

I didn't even know there was such a thing as Romans in the Bible. I thought there was an empire sometime thousands of years ago. But I had an inner witness of the Holy Spirit.

I know today what it was, but I had it before I knew what it was. I had this inner witness that I had become a son of God. There was a change that had come into my life.

And then thirdly, you need to witness a family and their acquaintances. So many people profess to know Christ, to be a new creation, to have died to an old way of living and to have experienced this newness of life. But tragically, their family can't bear witness to their profession.

The family, if you were to ask, say, well, I know that there's a certificate and I know that the coroner said that John or Alice is dead, but as far as we're concerned, they're still very much alive. They're as nasty as they've always been. They defend themselves at every turn.

We don't see evidence of humility. We don't see selflessness. We don't hear prayer.

We see no study of the Scriptures. We don't hear any exhortation to abandon ourselves to the will of God. There's very little evidence that this person has in fact died.

They're very much alive. And that's a tragedy. We've heard that over and over and over again, especially from young people in the church, even in this church.

Young people who come to church and the greatest hindrance to their growth in Christ sometimes is their own guardians and parents at home who come to church and sing the songs of Zion, but are very, very much still alive in the flesh. Now, death is defined in the Bible as the spirit that works in the children of disobedience. In Ephesians chapter 2, we started in Colossians.

So it's a book just before Colossians, rather, second before. Ephesians chapter 2 and verse 1. Here's what Paul says, And you has he quickened who are dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Now, Paul describes this.

There is a death that we have been made partakers of because of the sin of Adam, and it is a spirit that works in the children of disobedience. Now, in Colossians chapter 3, where we started, describes this spirit. Paul says, Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.

Now, in other words, put them to death. That's what mortify means. Put these things to death.

Reckon them to be dead. Trust Christ for the power and die and let these things be put to death by the Holy Spirit. Fornication, which means sexual relations outside of marriage.

It also means pornography. If you look in the original context, it's porneo. In the Greek, it means pornography.

It means sexual perversion. Put this thing to death. Uncleaness.

Inordinate affection, which means uncontrolled passion. Evil concupiscence, which also has a similar meaning. Covetousness, which is idolatry.

Covetousness, it means the desire for material goods above the will of God for your life, and the abandonment to the will of God. If anybody is sitting here tonight and you like sitting at some of these seminars in New York that say the Bible is just here to make you rich, then be warned. You're sitting around the table of idolatry.

For which thing's sake the wrath of God comes on the children of disobedience? In the which also you walked sometime when you lived in them. But now put off all these. Put them off.

Anger. Wrath. Malice.

That means a desire for revenge. Blasphemy. Filthy communication out of your mouth.

Lie not one to another, seeing you've put off the old man with his deeds, and you've put on the new man, which is renewed in the knowledge after the image of him that created him. Now, you see, Paul the Apostle infers that he died a death that set him free from the power of a death that had complete control over his life. This is where the mystery is.

We were dead in sins, but in order to be free, we must experience a death from this old way of living. This old power that used to control us. In Romans 7, verse 24, Paul cries a prayer, which I do believe is the cry of everyone who truly comes to God.

Oh, wretched man that I am, Paul says. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Paul said, the things I want to do, I can't find the inner power to do. And the things that I don't want to do, he said, I find myself always doing.

I delight in the law of God, he said, in my mind, but I find another law at work in me that is constantly dragging me under the power and dominion of sin. Paul says, oh, wretched man that I am. Who will deliver me from this power of death that so wants to govern my life and work within me? Now, let me just read it to you.

In Romans 6, verse 3, Paul says, Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Christ died. When we come to Christ, we die with him. We die to the old way of living.

We die to yielding to our sin nature. We die to doing things that bring dishonor and disrepute to the name of Christ. Therefore, he says, we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life.

If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him. That the body of sin might be destroyed.

That henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. How do I know that I have died? Sin has no more dominion over my life.

It doesn't mean I don't struggle. It doesn't mean I don't have failings and failures. What it does mean is these things do not govern my future.

They do not govern my life. I'm not under the dominion. If you are a child of God, you are no longer under the dominion of past hurt and memory.

You are no longer under the dominion of drugs and alcohol. You are no longer under the dominion of the lusts of your flesh. You are no longer under the dominion of a lying tongue.

You are no longer under the dominion of a poor self-image. You are no longer under the dominion of these things. You have died to them if you are in Christ.

They have died, you have buried these things, and God has planted within you His own Spirit and given you the promise of a new and an everlasting life. Paul goes on to say in verse 8 in Romans 6, Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. If we've truly died with Him, if we've truly given up on this old life, and we have trusted Christ, we believe that as the Holy Spirit raised Him from the

dead, we too shall also be raised from the dead.

Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more, death has no more dominion over Him, for in that He died, He died unto sin once, but in that He lives, He lives unto God. Paul says, Likewise reckon you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lust thereof.

Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but yield yourselves to God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God, for sin shall not have dominion over you. You are not under the law, but under grace. Hallelujah! Thanks be to God! Now folks, you have to understand, from this point onward, Paul began to preach his own funeral.

That's what my point is about tonight. If you look at the life of the Apostle Paul, from the time he met Christ on the Damascus road, and got up and went in the temple shortly after and began to teach, his whole life was about the funeral of a man called Saul of Tarsus, and the birth of a new man called Paul the Apostle. Hallelujah! Thanks be to God! That's why Paul could say, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new. Thanks be to God that Paul could preach his funeral everywhere he went.

If you are truly a Christian, you spend your life preaching your funeral. You spend your life saying, I used to be this kind of a man. I used to be this kind of a woman, but I died.

And God raised me from the dead. How do I explain this? My parents, remember when I was young, there was a tree that was growing in our front yard. And the root system of that tree was causing damage to the foundation of their house.

And so, they injected the root system of this tree with a poison. I don't remember exactly how they did it, I just know they did it. I was just a child at the time.

And for all intents and purposes, you looked out the front window and there's still growth coming from this thing. There was a few branches, a few leaves. But really, that tree had a sentence of death in it.

And ultimately, it died. The root system died and the stump rotted in the ground and eventually it was all gone. There was no evidence there had ever been a tree there, no matter how tall it was and how deep its root system was.

You see, this is the principle. When Christ came into you, the life of Christ was infused or injected into you, for lack of a better word. Infused is the word we use.

The Holy Spirit came into your life and the presence of the Holy Spirit brought a death sentence to your old nature. The old nature that produced rotten fruit and roots that went deep into the ground and disturbed people and things around you. And were alienated from the life of God.

The life of Christ coming into you sentenced it to death. If it's truly the life of Christ, your old nature is given a death sentence. Now, for a season, there's branches that will sprout and leaves that will come out, but they're not meant to last.

You see, that's why people get confused. They say, well, I thought I was dead to sin. How come I'm battling this? Oh, you might be battling it, but it no longer has dominion over you.

It has been sentenced to death by the life of Christ within you. Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. Hallelujah.

God changes the name of those that are his and begins to call both them and the things within them by new names. That's why he takes Saul and says, you're no longer Saul. You're now called Paul.

Takes Simon and says, you're no longer Simon. Your name is now Peter. Takes Jacob.

He says, your name is no longer Deceiver and Swindler. You're now Israel. You're a prince with God and you have power with God and with man.

He changes the names of those who come to him. When you came to Christ, you died. Whoever you were died and he changed your name and he changed your nature.

The miracle of God's life came within you. You see, folks, this is conversion. This is the new birth.

Everything else is just religion. That's all it is. It's powerless religion.

You see, the new man is a witness to the death of the old. If there is no new man, then the old man is still very much alive. It's as simple as that.

Tell everybody you belong to Christ all you want. Tell everybody you've died. Memorize Scripture.

But if the old man is still alive, there's no new man there. There has to be a new man for the old one to die. Paul says it this way in Ephesians 4.22. Put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

There's a new man. Oh, thank God. This new man hears a voice like Lazarus.

The new man hears a voice. Nobody else hears it. But you hear it if you're born again by the Spirit of God.

Everyone around you might be lamenting your departure. Might be talking about how sad it is and such hope they held out for you. And they've written you off and rolled a stone in front of you.

But all of a sudden, because you have truly been converted, you begin to hear a voice that no one else is hearing. And that voice never changes. He calls out and says, Lazarus, come forth.

Come out of this place of darkness. Come out. Get away from the Internet screen.

Come out of this relationship. Come out of this situation you're in. Come out of this dependence on these substances.

Come out and come to me. And if you truly are dead, then you've given up all of the designs of human effort to try to get to victory in your own strength, and you finally realize, I'm dead. I can't get out of here.

And God says, good, I'm glad you finally realized you're dead. Now listen to my voice and get up and get out. Christianity is a new birth.

It's a new life. It's a new voice. It's a new future.

It's a new destiny. It's a new value system. It's a new heart.

It's a new mind. Everything is made new. On May the 12th, 1978, I died to all the inner debates and doubts about God.

I had a belly full of religion up to the age of 24. I had all kinds of questions and debates and doubts until I finally got in the Bible. I read the book of John.

I saw who Jesus Christ is. I understood the claim that he rightfully had upon my life. And I gave up on all the inner debates and doubts and surrendered my life.

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon, or actually 10 to 3, because I started work at about 3.15, I often shared that no bells went off and I didn't hear angelic music or anything like that. I wasn't even aware of a change. I went to work.

I did my shift. But I'm telling you that the next day I got up and I remember to this day sitting on the edge of my bed and I knew there had been a change. How do you explain the Spirit of God coming into your life? There was a change.

I started thinking differently. I started to begin to desire things I never desired before. I actually started liking people, which was quite radical for me at that time.

I started to develop an inner conscience much deeper than anything I'd ever known in my life. Things that I used to be able to say or do or get away with, all of a sudden I'm living in this wave of this conviction. And you're wondering, where did this come from? I didn't study about this.

How did this happen? It happened because there's an infusion of a new life that sends to death the old nature. Over time I began to hear a voice calling me to what was formerly impossible. Things that were just absolutely so far out of reach.

But I heard God calling. How do you explain that? I never went to a success seminar. I began to hear Him.

I started reading His Word. Old things started passing away. I remember leaving my shift as a new Christian.

And I would always stop for breakfast on the way home. And I would sit there. And I'd usually have a beer with breakfast.

Or sometimes more than one. I never heard a sermon about alcohol. I was reading the Bible.

And I remember I was only saved a short while. And I was driving home. And I stopped for breakfast.

I had a beer before me. And I'm eating bacon and eggs. And I'm reading my Bible with a beer there.

And I stumbled on the Scripture where the angel came to Zacharias and Elizabeth. And talked about John the Baptist. Said he's going to be a wonderful man of God.

He's going to be a herald, as it is, of Christ's coming. And it said that wine will not touch his lips. I remember looking at that and thinking, well, if that's what it takes to be a man of God.

If this is what it takes to speak. Then I'm not going to drink anymore. And I didn't.

I stopped. And that's 29 years ago, I guess now. The old things pass away.

And they don't pass away because somebody lays before you a pile of rules and regulations. That's what religion is all about. There's a lot of people that don't do things because there's been a lot of rules laid before them.

But in their heart, they're very, very reluctant dead people. They're dead, but they're very reluctant to be dead. They really want to live.

They really don't want to not do certain things. But you see, if you're in Christ, you're given a new nature. And the obedience to God or the giving up of certain things doesn't come because of rules.

It comes because you have the power now of a new life within you. And there's a yearning for that life. There's a yearning to obey God.

There's a yearning to glorify Christ that comes into you. And it's supernatural. It's sovereign.

It's not a result of listening to tapes. It's as good as that is. It's not a result of singing songs or getting all pumped up in a church service.

It's the power of God's life being lived now within you. It's a supernatural rebirth. Your mind begins to be regenerated.

Your heart is given new values and new desires. You begin to want to be things that you never learned how to be. You might never have learned how to be a father or a mother.

But God puts the desire in your heart to do it His way and to be able to give yourself for others around you. He changes you. Puts compassion where there was only selfishness.

Puts love where there was only anger. Puts faith where there was only fear of the future. There's a supernatural change that happens within you.

And subsequently you end up traveling, as I've had the privilege to do, in places throughout the world. And you're not bringing people and nations a theory about God. You're bringing them a living experience that you're having with them.

And it's not about how to do this and how to do that and seven steps to this and seven steps to that. It's simply one message. Die and let Christ live within you.

I have a picture of myself when I was a policeman before I got saved. I haven't looked at it for a long time. If I put it on the screen, it would scare you.

But I look at that picture and I say, thank God that man is dead. I really mean that. That man is dead.

I don't even know that man. That was another man. That is not me.

I'm a different man now. I'm not just different. I'm another man.

That man died. When Jesus Christ came into that vessel, that man died. And all of my life, I've had the privilege of preaching my funeral.

I died. I died on May 12th, 1978. And Christ came to life within me.

The life I now live, I live by faith of the son of God who died and gave himself for me. Hallelujah. I want you to turn one last time to Luke chapter 7, please, with me.

It's a very joyful thing to preach your own funeral. I'm going to preach my funeral until the day I die. Then somebody else can take over.

Oh God, thank you. Jesus, thank you. Luke 7, 11.

It came to pass the day after that he went into, this is Jesus, a city called Nain. And many of his disciples went with him and much people. And when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother.

She was a widow and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, weep not. And he came and touched the bier, the funeral carrying vessel.

And they that bear him stood still. And he said, young man, I say unto thee, arise. And he that was dead sat up and began to speak.

And he delivered him to his mother. And there came a fear on all. And they glorified God, saying that a great prophet has risen up among us and that God has visited his people.

I feel in my heart the Holy Spirit told me that tonight that there would be people here. That you've been carried out, given up for dead. You've disappointed maybe people along the way, maybe people very close to you.

And in their hearts, they've sort of carried you out and buried you, written you off as hopeless. And I can see this procession. And they've gone through the funeral.

They've tried to say some nice things about this young man. And they're carrying him out to bury him. And Jesus interrupts the whole procession.

You see, that's why the Lord has brought you here tonight. He's interrupted the procession. The devil wants you buried and gone, hopeless.

He wants to so put your life under a pile of shame and remorse that no testimony to the glory of God could ever come from you. But Jesus came and he just touched that place. And I feel it tonight in my spirit that God has just come and he's just stopped you.

That's why you're here. Stopped the whole procession. And he said, young man, I say to you, arise, get up, get up and just come to me.

I will give you life. I will forgive your sin. I will come and dwell with you.

I'll give you life. But you have to want this life. This is not just about a mental agreement so that you don't go to hell.

This is about life. This is about abundant life and everlasting life. And he that was dead sat up and began to speak.

And they delivered him to his mother. And I just have a picture tonight of some of you, this Christmas season especially, going home. Or going back to your friends, associates, family, people that are at least somewhat close to you.

They may have written you off, but at least they're still somewhat within reach. And you are such another person. You're not religious.

Religious people stink. You're alive. Religious people just walk in and they condemn everybody and all they have is rules.

They have no life. But you're alive in God. You walk in and you're alive.

And they look and say, how did this happen? You are not the person that I knew a year ago, a month ago, six months ago. And the scripture says there came a fear on them all. Who can change a person like this? Who can raise people from the dead? Who can give them new life? And you can see this young man.

I think he spent the rest of his life preaching his funeral. I was dead. Carried out.

Written off. Hopeless. I was diseased.

I was incapable of change. And Jesus came, stopped the procession and spoke to me. And said, get up and come to me.

It's amazing how simple it is. You know, you think, well, you know, read Isaiah 58. And then after you're done with 58, go into Ezekiel, read Daniel.

If we were trying to, Jesus just said, get up. That's all he said to them. What do I have to do to come to God? You first of all have to want to live.

And then you just have to get up. It's as simple as that. But you have to want life, not religion.

You have to want life. And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And they delivered him to his mother.

And a great fear came on all. And they glorified God. And they said, a great prophet has risen up among us.

And that God has visited his people. The world doesn't need any more religion. New York needs no more religion.

America doesn't need any more religion. What America needs, what New York needs, is people who are risen from the dead. People who walk into their marketplace.

They walk into their homes. They walk into their communities. And they are alive in God.

They're alive in God. If that's what you want. If that's what you want.

If the Holy Spirit has stopped your funeral procession tonight. And if that's what you want. You have to want life.

You have to want to turn from sin. You have to want Christ's life within you. You have to want him as much as he wants you.

If that's what's in your heart. Then God is going to do a miracle in your life tonight. It's called the miracle of new birth.

It won't be me telling you that you're a Christian. It will be the Holy Spirit telling you. You won't have to run around telling everybody what's happened.

People will ask you what happened to you. Because you will have the power of a new life within you. I can't say it any more simply than this.

You will preach your own funeral for the rest of your life. You'll say this is the kind of man or woman I was. I walked into a church.

I heard something. I responded and I died. And before I left the church I was alive again.

Hallelujah. Would you stand please. If the Holy Spirit is drawing you.

You want to receive Christ as your savior. You want to live for God. I'm going to ask you unashamedly wherever you are.

Slip out of your seat. Just join me at this altar. We're going to pray together.

And welcome you into the family of God. Wherever you are. Just come.

God bless you sir and madam. Just come. Just come.

It's an offer of life. It's everlasting life. It's eternal life.

Oh God thank you. Hallelujah. Jesus said I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No one comes to the Father. No one. Except through me.

No one. Comes to the Father except through me. Because there's no other way.

Oh God I pray Lord. That nobody go to hell here tonight. Oh God.

Oh Jesus. You died that we might have life. Help us Lord.

Help every person here. Help the young. Help the old.

Oh God. My God. My God.

My God. One day soon the door is going to close. God today your hand of mercy is open Lord.

Help us Father. God almighty help us. Thank you Jesus.

Thank you Lord. Thank you God. Thank you Jesus.

Thank you Lord. Hallelujah. Lord let these decisions for you be real tonight.

I pray at this altar. In this church. We never draw people to just an agreement with an argument.

But to a living relationship with a living God. I pray Father at this altar there never be people casually step here. But this is an invitation by a sovereign God.

Who has chosen to be merciful to his own creation. I pray tonight Father. That the lives that have come here be absolutely transformed.

And be a sign to this darkened city. That God is still alive. And sits at the right hand of all authority and power.

Oh God. I'm going to ask you to pray with me those that have come to this altar tonight. A simple prayer.

But if you mean it in your heart. If you mean it. The Holy Spirit will put a witness within you that you're a child of God.

Pray with me Lord Jesus. I'm a sinner. I don't want to live in sin anymore.

I'm sorry for my sin. I'm sorry that it sent you to a cross. To pay such a terrible price.

But tonight I'm glad. I'm glad that you loved me. So much.

That you would die for me. You so longed for me. To come to you.

That you would suffer this humiliation. This terrible death. That you would endure.

The wrath of a holy God. In my place. Tonight.

I choose to die. To my old way of living. My old life.

My old desires. I ask you Holy Spirit. To come to my life.

Because of Jesus. And give me the power. That only you can give.

To live a new life. I believe. Jesus Christ.

You are the son of God. I believe. That you died.

To pay the penalty. For my sin. I believe.

That on the third day. You were raised from the dead. By the power of God.

As living proof. To me tonight. That my trust.

In you. Is not in vain. I believe.

That you have forgiven my sins. You are receiving me to yourself. And you will give me the power.

To be a new person. You will live your life. And establish your testimony.

In me. I believe. At this very moment.

I'm saved. Hallelujah. Thank you.

Hallelujah. This is the conclusion of the message.

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