

# (Christ--the Way God Makes Man Righteous)

## 14. Salvation Is Jesus Christ

by Denny Kenaston

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*Salvation is union with the person of Jesus Christ, and it is the way God makes man righteous, past, present, and future.*

**Duration:** 1:10:03

**Scripture:** John 1:1

**Topics:** "Jesus Christ"

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### Description

In this sermon, Brother Denny emphasizes the importance of Christ having preeminence in our lives. He refers to Colossians 1:18-19, where Paul explains that it pleased the Father to give Christ this exalted position. The name Christ appears over 500 times in the Bible, indicating the significance of this truth. Brother Denny encourages the listeners to read the Bible with an awareness of Christ as the context of the New Testament and to avoid cherry-picking verses out of context.

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### Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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It's my turn. Glory. It's such a blessing the way that God sanctifies life and makes it a joy.

Alright. Your assignment for tomorrow. The word definition that I want you to memorize is the word conscience.

We'll be saying a little about that today. It's good to have these definitions kind of flowing along with the lessons that God is giving. So, you memorize the definition for conscience.

Also, the last two chapters that I want you to read in the book Bone of His Bone is 9 and 10. If you want to go a little further there, he has a testimony out of the life of Hudson Taylor, the founder of China Inland Mission. It's an excellent testimony.

You'll find it a blessing. You may find your own heart, life, struggles, failures. You may also find that in there.

But it's a good testimony and well placed in the book. But chapter 9 and 10, that's as far as I want you to go on that. Alright.

Our Father and our God, here we are again, Lord. So much in need of Thee. Oh God, we do thank You this morning that You sit on the throne.

You know all things. You rule over all things. We thank You this morning that we are in the hollow of Your hand.

Hallelujah. My name is written on His hand. Thank You, Lord.

God, this morning we pray again that You would fill us with Your Spirit. Lord, all of us, that we may understand Your heart concerning salvation. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Alright. The title of the message this morning is this.

Salvation is Jesus Christ. Salvation is Jesus Christ. We are focusing again today on the practical side of an ongoing salvation which is past, present and a future experience.

And I want to come back to something that I mentioned a few days ago and just focus a bit more on it here in the beginning of this message. Consider again today the implication of the amount of times that the names Christ and the name Jesus appear in the New Testament. This is no little thing.

This is very significant theology. That the name Christ appears over 500 times and the name Jesus appears almost a thousand times. I believe that God's Spirit is saying great and mighty and significant things to us as the people of God just through that in itself.

It should alert us to how we read the Bible. It should alert us to the danger of pulling things out, verse here, verse there, and just holding them by themselves. I mean, Brother Jerry's been challenging you about expository preaching and staying in the context and all those things and it's beautiful what he's doing, but may I remind you this morning that Jesus Christ is the context of the New Testament.

Right? That's very obvious. He is the context of the New Testament. It's very clear to see where the Spirit of God is focusing the attention.

Paul explained this very well in Colossians chapter 1 dropping in at the end of a beautiful section where he's just overflowing about Christ and who He is and all that He did and all that He is to all of us. He sort of finishes with these words in Colossians 1, 18 and 19 that in all things He, Christ, might have the preeminence for it pleased the Father that in Him that is in Christ should all fullness dwell. It pleased the Father.

The Father has given His Son this exalted place in the whole entire universe and He's given Him this exalted place in the church having made Him the head over all and He's given Him this exalted place in

each and every one of our lives. The Father wants Christ to have the preeminence. I would like to add to this list of significant words this morning some revealing phrases and words.

They being the word in, the phrase in Him, the phrase in whom, the word through and also by Him, with Him and into. Now these are very small little words and they may not have a lot of significance when you just let them sit there by themselves. But when you take the words, the names Christ, Jesus, Jesus Christ and you tack these little words in front of that all of a sudden those little in's and by's and with's and through's become significant words especially as we're establishing a New Testament theology of salvation.

Very significant. These phrases and words, they also appear over 130 times in the New Testament connected with the One who is to have the preeminence. 130 times.

Do you see? Do you see the simplicity of this theology of salvation? The word, this word, now this word. Over and over again God keeps saying the same thing to us. So you bring these words together and make it in Christ, through Christ, by Christ and you have a revelation of what salvation is.

Salvation is in the person of Jesus Christ. And more simplistic yet than that, salvation is union with the person of Jesus Christ. Now we've already established that through these many sessions that we've had but we're just kind of bringing it right down home, you know to where we can focus on it more clearly this morning.

Salvation is union with the person of Jesus Christ. As I have studied the doctrine of salvation these last few months and I've read a lot of writings about that subject it has dawned upon me where the New Testament focus is. The major focus is not on justification by faith.

The major focus is not on the historical facts of Jesus Christ. These are important, no doubt, but not the preeminent focus in the New Testament. Again, that's significant brethren.

Luther and other early reformers over-emphasized justification by faith. I'm not shooting at them this morning. They all came out of this Catholic thing where there was a super over-emphasis on you're justified by the things you do.

And if you do good enough and you do good long enough you might hope to make it to heaven someday. So, they over-reacted to that and swung way over on the other side and over-emphasized justification by faith. As sweet and beautiful as that is, as powerful as that is that's simply a means to an end.

I mean, praise God, yes! The penitent sinner is justified, declared righteous by God based on the atonement of Jesus Christ. That's beautiful! But that's not the end. The end is union with Jesus Christ.

That's the end. So, Luther and the other reformers over-emphasized this to their hurt. Many theologians have followed their lead to the hurt of multitudes.

In fact, in the theology books, they call this justification by faith teaching Pauline theology. And it's true that Paul brought out the revelation of justification. That's true.

But that's not the basis of Pauline theology. Pauline theology is very clearly a union with Jesus Christ which comes through justification. That's Pauline theology.

The other was not Paul's emphasis as we have seen through these sessions. The heart of Paul's theology of salvation and the heart of Paul's personal salvation They ought to be together, right? So, the heart of his theology of salvation and the heart of his personal salvation experience is very clear. Both of them is union with Jesus Christ.

See, Paul met Jesus on the road to Damascus. And it was Jesus and only Jesus personally all the days of his life. Real simple, isn't it? All the days of his life.

So, here we see so beautifully that Paul's theology and his experience flow together which they should. They should. Union with Christ is the way God makes man righteous.

Past, from the penalty of sin. Present, from the power of sin. And future, from the presence of sin.

He is the deliverance in all three of these areas. Union and communion in Christ is salvation. Paul said it this way in Romans chapter 5 and verse 10.

He said, For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. There's another use of that word, salvation. So, what Paul is saying here is, reason together with me.

If when we were enemies, I mean rebels going our own way. If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. Now that we are reconciled, how much more shall we be saved by His life? And that life is union with Him.

That's what it is. Eternal life is not a doctrine. Eternal life is Christ.

John said it, and the life was manifested and we have seen it. That's what John said. So, to be saved by His life, Romans chapter 5 and verse 10, is to be saved through union with Christ, who is our life.

Colossians chapter 3. Christ, who is our life. Do you see that? Well, I don't know about you, but it's pretty exciting stuff this morning. Consider the implication of Paul's declaration in Christ.

In Christ. Oh, that little phrase comes up many times in the New Testament. In fact, you flip your Bible open to Ephesians chapter 1, you'll find that phrase in there a dozen times in one chapter, either in him or in Christ or in whom.

But it means the same thing. It's talking about union. Yes, we are blessed in heavenly places.

We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. But where do you get those? In Christ. In Christ.

See? That's not a theology, brethren. That's supposed to be a reality. Now, it is a theology also.

But theology without reality means nothing at all. But I'm telling you, this land that we live in, they're riding on a theology without any reality. And I tell you what, they're going to be shocked by the millions.

They will be shocked by the millions. I mean, they flip that in Christ phrase around like, you know, it's a buzzword these days. But consider the implications of Paul's declaration.

I am in Christ Jesus. This cannot be said of any man. We would not and could not say in Paul or in Polycarp or in Wesley.

It doesn't fit. No, this phrase is reserved only for God. Only for God.

But the plea that I'm making this morning is that we would understand that this is not just the theological statement that you can carry around in your back pocket and think that you're going to go to glory. No. This is supposed to be a reality.

I'm not in Paul. I'm not in Polycarp. I'm not in John.

I'm not in John Wesley. I'm in Christ. Christ.

He is the living, ever-present God with us. Emmanuel. That's who I'm in.

Paul described this union in Romans chapter 11, writing to the Gentiles, and he says that they were a wild olive branch. I like that. That's what he called them.

You guys, you Gentiles, you were a wild olive branch that was grafted in to a strong, healthy olive tree. Anybody tell me who the olive tree is? Christ, who is our life. So here's these Gentiles, these wild olive branches.

And by the way, if you go to Israel, you will find two kinds of olive trees there. You will find the wild olive trees, and you will find the very good and strong and healthy olive trees. And the difference between them is this.

There are so many olive seeds in Israel, you know. They eat olives just like we spit our watermelon seeds here and there and here and there. They spit their olive seeds here and there.

And little wild olive trees grow out of those seeds. But the other one has been cared for and nurtured and fertilized and pruned and cared for. And some of those strong, healthy olive trees are a thousand years old.

They grow and live a long time. That's a beautiful illustration, isn't it? Well, Paul says, you wild olive branches have been grafted in to the strong, healthy olive plant, which is Christ. Grafted in.

You've been brought into union with the olive tree. And now you are partaking of the root and fatness of the tree. What a beautiful description of the reality of salvation in a person's life.

Partaking of the root and fatness of the tree. He also warns them, Don't you boast, thou bearest not the root, the root bearest thee. When we, as a repentant sinner, believed God's saving word to us, we were baptized by the Spirit into Christ.

This is what in Christ means. We were baptized by the Spirit into Christ. And Christ came to dwell within us.

Christ, foreseeing this union after His death, instructed His disciples about it in John 15, verses 1-8. We're going to read that this morning. Just another way to describe the same union, communion, and fruit that comes out of that union and communion.

John 15, Jesus says, I, Christ, I am the true vine and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me, in me, circle that, in me, Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, He taketh away. And every branch that beareth fruit, He, the husbandman, purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Now, what is the fruit that Christ is speaking about here? It is that peaceable fruit of righteousness that we spoke about yesterday. It is that being filled with all the fruits of righteousness, Philippians chapter 1, that we spoke about yesterday. That's the fruit.

How does the fruit come? Verse 3, He says, Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in Me. Are you in Me? Then abide in Me.

Stay vitally connected in Me. Abide in Me. And I in you.

Let My life flow in you. That's what He's saying. It's very easy to grasp that if you understand the whole theology of the analogy that He's using.

You go out and find a grapevine somewhere, you will find the vine. And then you will find the branches that grow off of that vine. And every year they cut the branches back and then they grow new ones in the spring.

And you know, the husbandman, he goes along and he looks after the fruits beginning to push itself out. He looks and goes carefully along this branch and looks at it. He sees this little branch going off of the branch and he looks at it and he says, You know, there's nothing on that branch at all.

There's no little baby fruits on there. There's nothing good going to come out of that. He chops a little piece of that off and throws it on the ground.

But every now and then when he goes along and he's looking at all of his vines, he goes down through the rows and he's looking at all of these vines. All of a sudden he comes along this branch and he looks the whole thing along there and there's no fruit on it. He doesn't mess around nipping this little part off here, this little tip or this little flower over here.

He just goes all the way back to the beginning and So we'll give that plant rest for the year. So, if he finds fruit on it, he purges it. Because he knows that more strength will go into the place where the fruit will get pushed.

Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me. There is no other way to produce fruit.

I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. For without me, ye can do nothing.

Now, we need to come to grips with what he's saying here. You know, sometimes we read our Bible and we'll read a portion of Scripture so many times we get used to reading it and I don't think we come to grips with what it's really saying. But I think that you brothers are in a good place to take a good, longer, deeper look at what he said in that verse right there.

Because of all the beautiful things that God is doing in your heart for these last three weeks. I mean, life's pretty good these three weeks, isn't it? Prayer's easy. Easy to witness.

Seem to get better things out of the Scriptures. Your mind is clear. Your conscience is staying clear.

Isn't that right? Huh? Huh? Yeah! Your conscience is staying clear. Life's pretty good around here, isn't it? My brethren, this is the only way that you will bring forth the fruits of righteousness in your life. There is no

other way.

Now, you can go home and mimic some fruit. But the only way that this fruit is going to just naturally push up out of your life is if you continue to maintain this nice walk that you have been walking for these weeks and maybe some of you weeks before now. But that's the only way that you can bear fruit.

And that's what Jesus is saying. Back to the chair, huh? I am the vine. Ye are the branches.

Abide in Me. If ye abide in Me and I abide in you, you shall bear much fruit. For without Me you can do nothing.

And really, what Christ is saying is, Stay right here. Resting in, trusting in, committing your all to Me. And if you'll stay there, you will bear fruit in your life.

And that bearing of fruit will glorify My Father which is in Heaven. There is no other way. It may take you five more years to get it all figured out.

But there is no other way to bear fruit. None. We must abide in the vine.

Verse 6, He goes on to say, And if a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. Now, Jesus is not, He didn't change and start talking about different people. Oh, the lost people out there who chosen not to abide in Me.

He's not talking about lost people who are not abiding in Him. He's talking about people that are right there on the vine. And the husbandman comes by and sees that there's no vital connection here.

And the juice is not flowing from the vine into this branch. And because of that, the branch doesn't look very good and there's no fruit on it. He just goes over there and snips it off.

Which is a very sobering thing. I mean, I don't know who Brother Moses was talking about yesterday when he was talking about those fellas who used to come to Bible school and, you know, where they are now and what their lives are like. They know.

They do. They taste. They experience.

They walk. They taste. But I'm not going to yield my life to God like that.

I've got other things that I want to do with my life. I'll play this little Christian game. I'll go to church.

I'll satisfy my mom and dad. I'll carry my Bible and all that. But I've got some other things that I want to do with my life.

Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit. So shall ye be my disciples. That's it.

You have been given a mighty union with me, Christ says. Continue in that vital union. Allow me to have my way in you.

Let the sap of the Holy Ghost prevail in your life. And you will bear the beautiful fruit of a holy life, a righteous life, a Christ-like life. And my Father will be glorified by this abiding union, and you will be my disciples.

And everyone will look and say, there's no question, he is a disciple of Jesus Christ. A disciple is one who follows closely. He is with the teacher, and he follows the teacher's words, and he obeys the teacher's words, and he adapts the lifestyle of the teacher.

He is a disciple, a follower of Jesus Christ. Paul, in Romans chapter 8, if you want to turn there now, defines his phrase. This is so beautiful to me.

You just have to understand. When you're working on something for four months, and everything just kind of starts falling together, it's pretty exciting. But in Romans chapter 8, and verse 1, Paul defines his phrase, in Christ Jesus.

It's too bad that the theologians didn't study the definition. They just took the little phrase and throw the thing around everywhere today. And now everybody's in Christ.

And oh, there's no condemnation because they're all in Christ. Theologically. And all they do is just live after the flesh with a false assurance that when it's all said and done, after they've lived the good life here on earth, they'll even get a better one in heaven.

Not so. So, Paul defines in Romans chapter 8 this phrase, in Christ Jesus, as no one else can. And rightly so, that he should define it because he was the one who coined the phrase.

Paul is the one who coined the phrase. Surely the Spirit of God will lead him to also define the phrase which has been coined 130 times in the New Testament. Surely the Spirit of God will define what that means.

Please note, as we look down through some of these verses in Romans 8, this morning, please note, this kind of walk requires a surrender far deeper than things. Far deeper than things. It's way more than a trip to the altar.

But a moment by moment forsaking all. You say, brother, you're really putting it high on us. I'm not.

The Word is. See? But remember, we're talking about God. Amen? We're talking about God.

So in Romans 8, in verse 1, Paul begins with these words. There is therefore. And I must remind you what he's saying therefore for.

He's pointing back to that frustrating experience that was described in Romans 7, which culminated in the utter frustration and emotional desperation of, oh, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. And I study that word through.

It means the channel by which something comes. Who shall deliver me? Oh, my dear, struggling, frustrated friend! The channel by which the deliverance comes is Jesus Christ and vital union with Him. And that's the only way that deliverance comes.

The only way. So, he begins by saying, there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. And that's beautiful.

And that's true to the child of God, to the sincere child of God who's walking with God. We don't live in condemnation. We have a loving, comforting, holy spirit guiding, directing, encouraging, convincing, and directing our lives.

There is no condemnation. But who is that wonderful experience offered to them that are in Christ Jesus? But what does that mean? And may I remind you that most of the modern translations of the Bible leave the next phrase out. It's not in there.

They just say, the modern ones, there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ. Stop! That can be devastating. If in Christ doesn't mean anything, if in Christ is just theology, if in Christ is not reality, if that's all in Christ means to tell all the people, there's no condemnation, don't let anybody put anything on you, this, that, you know.

No, that's not what Paul is saying. He's actually going to now give us a definition, not just the little one that follows in verse 1, but he's going to give us a definition that takes him quite a few verses to define. And rightly so.

He should take quite a few verses to define this phrase which he coined because of the reality in his own life, in Christ Jesus. It's good that it gets well defined. Amen? But even his short definition, what does in Christ Jesus mean? Those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Whoa, that just drew the dividing line right there, didn't it? That separated the men from the boys. Hmm. Not a pun there, but if the shoe fits, wear it.

But that really makes a dividing line just that one. Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. And then he goes on from there.

Now he's going to explain. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. There's that phrase again.

There's life in Christ Jesus. And there's a law that goes along with that life. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is the law that I must yield to the Spirit's promptings in my life every day.

That's the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. And hallelujah! That law, if I live it, has made me free from the law of sin and death which works in my members and takes off any time it wants to if I do not defy it with a higher law. And every one of us know what I'm talking about.

You know, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. Amen. You know, it's like one law overpowering another law.

You know, you have the law of gravity which makes everything go down. Then you have the law of strength which is holding this book up today. That's pretty simple.

The law of strength is overcoming the law of gravity. Well, there's two laws that can be working in your members. One is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

And the other is the law of sin. You know? You still have a body and a soul. Yeah! You still live in the flesh.

But we don't walk after the flesh anymore. Amen? Now, let's go on here. I'm going to run out of time.

I can see it already. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. Why? That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.

Wonderful! Wonderful! The righteousness of God's moral law fulfilled in me! He will cause me to walk in His ways. He will write His laws upon my heart and cause me to walk in His ways. What a wonderful thing! What a beautiful announcement! What emancipation to the heart that truly wants to do right! I can fulfill the moral laws of God! They can be fulfilled in me! Oh, but who is that who walked not after the flesh but after the Spirit? Oh, thank you, Paul, for that reminder again.

That redefinition. That re-emphasis. That saying the same thing twice because I want you to get it, saith God.

That's how it happens. As we abide in Him and He abides in us, we are living after the Spirit and not after the flesh. And in that beautiful place, the law is fulfilled in us.

How does that happen? You have to walk with God. Enoch walked with God. Noah walked with God.

Abraham walked with God. Elijah walked with God. Christ walked with His Father.

You have to walk with God. I mean, how does this thing get worked out in real life? Sometimes you choose to go the wrong way. Sometimes you choose to look where you shouldn't look.

Sometimes you hear something, you listen to something that you shouldn't listen to. And when you do that, things get a little cloudy, don't they? I'm just using this chair in another way this morning to illustrate to you that when you choose to walk after the flesh instead of to walk after the Spirit, guess what? Things get cloudy. The flow of grace stops.

It's not that God has left you. It's not that God has cursed you. But the flow of grace has stopped.

You are still in Christ. But are you walking vitally connected in Christ? Obviously not. Things get pretty cloudy like this.

And it's sad to say, but some people live a long time like this and I'm not sure how long you can keep doing this, really. But God is very patient and He's merciful to us. But what do you need to do if you choose to walk after the flesh instead of walk after the Spirit? You need to repent.

It's called repentance. Repentance is not just something you do when you enter into the life that is in Christ Jesus. It's something that you do as you continually abide in that vital life.

You have to repent. And if you repent and come again based on the atonement and have those things washed away in the blood of Jesus Christ, everything clears up. And that, in simplicity, is walking with God.

And I think most of you, you know what I'm talking about. By your own experiences, you know what it's like to live with this thing over your head. And you also know what it's like to live with heaven open over your heart.

When heaven is open over your heart, you're walking in the Spirit. This is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. This is how that in Christ Jesus becomes an ever-living, every-day, ever-growing reality.

That's the only way that it comes. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh. But they that are after the Spirit, and I'm adding the word, do mind the things of the Spirit.

What does it mean to mind the things of the flesh? What does it mean to mind the things of the Spirit? We'd better define that, amen? We'd better see the difference between those two. Paul goes on in verse 6 and says, For to be carnally minded is death. But to be spiritually minded is life.

That life in Christ Jesus is life and peace. So, what is the difference? Alright? Here's a definition of carnally minded. To go by your senses and reason without the Holy Spirit.

Spiritually minded. To go by spiritual things and mind the Holy Ghost in your life. That's what it means to be spiritually minded.

Now, I want us to notice here this morning, brothers. You know, in your own readings, you may have thought, you know, well, I'm not carnally minded and I'm not minded after the flesh. No, not me.

But those words do not mean terrible, wicked things. You know, the things that fall underneath that definition are not just drunkenness and adultery and who knows what else kind of debauchery you can get into out in the world out there. It's just simply choosing to mind earthly things.

And to mind my own natural inclinations instead of to mind spiritual things and the moving of the Spirit of God in my heart. That's simply what it means. Now, it comes right down home, doesn't it? One of the reasons why you're having such a blessed month here is because you have been spiritually minded for all this time.

Hello? Did you get that? You have been minding the Spirit for this whole three weeks so far. And because you are minding the Spirit, I don't know, maybe somewhat against your own will, but we are directing you towards spiritual things and you don't have much time for natural, carnal, earthly things. You're prospering in the Spirit.

Hello? Hello? One plus one is two. You see what I'm saying? Because the carnal mind is enmity against God. Me? For it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Remember the frustration we talked about? Remember the definition that I gave you? My interpretation of Romans 7? Yes, it is the frustration of a lost man trying to do good and be right and do right, and he fails in frustration and the law becomes a schoolmaster to bring him to Christ. But dear brethren, that same thing can happen to you if you choose to consistently walk after the natural, after the carnal, after the flesh, after earthly things. If you live like that, you will find yourself right back in Romans 7, because the carnal mind is enmity against God.

And you're not going to be able to do it. You can't do it. You try, but you'll fail.

You'll get up and start over, but you'll fail. And listen, it's the same way. Just like that lost man, the law was used to bring him to the reality of repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

But remember, the end goal is not a one-way ticket to heaven. It's life. It's a whole life that ends in heaven.

So, in the same manner as that man was brought to frustration, God still uses His moral law to bring His people to frustration if in fact they decide, I'm just going to live it up a little bit. Ah, that guy, he's a fanatic. You know, always talking about reading the Bible and all that stuff.

Ha! You know. Fine! Have at it! But you're going to find frustration. You're going to find despair at times.

You're going to find your flesh went further than you ever thought it would go. And then everything's going to get messed up. And all of it is one beautiful divine plan to bring you to the place where you just settle down, rest in God, and walk with Him every day.

Look at that! Even God is in all of those mess-ups that you did. But what is He after? He wants you to be in Christ. That's what He's after.

So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But, ye are not in the flesh, 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 His. And those are sobering words. But better to look at them now than to find out some day later that you didn't understand them.

But basically what Paul is saying there is, if there is no reality of the Spirit of God in your life, you are none of His. No matter where you grew up, no matter how much good teaching you have, no matter how sincere it might be, if there's no reality of the Spirit of God in your life, you are none of His. And, if Christ be in you, now listen to this.

This is a good one. If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin. Remember? Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The body is dead because of sin.

I preached this sermon years ago now, but it was called, Living in a Dead Body. Oh, what a title. Living in a Dead Body.

Did you know that you're living in a dead body? Your body is dead. It's dead. It's dust.

And some day, when God takes your spirit and soul out of it, it'll just become dust again. It's a dead body. It's a body that's going to die.

And it's a body that is dying. And I know that's hard for you to grasp, but I'm almost 60, and I can tell you it's true. The body is dying.

It is slowing down. It is going down. It is moving toward those dust, the dust of the earth.

That's where the body is going. It's dead. Why? Because of sin.

But, the spirit is life because of Jesus Christ. So, why in the world would we let our body, our flesh, rule our life when it's just going to die anyway? 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 dwelleth in you. And I've heard a couple different interpretations of that, and I think that probably both of them are a bit right.

You know, like yesterday, I came up here and I was tired. No doubt about it. Only four hours sleep.

But you probably didn't notice that I was very tired while I was preaching yesterday. Because the Spirit of God does quicken this mortal body of ours. But I don't believe that is the clearest and the right interpretation of that verse.

What He's saying is, if the Spirit of God dwells in you, He's going to quicken this mortal body someday. We're going to get a new body. We're going to get a new body.

And I'll tell you why I know that's what He's saying. Because He goes on to say, Therefore, brethren... He's not talking to lost people here. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh to live after the flesh.

Right? We're not debtors to the flesh to live after the flesh. We're debtors to the Spirit. Because the flesh, it's dead.

Remember what Paul said in Colossians 2? Christ in you, the hope of glory. What does that mean? What He's saying is, the reality of Christ in you is your hope of glory to come. So, let's be in debt to the Spirit.

He's going to change our vile body and turn that thing into a body like unto His glorious body someday. I'm in debt to the Spirit. Not in debt to this dying body.

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors not to the flesh to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die. Why is He saying that to Christians? That's a good verse for the lost people out there, isn't it? But why is He saying it to Christians? He's saying it to Christians because it stands true either way.

If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die. But He doesn't stop there, does He? But, if ye through the Spirit do mortify or put to death the deeds of this body, ye shall live. And that live means live now.

And that live means live tomorrow. And that live means live ten days from now. And that live means live for all of eternity.

If ye through the Spirit do mortify, and you can't do it. It's not will worship. It's through the Spirit that we mortify the deeds of this body.

By letting the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus rule in our heart, in our life, this body is brought into subjection. And you can tell it what to do. And you can tell it what not to do.

And you can tell it when to get up. And you can tell it when to go to bed. And you can tell it after the meal today to shut up when it's hungry.

But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. And verse 14, we're going to stop there. For today, for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

And I wrote in it next to that, mature sons. Now, that's where God is going. God is after you.

He wants a mature son. Now, we understand that, don't we? He wants a mature son. As many as received Him to them gave Him power to become the sons of God.

To become mature sons. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the mature sons of God. Are you ready for that? Paul said in Galatians, he said it this way, walk in the Spirit in the way that we just described and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh, but you will fulfill the moral law as the fruits of the Spirit are manifested in your life. Love, joy, peace, temperance, long-suffering, down the line there are eight or nine of them. Do you see the simplicity of this? You know, again, we're right back to the same thing.

God demands a righteous life. But the God who demands a righteous life has also made the way for you to live a righteous life. And by the way, there's only one way to live that righteous life.

There's not two. There's only one. You must learn to walk after the Spirit and to be spiritually minded.

See? Spiritually minded. I mean, that affects a lot of things, doesn't it? That affects, you know, flipping the old radio on where you're going from point A to point B and boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. You know, that nonsense that they have on there.

Or if you don't get the boom, boom, boom, then you get all the incessant commercials just blasting your mind and pulling you back. It has to do with what you're going to read. It has to do with your spare time.

It has to do with what you do in your free time. It has to do with hobbies. It has to do with all of those things.

Are you minded after the Spirit? Are you going to mind yourself after the flesh? If you mind yourself after the flesh, you're not going to prosper in the very way that God, who is inside of you, is moving you. You won't prosper. Paul's theology of salvation and his personal experience come together so nicely in Philippians 3. Consider his testimony and notice in his testimony, and we won't have time to go all the way through it, but notice in his testimony, you read it yourself, he is caught up in the person of Jesus Christ.

You see that so clearly there in Philippians 3. Paul's theology of salvation and Paul's reality of salvation is caught up in the person of Jesus Christ. He says things like, that I may win Christ. Oh, I want to win Christ.

Huh? Win Christ. Paul, you have Him. What do you mean, Paul? Oh, I just keep gaining and gaining and gaining.

Yesterday's win doesn't satisfy today's. I want more. That's what he's saying.

I want the reality today. Yesterday's grace will not do for today. Oh, maybe you had a hot time in prayer yesterday.

That won't do for today. Christ must be a living reality to me today. Oh, that I may win Christ.

That I may be found in Him. Huh? You are in Him, Paul. You are in Him.

I mean, if you're not, who is? You are in Him. I want to be found in Him, vitally connected. I want to be found having a righteousness which is by faith, he says.

Not a righteousness which is by law. What's the difference? Real simple. You've been watching it all morning.

And hearing it. The righteousness which is by faith is the righteousness which flows out of the life of the one who has yielded to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. That person, righteousness flows out of it.

But if you cut off that relationship, then you have righteousness over here which just comes by law. And it's not just the Pharisees who do that. It's the Christians who, having clouded their life up pretty good during the week, come to church on Sunday, carry their Bible, sing the songs, say amen, and all those things.

That's righteousness which is in the flesh. It's righteousness which is by law. You're just doing what you know you're supposed to do.

Paul says, I don't want to have any of that. I want Him to find me vitally connected in this beautiful, in Christ relationship. And I want Him to find fruit in my life from that.

I don't want the other. I want to be found having a righteousness which is by faith. And I want to know Him.

I want to know Him. Oh, Paul, you know Him. Oh, but I want to know Him more.

I'm not satisfied with yesterday's knowing. I want to know Him more. I want to know Him.

I want to know His power. I want to know the fellowship of His sufferings. I want to know what it is to be conformed to His death.

Oh, I'm pursuing this Christ to the depths. And lastly, I want to apprehend His purposes for my life. Paul says, I want to apprehend His purposes for my life.

Do you see how he's caught up with this Christ? The Son of the Living God. The one that he met 35 years before on the road to Damascus. He's still caught up with this Christ.

The Son of the Living God. He finishes there in chapter 3 with these words, Let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded. Minded like what we just said.

And if anything ye be otherwise minded, if you will walk in the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, if there be anything in your life that is otherwise minded, God will reveal it to you. You won't need your dad to come and say, What about that? God will reveal it to you. A jealous, possessive God will reveal it to you because your heart says, I want to walk with Him.

God will reveal it to you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule. Let us mind the same thing.

Yes, brethren, salvation is Jesus Christ. That is salvation. And oh, tomorrow we'll look beyond and see what that means in the eternity.

I'll tell you what. It'll be worth it. It'll be worth it.

This little self-forsaking of life that we have here on this earth cannot be compared to the glory that shall be revealed to those who love God, who walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh. Let's pray. Lord, let these things sink deeply down into our hearts.

God, change us this morning. Don't let us, Lord, forget what we are learning. Lord, hold us to this standard.

Lord, we trust You to do that. And we thank You in Jesus' name. Amen.

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