

# Spurious Believers #2

by Ernest C. Reisinger

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of self-examination and the use of literature in witnessing to distinguish between true and spurious believers.*

**Duration:** 1:02:08

**Scripture:** Isaiah 40:1, Matthew 6:33, Luke 8:4-8, Luke 8:12-15

**Topics:** "Discipleship", "Evangelism"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by emphasizing the importance of Jesus as the light of the world. He then reads from Luke 8:4-15, which contains the parable of the sower. The parable describes different types of soil where the seed falls, representing different responses to the word of God. The preacher highlights the need for honesty in sharing the gospel and suggests that many churches have not been honest with people about the true cost of following Christ. He concludes by mentioning another difference between the real and the spiritual, without providing further details.

---

## Transcript

May I just say a word about a few books. I hope you'll visit the book table. I was just telling the elders as we were having our prayer meeting, and the pastor, about... I just mentioned in one week I met two fellows, one in seminary and the other one who changed colleges to go to a Christian college, all because God and His providence put a book across their paths.

I was speaking to Dr. Gray's church, and a young fellow came up to me and said he's going to seminary this year for the first time, and he said he went in the library and got a hold of an old book, and I'm strong for books. And I want to tell you about a couple we have each night. I'll be mentioning a few.

But for a couple reasons. One, not only for yourself, but a great way to witness this with literature. I realize that everyone does not have the kind of a personality that's able to open up easily conversations about Christ.

I'm recognizing that. But I can't excuse you because I believe that every true child of God has a desire to witness. They may not be diligently about it all the time, and they probably never are satisfied with their own efforts in that area.

But down beneath those who have been twice born, there is that beat of the heart, that pulse of Christ that makes them anxious to make Him known. And if you're of the timid sort, one of the great ways you can witness is by literature. I'm amazed sometimes in meetings somebody will come to me and say, Well, you know, my wife is not a Christian.

She's come to the meeting tonight, and she's not a Christian. And I'm amazed at times I'll ask somebody, Well, have you talked to her? And said, Honey, I'd like to talk to you about this. And a number of times it's happened that the people have not talked.

They say, I'm bringing my neighbor, I'm bringing my friends. But they've never talked to them about Christ in a very personal, intimate way. Well, I want to encourage you, and I want to encourage you to use literature.

I meet those people who say to me sometimes, You know, so-and-so is coming with me to the meeting tonight, and I don't think they're Christian. I say, Well, did you ever talk to them about that? No, never have. Well, you have a duty.

And here's a little book by J.C. Rowland. In fact, there's a lot of these little pamphlets back there, and they're only 20 cents. I only call your attention to them because they're a great way to witness.

There's one by George Whitefield. Those of you who live in the Philadelphia area, it ought to be easy to use Whitefield, because he's on Triangle Square down at the University of Pennsylvania. That statue, that monument you see there, is George Whitefield.

And he's got a great little pamphlet back there on almost a Christian. And this is by J.C. Rowland. If you've got any Episcopal friends, a fine book to give your Episcopal friends.

J.C. Rowland was an Anglican bishop. And then I want to recommend a little book, the subject of which has been of great comfort to me. There's a text in Corinthians where it exhorts us to comfort one another, wherewith the comfort we ourselves have been comforted of God.

Well, if there's any great truth in the Bible that has comforted me as a Christian, on many occasions with sometimes seeming problems that would overwhelm me, it's the fact that there's a God in heaven who is sovereign. And he's running the show. And many a night I've put my head on the pillow, and I believe that this has taken the place, this truth that this book talks about, has taken the place of many sleeping pills.

And I recommend that little book on the sovereignty of God to your comfort. And then here's a book. A lady asked me last week in a church where I was.

In fact, it was the pastor's wife. She said, if you were going to be marooned on an island and could only have five books, she said, what books would you take? I said, well, of course I'd take the Bible. That's understood.

And I said, I'd take the Westminster Confession of Faith and John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. In fact, as I think so much of this book, I'm not sure you can get to heaven if you haven't read it. Now, you know I'm not serious about that.

But I'll tell you, you're going to be sorry when you get there if you haven't read it, when you meet old John Bunyan. Because this is a picture of a man who's seeking God, how God in his mercy brings him to the

cross, how he loses his burden, and all the battles and warfare of the Christian life from there on until he reaches the celestial city. And I'll guarantee you, and I don't care who you are, somebody said, well, it's from the 1600s.

But the perception that this man had into human character, you'll be able, I'll guarantee, I don't know if you'll be able to find yourself, but he's got a picture of you in this book somewhere. You might be Mr. Talkative, you might be Mr. Ready-to-Honk, you might be Mr. Feeble-Mind. I hope not that, but you're in this book somewhere.

You're there. And it's blessed me, I've read it three times this year. Spurgeon, you can hardly read a sermon of Spurgeon's where he's not, you don't see a little bit of Bunyan.

The fact is, you know what Spurgeon said to his students? He read it a hundred times. He didn't live to be a hundred years old, so that means he read it a couple times a year, and he didn't start when he was one. So he read it a lot of times.

But he said about old Bunyan, he said, You can pluck old Bunyan anywhere, for out of his veins flow Bible lines. And the reason I like it, and the reason I like the Westminster Confession of Faith is because it's Bible. It's so scriptural.

And you can't open this up in a page, you might not recognize the scripture or the great doctrines that he has tucked away in it. Now, one other thing about it, don't come to me afterwards tonight, and this happens a lot of times, some might say, Oh, I read that when I was a little girl. Or, I read that when I was in school.

No, I know you did, but you missed it. I'm talking about as an adult. You see, the children like it.

In fact, there's a children's edition back here, very good for young people. And I guess some of the older people ought to read that first. It'd be helpful.

But the children like it for the story, and the students, even in college, read it for its literary value, to take it apart from its literary content. But that's not why I'm recommending it. I'm recommending it because of the wonderful theology in it.

I wouldn't know what to do without that book. Now, if you have your Bible tonight, I want to try to finish up what we started to do last night. But I want to say a little bit about the purpose.

Again, a little explanation. You see, almost everywhere I go, I find somebody object to the idea of self-examination. They say that's introspective, and it's bad, and we must not be looking inward, we must look to Christ, and all that's true.

We would not deny that. But you see, the purpose of examination and taking stock of our title once in a while, looking at our title, it's blessed for Christians to be not only assured, but strengthened, because they do see that in their walk and in their heart and in their life, there is those, the bent of their life is that which is described in the Bible as Christian character. And of course, it's beneficial to those who may not be Christians.

The next thing to being a Christian, the next best thing in this world, is to know that you're not a Christian. Now, of course, the best thing is to know that you're a Christian and to have a well-grounded assurance,

not only to have a right hope, but to have sufficient grounds for that hope. That's the best state.

But the next best state is to know that you're not a Christian. Because if you're here tonight and you know that you're not a Christian, there's some hopes for you. You might start seeking God, and God in this mercy save you.

But the danger, and the one that we have the most warnings about in Scripture, are for those who think all is well when they're really on the road to hell. Bunyan said on one occasion, there are those who go to hell frontwards, meaning, of course, the out-and-out people who make no religious profession, the wicked, outwardly wicked, they do blush not at their sin, make no pretense of religion, that's going forward. But Bunyan said the hosts that go in who are faced the other way and they go backwards to hell.

That is, they think they're faced this way, but they fall backwards to hell. That's why our Lord undoubtedly gave so many parables. Almost all the parables, not every one, but almost every parable sets forth the real and that which appears to be real.

For instance, we have the parable of the weak and the tares. Our Lord said they both look the same. And fact is, He said they look so much the same that don't you touch them.

He said, I'll take care of that. And there's a parable that sets forth the real and the spurious, but they both look real. We have the parable of the two houses.

Both look fine. The superstructure, they both look like they were fine. And the test did not come until the winds blew.

And then we find that one had a wrong foundation. But in appearance, they were both the same. And obviously, if you read these parables, we have the ten virgins, for instance.

The basic thrust of that parable is, five were wise, five were foolish, but they were all saying, Lord, Lord. But He said, I don't know, five of you. Now, it's because of this.

There are several reasons why it's wise. First of all, I say if we look around us and see people in our churches, and this is not to scold you dear, this is a Monday night crowd, I ought to be saying something nice to you. But I really mean this to be nice.

I want to be a friend to your soul. I'm not trying to deceive people. I'm trying to be a friend of the souls of men and women.

But I can't be a friend to your soul and tell you about yourself what the Bible would not say and what I don't believe. And I do believe that, and I say this not to scold you or not to judge you, but I do believe that our churches, and I don't care which one it is, are loaded with an awful lot of people who do not give Bible evidence of the work of regeneration in their heart. Now, I'm not God, and I can't, the Lord's already told us, don't you go down there and say you are and you aren't.

I don't go there. I'm not going there. I'm saying I got a Bible, and I read it now and again, and this Bible does have something to say about what a Christian is meant to be and to do.

And as I look at this and I look around me, I say the church has got an awful lot of people in that do not give Bible evidence of regeneration, Bible evidence of conversion. You see, the reason I'm so strong that don't you try to pick the weak and the tares, I was telling somebody today, look how long, look how dead

wrong we would have been if we would have seen Judas Iscariot carrying the bag, for instance. He was the treasure of the church of his day, and the church wasn't very big right then, so we certainly would have assumed that if the church was this small and there was a great price to follow Christ then, we would have assumed, certainly, that Judas, if anybody was a Christian, certainly he was, because he was the treasure of the church.

On the other hand, if we would have looked at Peter, we would have been dead wrong, incidentally. And let me tell you why we can know that Judas was not a Christian, never was, and that's this. You remember when he took the money back to the money changers? I mean, to the priest? He cast the money, all of the 30 pieces of silver on the floor, and what did he say? All he said was, I have betrayed innocent blood.

That's all. He never really confessed his sin. You see, he had signed a peace treaty with sin.

That's why one sin can send you to hell, if you sign a peace treaty with it. Judas never did say, Oh, I was a thief. And if you look in John, chapter 12, verse 6, you'll find that he was a thief from the beginning.

He had signed a peace treaty with his sin. He had signed a peace treaty with his sin. Now, the Christian sins, but he doesn't sign a peace treaty with any.

On the other hand, look how wrong we'd have been. I say we'd have been wrong there by calling him a Christian, but look how wrong we'd have been if we'd have seen Peter that day when he cursed and denied the Lord. Wouldn't you have been wrong and you'd have said, He's not a Christian! Oh, how wrong he'd have been.

You see, because the ball game wasn't over, and you can't tell the score until the ninth inning. What proves that Peter was a Christian? Why, he didn't remorse and commit suicide. It didn't lead to remorse and suicide.

His sin led to repentance. He remembered his sin. He remembered the Savior, and there was repentance.

That's entirely different. As they sat around the table that day, the Last Supper, our Lord's Last Supper, you say, What was the difference between Peter and Judas? As they sat around the Lord's table. This is not my sermon.

I'm telling you why we're examining ourselves. As they sat around the table, what was the difference between Peter and Judas, basically? Well, I'll tell you. Judas was presently guilty and planning a sin for tomorrow.

He's betraying the Lord. He was presently, had unconfessed, willful, known sin that he had no intention to forsake it. He had signed a peace treaty with it.

It's not that his sin was worse than Peter's. Peter's was just as bad. You say, Well, what about Peter? Well, the difference was, Peter was ignorant of his own weakness.

And he had no planned sin. He had nothing in his mind where he purposed. It was his planned sin to deny Christ within the next day or so.

That was the difference. And so I say, we have a Bible examples of these things. We have the lives of the people around us.

We have the parables that set forth the real and the spurious. We have examples in Scripture of Judas who perished among the apostles. Demas who perished among the evangelists.

Not only that, we have the commands of Scripture where our Lord says, God says through the apostle, Paul, examine yourself. We have 2 Peter 1.10 where it says, Give diligence about it. Give diligence to make your calling and election sure.

I don't know why people object to self-examination so much. I don't know why. I find that if you have a good title, you don't mind looking at it.

If you got a real dollar, you don't mind the banker questioning you about it. You don't care if he jerks it and tears it and twists it. You don't mind what he does.

But if you're a counterfeiter, you don't want him fumbling that thing too much, do you? You want to kind of go away. There's a blessed result in self-examination. And fact is, let me tell you how important it is.

Do you think the communion service is important? There isn't a person here tonight that's a Christian or a professing Christian that wouldn't tell me that the communion service is very important. Well, do you know how important self-examination is? It's tied to the Lord's table. Because it says, Before you go to the Lord's table, let a man examine himself.

That's how important it is. It's tied tight to the Lord's table. I'm glad in this church, and this is one of the few that I get in, have what they call preparatory service.

Do you know the whole purpose of that service? It's to keep short accounts with God. That's the whole idea back there. Right, Pastor? That's to keep short accounts with God.

And that's tied in with this injunction to examine ourselves. Now, so much for that. Now, if you have your Bible, I'm just giving you the reason, because I get a little problem.

You see, in Psalm, before we look at that, just let me say one more word about this, and then I'll, I like to tell people why we're doing this. You have your Bible, turn to Psalm 130, keep your finger in Luke 8, and I want to show you something tonight. Because God doesn't tell us to do anything without a real reason.

And if you have Psalm 130, would you just turn there for a second? Look at Psalm 130, verse 3. Now, here's a man, because examination has gone into the court of justice, that's really what it is. And here's a verse that tells us about the court of justice. Psalm 130, verse 3. If thou, I'm examining myself now, see.

I say to the Lord, I'm in the court of justice. I'm in the court The self-examination takes you to the court of justice, but not to keep you there. Now, here I am in the court of justice.

If thou, should mark iniquity, O Lord, who should stand? Question mark. Ah, but you don't stay in the court of justice, you move to the other court, the court of mercy. And the whole purpose of going to the court of justice is that you might go to the court of mercy, which is in the next verse.

But there is forgiveness with thee, the Lord is with thee. As thou mayest be feared. There's forgiveness with thee.

So, that's the whole purpose of it. Now, we're going to continue our message last night. Before I read from verses 4 to 15 in Luke chapter 8, let's bow in a word prayer.

Lord Jesus, we thank you that you are the light of the world. The light of the world. Send thy spirit upon the pages of this word.

Upon the tables of our hearts. And upon our minds tonight. That we might hear what the spirit.

Oh, make us diligent listeners this night. Make us diligent to thy word. Give thy people discernment.

Father, we ask it in the name of our Savior. Now, here's another one of those parables that we talked about. The Lord setting forth the real and the spurious.

There's an awful lot in the Bible about it. Verse 4, And when much people were gathered together, and there were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable. A sower went out to sow a seed.

As he sowed, some fell by the wayside. And it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. Some fell upon a rock.

And as soon as it was sprung up, notice it did spring up. As soon as it was sprung up, it was withered away because it lacked moisture. And then our Lord tells us about that which fell among thorns.

And the thorns sprang up with it. Therefore it also sprang up. And it was choked.

Others fell on good ground and sprang up. They all sprang up, good starter, and bear fruit and hundredfold. When he had said these things, he cried, And I say to you tonight in his words here, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Because as our Lord defines this parable, dear friend, tonight, everybody here is in one of these soils that I'm going to read about. They ask him in verse 9, What is the parable? And the disciples ask him, saying, What might this parable be? And he said unto you, It is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God. You a seeker tonight, you hungry tonight, you'll know.

But if you're wise and prudent in your own eyes, well, you won't know. But to others in parables, that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. Now, the parable is this.

You don't need to turn to your commentaries. The parable is this. The seed is the word of God.

So that settles that, doesn't it? Now, what happens to this seed? And here's where you are. You're either in verse 12, you're in verse 13, you're in verse 14, or you're in verse 50. But you are in one of these verses.

Those by the wayside, are they that hear, then come of the devil, and take away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. I believe it's a picture of those who make no profession. I don't think that's an awful thing if you make no profession.

We're speaking to you tonight and telling you to make a profession. We're telling you to come to Christ. We're telling you to seek Christ.

Come to Him. Verse 13. You may be in this verse.

A lot in our generation are in this verse. They had a joyful experience, but they don't give evidence today that it's real. They on the rock are they which when they hear receive the word with joy.

And I mentioned this in passing the other day that one of the marks of true conversion is when they first receive the word it's not with joy. The joy comes. But one of the things that makes you suspicious about these people in this group is they receive it with joy.

The first impressions, and you'll get it from Bunyan, you'll learn his first impressions was somebody that was weighted down with sin, bothered about his sin. And if I were to ask the men in this assembly tonight who are truly Christians, that are truly Christians, they'll tell me they can know the day of conviction when they were bothered and disturbed about their sin. And the first reaction to that holy word of God is it cut away at their heart and the root of self.

They were disturbed and bothered, not joy. They received the word with joy. These have no root which for a while bleeds.

In the time of temptation they fall away. They're spurious. They're believers, but they're spurious.

They had no root, no fruit, no continuing. Now verse 14, and this is the verse we're thinking about tonight because we've already kind of in last night's message described some of the others. But verse 14 is another group.

And they which fell among thorns, are they which when they have heard, go forth, they make a start. How long? I don't know. One year, two years, three years, four years, five years.

I don't know. They may go through the church and wind up in college and go off there. They may get married and go haywire on a job.

I don't know. Go forth. How long? I don't know.

And are choked. What chokes them? What stifles out the seed? What crowds out the word of God? Well, it's simple. It tells you there.

The cares and riches and pleasures. That's the thing. The cares and riches and pleasures of this life.

People have no concern after a while for eternity. And they bring forth no fruit. They never brought any fruit.

Did you ever bring any fruit? Well, this is the kind of people who have brought forth no fruit to perfection. Now notice the last verse. Verse 15 that we're going to read.

But they on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. What are the two distinguishing characteristics of the last group? Very simple. They keep the word that's continuing.

And they bring forth fruit. That's the two distinguishing marks. Now how in God's name, as a preacher of God's word, can I or any other preacher continually week after week lead you to believe that you're a Christian if these two distinguishing marks are not your portion? Huh? I'm helping to deceive you, friend.

I'm contributing to your damnation. I'm aware that there's a word of comfort in the Bible. The fact is, probably Pastor Duvall ought to preach on it after I leave here.

And I'll give him a good text. Isaiah chapter 40, verse 1. It says, Comfort ye, comfort ye my people. But I want to remind you that there's 39 chapters of plowing before that.

Right, Pastor? There's 39 chapters without any comfort in it. And the reason is because we're so anxious to give people comfort and joy and peace. We don't have to be so anxious about that.

If God the Holy Ghost will take a word then they might be delighted with the gospel. If God shows them and takes away the false peace then the Prince of Peace will give them everlasting peace. But I'm not forgiving them false comfort.

Now, we tried last night to begin to say some of the differences between real believers and spurious believers and I mentioned only two. I'll just say a word about them because I want to get to a third one tonight. One of the differences between the real believer and the spurious believer is this.

The spurious or the phony believer he wants Christ but not without exception. He wants the grace of Christ but not the government of Christ. He doesn't want to be ruled.

He doesn't want to be guided. He doesn't want Christian instruction. He doesn't want to walk in the Christian way.

He's satisfied and it's a strange kind of a fellow. He says, well, I'm part of the kingdom but he's not subject to the king. He's spurious.

He says, I'm part of the kingdom but I'm not subject to the king. What kind of a believer is that? Oh, he's spurious. Then the second difference, that's one.

The true believer wants Christ without any ifs, ands, or buts. Now, the second one we pointed out last night was that the true believer wants Christ and closes with Christ as he's offered in the gospel. And we pointed out and labored the point with all my heart that the only way Christ is offered is as Lord and as Lord he's your prophet, priest, and king.

Prophet, priest, and king. Whereas the spurious believer just kind of wants Christ as his priest but he doesn't want him to reign over him, doesn't want him to guide him, and doesn't want him to instruct him. Now tonight I want to point out a third difference between the genuine believer, the true believer, and the false, or the temporary believer.

The false and the temporary believer, as is very clearly defined in our text, verse 14, never closes with Christ and all the inconveniences that may follow. Now, that takes a little explaining. And it takes a little something else.

Because tonight I'm not going to only be laying all this at the foot of the people in the pew. I want to lay it at Pastor Duvall's feet, I want to lay some at my feet, you Sunday school teachers, you elders, those of you who do personal work. I think we all have to share in some of the responsibility for what I'm going to talk about tonight.

Because I believe that part of this is our fault, and I want to include myself, I'm not scolding anybody or shooting at anybody, that I'm not, I'm including myself, for not being honest with people at the beginning. You hear me? I believe that we in the Christian church, with our young people, everywhere I go they fuss about the young people, they holler about this, and they holler about the young people. But do you know

that I've come to a firm belief, and a strong conviction, that many of the people in our church today, we have not been honest with them at the beginning.

You see, I like to illustrate it by a funnel. We, as a rule, and this is typical of our present-day evangelism, and it's typical of us other places, we make a great big wide funnel, and we throw open the doors, and it is wide. And we say, oh, come in, we bring them in like a funnel, then we get them in the church, and we try to squeeze them down.

You don't do this, you don't do that, you don't do that. And you see, when they're not saved, they start to, as they start to get narrowed down, they start to kick and squeal and squirm, and they get tough. That's one of the reasons you've got all the problems in the church.

Because a lot of those people were brought in on a great big wide funnel, and when you start straining her down to discipleship, and following Christ, and living for Christ, and giving, and witnessing, how many parts of that? That's because you didn't come in right. And somebody wasn't honest with you at the beginning. And what I want to tell you tonight is we're going to examine a couple of the invitations of Christ, and I'm going to show you that he turned the funnel the other way.

He made it narrow at the beginning. And a Christian, a non-Christian, wants free from the rule and reign of Christ, and he gets his teeth and says, I love you. A true believer finds his freedom in the reign of Christ.

He finds his freedom. That's where he finds his freedom. Would you turn to me tonight to look at a couple of invitations of Christ, please? Luke chapter 9, just over a chapter from where we read.

We were reading in chapter 8. Over in chapter 9, I want to show you, and I'm asking myself, and I look back over my personal work and the people I've tried to talk to about the gospel, and I want to say at the beginning, I'm guilty of not being honest with people at the beginning. Now, I want you to notice verse 23, and this is not some after second or third or fourth invitation. This is an invitation of Christ to follow him.

And he said unto them all, this is at the beginning, this is the funnel now down at the narrow end first. And he said unto them all, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. That's at the beginning.

And then he gives why. He gives a reason. For whosoever shall save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

Sounds like double talk. Sounds like double talk, doesn't it? A young man tonight, mister, sir, lady, young woman, I look you in the eye tonight and I say this is the invitation of Christ. I say come, come to him.

But this is an invitation. Oh, you say, do you know what that may mean? Yes, I know what it may mean for somebody. Young man, this may mean you go to Africa or South America.

I don't know. It may not, but it may. You wouldn't be the first one.

You see this idea that there's a special kind of discipline and self-denial for preachers and missionaries and elders, but the rest of the people they can just kind of slide in on some other basis. No, dear. I'm sorry.

I'm talking about coming to Christ for salvation. Whether you come as a preacher or whether you come as a nice secretary in somebody's office or a young man or a father, this is the term that Christ invited men to come on. I think I may have shared with you once before.

I've got a great commentary on this verse. I used to read it and it looked like double talk to me. Whosoever shall save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

I was reading a missionary book and I got a commentary on this verse. The missionary said this and he'd got it from the Puritans. I found somebody else pointed out to me that he'd gotten it from the Puritans.

Anyhow, here's what he said about this. He says, this was the commentary on this verse that sounds like double talk. He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to receive what he cannot lose.

And as I think of that, I say, someday I'm going to lose my wife. I love her, but I'm going to lose her. That grim monster is going to come.

Someday you're going to lose your husband. Doesn't matter how much you say, I'm going to keep him, I'm going to hold him. No, dear, you're going to lose him.

Someday you're going to lose your children. Doesn't matter how much you say, I want him, I'm going to hold him. You're going to lose him.

Yes, that sweet little boy, that sweet little girl, that sweet husband, that sweet wife, you're going to lose them. Someday you're going to lose your money. I don't care what bank you have it in or which pocket you have it in.

I don't care how much you say, I'm going to hold on to it. You're going to lose it. Someday you're going to lose your position.

Someday you'll lose your home. Because that grim monster will come. And that's not something to use as an imaginary lever to get a moral decision.

That's a cold-blooded fact. That's a cold-blooded fact. Now, the verse says this.

Whosoever shall lose his life, whosoever shall save his life, shall lose it. Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. Someday I'm going to lose all this, what I just mentioned.

My family, my money, my position, my own life. Is a man a fool to give what he can't keep, and I can't keep any of those things? Is a man a fool to give what he can't keep to get what he can't lose? Huh? He made a pretty good deal. Didn't he? Why, sure.

And that's what the verses say. And I say that's one of the invitations of Christ, at the beginning. Would you turn to the end of the chapter, after 9? Let me show you another invitation of Christ.

Verse 57. I want to show you tonight, dear friend, hear this. I want to show you how honest Christ was with man.

That's my whole point tonight. And I'm saying that the true believer, the true believer, follows Christ with all the inconveniences that may follow. And I don't know what may follow.

But I want to show you this invitation. Verse 57. And it came to pass, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I'll follow you wherever you go.

If that had been our day, we'd have signed him up. In about two weeks, if he'd have been in a Baptist church, they'd have baptized him in the evening service. They'd have had him given his testimony at least

the next Sunday, especially if he'd have been from Hollywood or a big ball player or some big businessman.

They'd have had him given his testimony next Sunday. Boy, they'd have said, if he was dead, I'll follow you. And if he'd have been in a Presbyterian church, he'd probably have taken a little longer, but he'd have been an elder pretty soon.

They said, we're looking for you. We're looking for you. I'll follow you wherever you go.

But I say to you tonight that Jesus Christ was more honest than that. And I want to read you his answer to that man who said, I'll follow you wherever you go. And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.

Not a very good way to get customers, is it? Huh? You go to the 14th chapter, you find the same principle where he tells people to count the cost. Where he uses that illustration, a man doesn't go out to war against somebody until he anticipates the enemy. And verse 14 of Luke 8 that I was talking about tonight is exactly the same principle involved.

What happened? Well, they fell among thorns and they were, they've heard, they go forth, but as soon as a little tough going comes, they're ready to scam. Somebody goes, Boo! And the church says, Oh, I can't bear it! Gone. Cares? No, no.

My dear friends, I say one of the differences is that the true, false, temporary believer never closes with Christ and the inconveniences that may follow. In my short lifetime, I've seen some people who paid a great price. It may not make any much physical change in you to come to Christ as you are.

It may not make any change in your home. It may not mean that you're going to lose your mother. It may not mean that your father's going to throw you out of the house.

But I know, I know a fellow that that happened to. I helped him through school. A Jewish lad in Philadelphia who used to go by a mission for the Jews and finally got some Christian literature.

Now and again he'd get some, got interested, start asking about Jesus. Finally, he bowed to Israel's true Messiah. What did that mean for him? Oh, it wouldn't mean anything for you.

You won't get thrown out of the house. But what did that mean for my friend, Mr. Salmanson? I'll tell you what it meant. First of all, his father discouraged him from the New Testament.

Elijah I, that boy, read the New Testament through under the covers, with the covers over his head with a press button flashlight so that the light wouldn't go under the door. And if anybody, if he'd hear anything coming down the hall, he could take his finger off of the press button flashlight. But that's how he read the New Testament in his bed.

This isn't something I read out of a book. This happened 40 miles from here. Same principle, the invitation.

But it got so serious that one day, and he told me this with his own lips, that his father took off his belt. And he said, Son, in anger, it's Jesus Christ in that New Testament or it's your family. And that lad wandered down to the mission and told the people there what the problem was and they took him in and helped him.

Later, his parents tried to have him sworn insane by a Jewish psychiatrist who had been first Christian. So here they are in the courts. It got all the way to the courts where a Christian psychiatrist had to testify to his sanity for his mother and father.

That's not some story. That's what it cost him. Oh, did it cost him that? To be saved? No, nothing but the precious blood of Christ can save men.

And it won't cost you anything to be saved, but it may cost you anything to prove to your own heart and to the world that you are saved. But don't fear, dear. It won't cost you anything you don't have.

Don't get all worried. It won't cost you anything you don't have. That's the difference between the true and the bleak.

And there are inconveniences. If we'd have a testimony meeting right now and I'd ask the men here to stand up, what's it cost you to follow Christ? There would be men here to say, I had to turn away from that business deal because I was a Christian. There's men who say, I'd have to turn away from that because I was a Christian.

I couldn't do this because I was a Christian. Some of you couldn't marry somebody because you were a Christian. How can I look at young people in the faith knowing the consequences of closing with Christ as it's in the gospel? How can I look at young people in the faith knowing I've got some acquaintance that it means? That's what it meant.

How can I do differently? How can I look at a man, young man in the faith, medical profession or grave prospects for the legal profession and down in my soul I know that if he closes with Christ, not always. God has Christian lawyers. God has Christian doctors.

Thank God for them. But it may mean that. It's a possibility.

Some of you here tonight may know my bosom friend who's gone on to be with Jesus now. Great. Executive Theo McCulley.

His son Ed was a prudent, sharp law student. Top. Top.

Ed McCulley was a top student in college. Top student in law school. What did it mean for that father when he invited Ed to Christ? To come to Christ and close with Christ? What did it ultimately mean? You think a father doesn't love his son? Well, sure.

What did it mean for Ed McCulley's father continuing to be invited to Christ? What did it mean in this case? Well, I'll tell you. Those of you who know the story know what I'm going to say. It meant for Ed McCulley to leave law school, follow the Son of God, the orders of the Son of God, because he's the commander.

When you're his, he's your commander. What did it mean for Ed McCulley to follow him out of law school, follow him to the shores of South America, and there to precede his father in death with a spirited side? No, this isn't some fairy tale I'm telling you. This happened.

I know this father, know this family. This happened. And so I say I believe that Christ was more honest at the beginning than we are.

I really do. And I believe that some of the fruits that we're reaping today, right now, in this church and any church I'm in, my church, some of the fruits, say to somebody today, the wagons are coming in, the wagons are coming in, and they've got the fruit in them, the fruit that we've, the wagons are in. You look around in your church, wagons are coming in, we look at the fruit, it doesn't look very Christian to me.

People want to fuss with the fruit. No use fussing with the corn, the wheat, the kind of fruit you've had. My dear sir, Sunday school teacher, you'd better look at some kind of seeds you sell, because you see the seeds produce the fruit.

That's how you get, that's how you get wheat, you put a piece of seed, you put a little seed in the ground. And the seeds produce the fruit. Don't fight with the fruit, but check up on the kind of seeds.

I'm not going over any more invitations, that's enough. But you'd find out that Christ, our Lord, and I say to myself, and do you know something? I say this, it's hard to be honest with people spiritually. I look you in the eye tonight as a businessman and say I believe, honest.

I believe that it's easier to be honest in business than it is to be honest with people about their soul. One of the hardest things is to be honest with people about their soul. I believe it's easier.

Let me tonight just go to one more difference between the real and the spurious. I've covered three. The true believer closes with Christ without exception.

The believer wants lots of exceptions. The spurious believer. The true believer closes with Christ as he's offered in the gospel.

The spurious believer just wants one of the offices of Christ. The true believer wants Christ and all the inconveniences, whatever they be, that may follow. The spurious believer, Luke 8.14, he soon, or maybe not so soon, the cares, the riches, and the pleasures of this life choke him out and he finds he's phony.

Now one other difference between the real and the true believer. The real believer, false believer, doesn't have a changed heart. And you can counterfeit almost every Christian virtue.

That's right. You can counterfeit almost every Christian virtue. But you can't give yourself a new heart.

You can stop smoking. You can stop drinking. You can stop beating your wife.

It's hard, but you can. You can stop a lot of things. But you can't give yourself a new heart.

You can't give yourself a new heart. You know, in Acts 15, verse 9, there's an appeal to that very thing. There's an appeal to that very thing about trying to prove that some people were Christians.

Acts 15, Peter's argument for the Christians. In verse 9, and he said, and he put no difference. Or maybe it was policy.

And verse 7, And when they had been much disputing, Peter rose up and said unto the men, Men and brethren, know we not how that a good while ago God made a choice among us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel and believe and God which knoweth the heart bear them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost even as he did us. And, listen, now here's the thing, he appeals to one thing. And he put no difference between us and them purifying their hearts by faith.

That was the thing he appealed to, that they had a change of heart. Ah, sir, tonight, could I ask you, have you had a change of heart? Or you've just been playing church? Huh? I don't care how old you are, how young you are. I ask you if you have this mark of a true believer.

Has God in his mercy changed your heart? Huh? You know, each week, when you're here, or each month, or however often you have communion, you hear the pastor, usually, always, some dear pastor, do you refer to the New Testament in my blood? Do you hear something like this when he refers to the blood of Christ, the wine that's a symbol of his blood? Do you hear him say something like this? For this is my blood of the New Testament, or New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Do you know what the blessings of the New Covenant are? You've been going to communion long enough, it's about time you find out. I hope you know.

I don't want to scold you, but do you know what the blessings, do you know what the two blessings of the New Covenant really are? Well, they were promised. Let me show you where they were promised, and then let me tell you what they are, and then let me tell you the two problems they solved. The two blessings of the New Covenant.

If you look back in Ezekiel chapter 36, you'll find a promise, a reference, what God's going to do someday. He promised there this is a promise, Ezekiel chapter 36, verse 26 and 27. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.

And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh, verse 27, and I will put my spirit within you. Sir, lady, do you know anything about this new heart? And I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. Why? Because you want to.

Now, I want to turn you over to what I believe is a picture in the New Testament of a reference to the fulfilling of this New Covenant. Would you turn to Hebrews chapter, two verses I want to give you. Hebrews chapter 8, verse 10.

Hebrews chapter 8, verse 10. Verse 10 of chapter 8. For this is the covenant, and whenever you take that wine next time, you think of the blessings of the New Covenant. They fill two, solve two problems.

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people. Chapter 10, verse 16 and 17.

And here I want to show you the two blessings of the New Covenant. Now, let me tell you why I want to tell you about these blessings. Because these two blessings solve the greatest two problems that you have.

And let me tell you the greatest problem you have, whether you're saved or unsaved. The greatest problem every unconverted man or woman here has, you have two great, tremendous problems. And I'll tell you what they are.

You've got a bad record in heaven, and you've got a bad heart while you walk on earth. That's the two things. That's your two greatest problems.

All the deceit you've ever done, all the lies you've ever told, you've got a record. There's a record of it. You've got a bad record, and the reason you've got a bad record is because you've got a bad heart.

And that's what produced it. That's the two blessings, that's the two problems that men have, men and women. Now, what are the two blessings of the New Covenant? Let me read you.

They take care of these two awful problems. Notice, verse 16, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, verse 16, I will put my laws in their hearts, and in their minds will I write them, verse 17, that's one blessing, a new heart on earth. Something happens to your heart on earth, and notice, verse 17, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

That takes care of the record, doesn't it? Now, the two blessings of the New Covenant are right there in those two verses, and this is what they are, a new record in heaven and a new heart on earth. And I want to tell you something tonight and I don't want you to miss it. Don't you go around telling people that the blood of Christ took care of your record if the Holy Ghost hadn't done something to your heart on earth.

Get that? Don't go around talking about how you're justified before God by the blood of Christ. If the Holy Ghost hadn't given you a new heart on earth, because they're both blessings of the New Covenant, inseparable. Oh, you want them in more theological language? Well, I'll tell you what it is.

I'll tell you what I'm trying to say. The two blessings of the New Covenant is this justification by faith alone, the blood of Christ, sanctification by the Spirit of God. And don't you tell anybody you're justified if there's no evidence of sanctification on earth.

Here are two problems, two blessings of the New Covenant. One of the differences, that's the last difference I mentioned, between the real and the spurious believer is just that. It's just that, a new heart.

The true believer has a new heart. And it's an awful thing, young people, to try, to struggle, to fight, to live a Christian life when you don't have a changed heart. It's a battle, if you don't have a changed heart.

What are these differences, just by way of review? One, the true believer wants Christ without exception. The spurious believer, many exceptions. He wants Christ and his other lovers.

Two, the true believer wants Christ as he's offered in the gospel, prophet, priest, and king. Three, the true believer wants Christ and all the inconveniences that may follow. He says, we'll forego all, but we won't forego Christ.

He'll say with Paul, I count all things but dung that I may win Christ. He won't forego Christ. The spurious believer folds at some of those things, the care, the riches, the pleasures of this world.

The fourth thing, the difference between a real and a true believer is, the true believer not only talks about his record being straight in heaven, but he has a new heart. Well, that's it. That's it.

Has God by spirit given you a new heart? Do you know what the old Puritans used to ask two questions? When people came in the church, we asked one. Or we may ask it different ways. But we usually are concerned about, what did Christ do for you? So they rattled off, Christ died for my sins, according to the scriptures.

Wonderful. That's their creed. And I wouldn't want to eliminate that question.

It's important for you tonight to know what Christ has done for you on the cross. That's one question. What has Christ done for you? But they always ask a second question.

You know what it was? What has Christ done in you? New record. And the true believer is somebody who God by spirit has done something inside that manifests itself on the outside. Let's go home tonight without singing.

Will that be all right, Pastor? I kept you a little long. Let's stand and be dismissed. Our Father, give this people the discernment that they need to know that which is of truth in heaven and to recognize that which is of man whose breath is in his nostrils and seal to their heart, O Father, by your spirit, the truth of heaven.

We cry out, O Lord, change us, and we shall be changed. Turn us, and we shall be turned. Hear our cry tonight and our prayer for men and women and young people that they might have those marks in their heart and in their life and leave them with no question about whether they are spurious or real.

Grant your spirit to do that holy work for your dear name's sake and for the good of thy church. Amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/15/SID15565.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ernest-c-reisinger/spurious-believers-2/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**