

The Biblical Evangelism of the Westminster Confession #2

by Ernest C. Reisinger

The sermon emphasizes the importance of biblical evangelism and the need to distinguish between true and false believers, highlighting the characteristics of true believers and the dangers of false believers.

Duration: 59:09

Scripture: Luke 14:27-28, Luke 14:31, John 8:31, Acts 20:27, 1 Corinthians 2:4, 1 Corinthians 2:13

Topics: "Evangelism"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of addressing the needs of the audience and applying the teachings of the Bible to their lives. He emphasizes the necessity of evangelism and the biblical doctrine of assurance. The preacher also shares a personal experience of being deceived by someone who only told him partial truths. He concludes by expressing his frustration in not knowing how much to touch on in his sermon, comparing it to a bishop who lost his train ticket but was recognized by the conductor.

Transcript

May I just express my appreciation to your leaders for this invitation here. It's always good to come to Westminster again, even if it's for a visit, not necessarily to speak, but to see some of those who labor in the gospel here to instruct you. I am grateful for Dr. Miller and his interest in evangelism since he's been at this seminary.

I may be wrong, but it seems to me I've heard more notes on evangelism since he's here, and I thank God for him and for all your faculty and for this great institution. So I'm glad to be here today with you. I want to try to talk about some subjects of biblical evangelism this morning that I hope are pertinent to our day, to our need.

You know, there's a great question in the old catechism, and I hope you young preachers don't miss this question. It might be as good as most of the, or much of the instruction you get on preaching, but there's a great question. I think it has some of the most valuable things in it for preaching in the old catechism that I've ever found.

It's so comprehensive, and the question is this. You may not know it's there if you haven't looked lately. How is the word of God to be preached by them that are called thereunto? How many of you ever seen that question in the larger catechism? Well, a few of you.

Thank God for that. Well, listen to the answer. They that are called to labor in the ministry of the word are to preach sound doctrine diligently in season and out of season.

That's number one. Plainly, this is number two, not in enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and power. Number three, faithfully making known the whole counsel of God for, and this is what I want to particularly refer to, wisely applying themselves to the necessity and the capacity of the hearers.

Now, that would be a great thing for young preachers to get a hold of that point. Wisely, it's to be preached wisely and wisely, it says, applying themselves to the necessity and the capacity of their hearers. I remember once going into a church.

It was quite dead, and there was about 12 people there on a Sunday night, and the subject was the historicity of 2 Peter, and I thought if there's any crowd that needs that, they sure needed to hear something about, follow me and I'll make you fishers of But it's applying themselves to the necessity of the hearers, and it goes on a few more things velocity. I want to try to speak to the necessities of our day, to what we see in our day concerning evangelism. I would love to have time to cover evangelism and the biblical doctrine of assurance.

It's a very important thing. It would put an end to all these canned methods of evangelism. It would put an end to them totally.

Now, it wouldn't put an end to the whole system, but it would put an end to that aspect of the system where they decision people on the spot and give them assurance that they belong to Christ, all in about 3 minutes or 5 minutes or some of them real long. It might take them 20 minutes, but all that in one 20 minutes. Well, if they knew the bible doctrine of assurance, it would end all of that altogether.

I'd like to have time to do that. However, I won't. I won't have time.

I feel somewhat like that. Last night, I had a terrible time with my trying to get my lips wet. My saliva glands must have stopped last night.

I had a terrible time, and today I'm kind of frustrated because I just don't know how much to touch. I feel like the bishop who lost his ticket on the train, and when the conductor came by, he was feverishly trying to find his ticket, and finally they went by and said, that's all right, bishop, we'll be back in a minute. And they came back when he collected the tickets for the rest of the train.

He came back again, and he was feverishly still trying to, and by this time, he's really getting worked up. That's all right, bishop, we'll be back. So when he'd come back the third time, the bishop was really broken out in sweat, and I mean the bubbles of perspiration were his head, and he said, that's all right, bishop, we know you.

He said, we ride this train all the time. We know all about you. That's quite all right.

You just, you could pass again, or we know you have the ticket. And he still kept feverishly going for the ticket. He said, but the problem is, I don't know where I'm going.

So I feel somewhat like that today. I hope I know where I'm going. Well, let me announce at least what I'm going to try to do this morning.

I've, as a layman, did some itinerant work, if there is such a thing in the Bible. I suppose there is, in some degree, anyhow. I don't know about these itinerant preachers, however, but, and much less lay preachers.

There's only one thing more dangerous than being a preacher, and that's being a lay preacher. That's what Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones said, and I agree. Uh, but in going from church to church, and meeting some of the wonderful men of God that I've met over the years, and had some wonderful times of fellowship and devotion and prayer with them, it's been a, it's been a high privilege that I've had to do that.

Some preachers never get out to meet many other preachers, even in the whole course of their ministry, and that is to live with them a week or something like that. And I have met some godly men in that course of 10 years about, uh, and had some very intimate conversations about Christianity and about their church, things that wouldn't be proper for them to discuss about their church publicly. But not infrequently men will say to me, who, people who have a real concept of biblical conversion, biblical salvation, say that they wonder how many people in their congregation really give Bible evidence of being converted.

I had one man that preaches to 700 people every Sunday, he did then, I don't, I hope it's more now, maybe less, maybe he preached some of them out, I don't know. But I remember very vividly, we started a week of meetings there, eight days, and he said, he said, Ernie, he said, I really don't believe 25% of my people give Bible evidence of being converted. Bible evidence.

He didn't say they weren't converted, they were, he said, they do not give Bible evidence of, of, of conversion. Two weeks or three weeks ago, I was in Alabama in a Presbyterian church for a week and lived with the pastor, a wonderful young preacher, a man of prayer. And during that week, he expressed to me that he wondered if any of his elders were converted.

Now that's a fact. I'm not God, I'm just telling you what he said. I didn't say they weren't converted.

Now, it's in this area that I want to touch today, because the Bible does have something to say about spurious faith. It uses different terms to express it. I'm not suggesting, and I want to say this at the outset, it's not for the preacher or for me or for other Christians to decide who is phony and who's not.

I mean, unless it's a, a blatant open confession that they deny things. I'm not suggesting that we can go around and decide who's spurious believer and who's a genuine believer. That's not the answer.

The answer is the Bible does have something to say about spurious faith, spurious believers, and some of the characteristics. And it also has a great deal to say about those who are in possession of real Bible faith. Because of that, that I want to try this morning to, and it's important in evangelism, to at least have some idea of this distinction.

And I believe as this man I told you about a moment ago, who preaches to 700 people, by the end of the week, because I was preaching on self-examination, he was kind of a little disturbed. And I remember one day he said to me, what do you want me to do? Stand up every Sunday morning and tell them they're not converted or they're not Christians? I said, no, doctor. I said, I wouldn't suggest that.

He said, well, what should I do? I said, well, I have a Bible. And I said, I read it now and again. And I said, in there, it tells me what a Christian is meant to be and to do.

And I said, I believe it's the duty of godly preachers to hold up before men and women what is a Christian and what he's meant to be and to do. Are you a Christian? That's not trying to play god, but that is trying to expose and expound what a Christian is. Now, why do I say this? Well, because of a passage of scripture like 1 Corinthians 15, 1 and 2, where it says they believed in vain.

That's not true faith. They believed in vain. Or James 2, 19, where it says the devils believe and trembled.

Some of you haven't even trembled. You haven't believed to that extent. Did you have any trembling? Phoenix believed something, because when Paul pressed upon him the great message of the gospel, the Bible says he trembled.

He was affected. So he had to believe something. In Matthew chapter 8, verse 28 and 29, we find the confession of the demons.

They have a very good confession. Did you ever know that? That the demons have a good confession of faith. If you look at verse 29, they believed in the person of Christ.

We know that thou art the Son of God. They knew that they had a good confession. They believed in the person of Christ.

Not only that, they believed in the power of Christ. They said, art thou come to torment us before the time. They believed he had power.

So they had a good confession. In fact, it sounds like they were even straight on prophecy. I'm not, but it sounds like they were, because they said, art thou come to torment us before the time.

So maybe they were even straight on prophecy. I don't know. Luke 8, chapter 8, verse 13, it talks about those who believe for a while, but in the time of temptation they fall away.

James chapter 2, verse 17 and verse 26, it talks about dead faith. Well now, if there's such a thing as dead faith, devil's faith, vain faith, then we ought to have some idea, at least the Bible can't be so vague that there wouldn't be some idea about some of the characteristics of these two kinds of faith, real genuine faith and the others. I think it gets down to experimental religion.

Now, the reason this is important in evangelism, in my opinion, is that we would be very careful in the area of us giving other people assurance. Not that we don't tell them assurance is there. Not that we don't take the Bible position and tell them to give diligence to make their calling election sure, because joy comes from knowing.

The joy of a Christian life is in the aspect of assurance. How much joy can I have about the Christian life if I'm not sure I'm a Christian? So the joy of it comes from knowing I'm a Christian. And I'm not going to run out witnessing to anybody and say, oh, come and be a Christian, it's wonderful, it's great.

And they say, are you a Christian? I say, well, I don't know. You see, there's a very close relationship between joy and assurance. That's why we see it so vividly set out in John's epistle.

There's a very close relationship. There's a close relationship between assurance and service. When David is in that great psalm where he's confessing his sin with Bathsheba and his murder of Uriah, when he's in the midst of that great confession, you know the part where he said, Lord, bestow unto me the joy of thy salvation.

Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted to thee. So there was some relationship between that joy of God's salvation that he was pleading for and him instructing sinners, because he said, then, then will he do it. So this morning I want to try to set before you a few of the differences.

I didn't say who they were, but some of the differences between biblical faith, shaving faith. This is not all, it's not a comprehensive or an inclusive type of a message, not even any attempt at that. But there are some differences.

This morning I'd like to try to set before you a couple of those differences. And the first is, the first I suggest is this. First, the Bible does teach it, that there's a believing that's less than believing unto salvation.

I did give you some references. Let me just give you a couple more cases. John chapter 2, verse 23 and 24.

We find that when there is a case where it says, many believed on him, but Jesus did not commit himself to them. Well, if Christ has not committed himself to us, it's certainly not saving faith. Jesus did not commit himself to them.

It's not only me committing myself to Christ, but it's Christ committing himself to us in all of his work. Then there's the passage in John 12. Nevertheless, among the chief rulers, also many believed on him.

But because of the Pharisees, they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue, for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. So we have it all through the Bible. And of course, the most vivid example is Acts chapter 8. This is very embarrassing for a Baptist, because he not only was a believer, but he received believers baptism, believe it or not.

And he still was lost. I'm not going into that fellow this morning, but he certainly had no reason to believe that he was a Christian, or been savingly joined to Christ. Well, the question is, not so much does the Bible teach this.

I think that's rather simple to establish. But the question is, well, what's the difference? And that's what I want to try to share with you a little while this morning, because it's vital to evangelism, especially in the area of us giving people assurance. The first difference I'd suggest is this.

The false believer, the spurious believer, that's the fellow who's not genuine, the phony, believe it or not, they want Christ. So they wouldn't be a believer at all. They'd be an unbeliever.

So the spurious believer wants Christ, but not without exceptions. This is the difference. The true believer, there is that time in his life when he comes to Christ, and he wants Christ without any buts, without any ands, and without any ifs.

Not this idea, I want Christ, but I'm not going to steal. No, you're not going to be saved. Don't you tell people they are either.

I want Christ if, and I want Christ if, if, if, if. No, you're not a candidate for salvation in that sense. You see, the spurious believer wants Christ, all right, but he wants his other lovers likewise.

Now, I don't question that we as true believers have some buts and ands and ifs as we go along the pilgrim way, but there must come that time when my heart is so subdued that Christ and Christ is so beautifully set before my soul that I want Christ without exception. You see, there's this idea that people want the grace of Christ, but they'll have nothing to do with his government, and that's not saving faith, just to want his grace and not want his government. It's like the prodigal son.

He wanted his father's goods, but he didn't want his father's government. That's the difference. The spurious believer wants the benefits of the cross.

He loves to have you tell him, because he's a believer, he loves to have you tell him about the benefits of the cross, but don't talk to him about bowing to the implications of the crown. That's something else, and that's a distinction between if he just wants the benefits of the cross. He says he's in the kingdom.

Oh yes, he's in the kingdom. He's a believer, but he's not subject to the king. He wants the crown at the end of the way, but not the narrow robe that leads to it.

They want this big free gift that people are huckstering off. The big free gift, salvation. But what we must also tell men in evangelism, yes, it's a free gift, but it must be received with empty hands.

That's the difference. And when you tell the spurious believer, oh, it's free, but empty your hands, that's letting him in without repentance. There's no such salvation.

They don't mind trusting, but don't talk to them about turning. They want heaven, but not the narrow road that leads there. They want the straight, not the straight gate, they want heaven, but they don't want to go through the straight gate that leads to it.

That's the spurious believer. But you see, the true believer, he wants Christ without any exception. It's also a gospel of behavior as well as a gospel of belief.

True believers see Christ as the treasure hid in a field, as we have it in that great text in those little short parables in Matthew chapter 13. The true believer sees Christ as the treasure hid in a field, Matthew chapter 13, verse 44. Here's the picture.

Here it is. And I just call your attention in those passages. And again, the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hid in a field.

When a man hath found, he rejoiced, and for joy thereof he goes and sells all that he has, and he buys that field, that salvation. I want that field at any cost. You see it in the next parable as well.

Again, Jesus said, the kingdom of heaven is like an unto a merchant man seeking goodly pearls, who when he hath found one pearl of great price. I need not waste any time telling you what that is. When he found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had and bought that.

That's the principle that I'm talking about. And the true believer says he wants Christ without exception. And you'll not be saved on any other grounds.

Anything less than that is less than Bible faith. Anything less than that is not saving faith. And then the second thing, the difference that I'd call to your attention, is this.

The false believer never closes with Christ. If I could use it in that expression, he never comes to Christ in all of his offices as he's offered in the gospel. What do I mean by that? Well, I'd like to catechize you again this morning.

You see in the old catechism and in the Bible itself, you don't see anything about people trusting Jesus as their savior. Do you ever know that? There's not a line in the Bible that has any idea that it even implies that. It implies that principle.

Now don't misunderstand. It's a very important point that I wouldn't want to be misunderstood on. It's certainly proper for us to sing about him as our savior, to present to the world as a savior, to talk about him as our savior, and to know him as our savior.

The danger is, as when we take this away from who the savior is, when the angels announced his coming into the world, they said, unto you this day is born in the city of David a savior who is Christ the Lord. When the apostles preached, they preached Christ Jesus the Lord. Second Corinthians, we're your servants for Jesus' sake.

They preached Christ Jesus the Lord. Colossians 2, 6, when sinners receive Christ, they receive Christ Jesus the Lord. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.

That's the language of the Bible. And that's the language of the old catechism. And what's Mr. Confessions? Why is it in the whole confession? In the whole catechism, you wouldn't find any reference to anybody trusting Jesus as their savior.

Not a single line in the whole catechism. And I said to somebody this morning, when I held it up, I said, this is not the Bible. This is just the best expression of it.

Not a line in the Bible like that. This is the language you get there, and I'm going to catechize you now. Because I want to make the point, this is one of the salient differences between true believer and a false believer.

The true believer never closes with Christ in all of his offices. That is as he's offered in the Bible. Catechism question number 23.

What offices does Christ execute as our Redeemer? Answer. Christ as our Redeemer executes the office of prophet, preached, and king, both in the estate of his humiliation and exaltation. He executes the office of king.

Question 24. How does Christ execute the office of a prophet? Christ executes the office of a prophet in revealing to us by his word and spirit the will of God for our salvation. Question 25.

How does Christ execute the office of a priest? Christ executes the office of a priest in his offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, to reconcile us to God, and make continual intercession for us. That's the work of the priest, sacrifice and intercession. The next question, 26.

How does Christ execute the office of a king? Christ executes the office of a king in subduing us to himself. The sinner must not only want the sacrifice, but he must be subdued to Christ by subduing us to himself in ruling and defending us, in restraining and conquering all his enemies and ours. First, you see, he's anointed king to rule over all things.

He's the priest who procured pardon and peace by the blood of his cross, and maintains that peace by his intercession. He's a prophet to be a wise teacher and counselor in all cases. Now, what office does the false believer want? It's obvious.

He doesn't mind having a priest, but don't talk to me about that business. He doesn't mind having a priest, but he doesn't want to be instructed in the way of righteousness. He's not even keenly pursuing it.

Now, don't misunderstand me. I know there's a lot of people that are Christians who are not familiar with this catechism language, but they are familiar with it and experience in their heart the principles involved here. I remember once I was speaking at a Presbyterian young people's conference, and a young girl about 18 came to me who hadn't been catechized.

She had not come up through that particular communion, and I was speaking about the prophet, the priest, and the king. And she said to me, Mr. Risinger, she said, I believe I'm a Christian, but she said, I never heard of that. And she said, I never trusted Christ as my prophet, priest, and king.

And I said to her, let me ask you a couple of questions. I said, when you came to Christ, did you have a desire to be taught of him, to know his will, to be instructed by him? She said, yes. I said, did you desire for him to rule your life and reign over you? He said, yes.

I said, well, I believe your experience is better than your understanding, and maybe tonight your understanding caught up with your experience. And so bear in mind that I'm not saying that everybody that doesn't have this particular language doesn't have it in principle or in experience, because they may. But I say to you tonight, don't miss this point, either.

This morning, excuse me. Don't miss this point. What office does a spurious believer want? Obviously, he doesn't mind having this personal savior business.

And you know, we're guilty, the best of preachers are guilty sometimes, even who know his principle, in their implications in proclamation, and their implications in witnessing, and their implications as they teach. We must be careful of the implications. Now, if you read, this is, this shouldn't be strange to you.

If you read Charles Hodge, in volume three, you'll find that he talks about speculative or dead faith. You'll find that he talks about temporary faith, and this is what he calls it, quote, nothing is more common than for the gospel to produce a temporary impression, more or less deep and lasting. Those thus impressed believe, but having no root in themselves, sooner or later they fall away.

He's describing temporary faith. Now, if that's a possibility, if that's a possibility, how can I unequivocally say to any particular individual, young or old, in evangelism, that they are positively unequivocally saved? I'm talking about me saying it for them. Robert Dabney and Charles Hodge thought he was the greatest theologian of his day, and of course, Dabney thought Charles Hodge was, so I don't know, it might have been just a little, I can't tell that, but at least, at least Charles Hodge had a great opinion of Robert Dabney, and I personally believe he's one of the two greatest Presbyterian theologians in the Southern Church ever produced.

The other, and he was professor of theology at Union Seminary, and the other one, of course, is Thornwell, and there's quite a debate even among the Southern Presbyterians who they consider, and it's not, it's not, they don't have any unanimity on that subject. Well, Dabney was also the chaplain for Stonewall Jackson, but in his theology, which is hard to come by, he mentions four kinds of faith, historical, temporary, saving, and miraculous. Now, I want to just read a little bit on this point.

He said true faith, now get this, this is years ago, and if it was true then, it's a thousand times more true now, because we're so saturated with cynicism that it's worse now than it was in his day. True faith embraces Christ substantially in all of his offices. This must be of prime importance, and then referring to the danger of teaching and preaching only the priestly or perpetuatory work, Dabney says, this is a warning and a danger about just preaching the priestly work of Christ, he said this, this teaching, referring to just preaching the priestly work, this teaching is far too common, at least by implication, in our pulpits.

It results is temporary faith which embraces Christ for importunity only instead of deliverance from sin. Dabney, referring to the shorter catechism says, our catechism defines faith as embracing Christ as he's offered in the gospel, and he's never offered as a priest alone. He's never offered as a priest apart from his prophetic office.

These are his offices, these are his offices, and he's never, you don't divide his offices. He that hath the son hath life, and when you have the son you have all his offices. He can't be picky and choosy, and that's what he's talking about.

He says our catechism defines faith as embracing Christ as he's offered in the gospel, and just further the quote, the tendency of human selfishness is ever to degrade Christ's sacrifice into a mere expedient for bestowing impunity. The pastor can never be too explicit in teaching this, in teaching, in teaching this is the travesty of the gospel, and that no one rises above the faith of the stony ground here until he embraces Christ as he is, until he embraces Christ as a deliverer from depravity and sin as well as hell. I was going to read that question from the shorter catechism, but I won't.

Let me read a quote from Spurgeon. You'll condescend to listen to a Baptist quote, won't you? Spurgeon in warning his students said this, this is a quote, if the professed convert distinctly and deliberately declares that he knows the Lord's will but does not mean to attend to it, you are not to pamper his presumptions. It is your duty to assure him that he's not saved.

Do not suppose that the gospel is magnified or God is glorified by going to the worldling and telling them that they are saved at this moment by simply accepting Christ as their Savior while they are wedded to their idols and their hearts still in love with sin. If I do so, I tell them a lie. I pervert the gospel.

I insult Christ and I turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. Spurgeon went on to say it is interesting to notice that the apostles preach the Lordship of Christ. The word Savior only occurs twice in the Acts of the Apostles.

On the other hand, it is amazing to notice that the title Lord is mentioned 92 times, the Lord Jesus 13 times, the Lord Jesus Christ 6 times in the same book. The gospel is, says Spurgeon, believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Matthew Henry, in his introduction to the New Testament, now I know it's not so good to say Matthew Henry around seminaries because he's not very critical.

It's kind of old English and all that sort of thing. I don't usually mention him in seminaries, but I find these fellows, make me some of these preachers after they've been out about 10 years, they've learned a great lesson that God didn't call them to feed giraffes, but sheep. And then they turned back to old Matthew Henry again.

In his introduction to the New Testament, Matthew Henry says this, all the grace contained in this book, referring to the New Testament, is owing to Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. And unless we consent to him as our Lord, we can expect no benefit by him as our Savior. Now, you see, all these heretical doctrines of the second blessing and the divided Christ, you trust Christ as your Savior at one time and the Lord at another time, and all these second blessing things, I don't care what shade they take or what form they take, they're all as a result of faulty evangelism.

Because these people make a profession of faith, the church calls them Christians, the preacher calls them Christians, their friends call them Christians, but they don't act like Christians. And so we have to get them to come down front for something else. Well, the problem with him is, he trusts Christ as his Savior, but he doesn't know Christ as his Lord.

That's a travesty. That's a contradiction of terms. That's wicked.

It deceives sinners. And all these things, bar none, every one, is a result of faulty, bad evangelism. Catechism tells us that we must receive Christ as he's offered in the gospel.

The only way he's offered is as a mediator. And as a mediator, he's the Lord with three principal offices as prophet, priest, and king. And the true believer says, I want a Savior.

I want somebody to instruct me. I want a king to rule over me. And the spurious believer says, I'd like to have a Savior.

I don't want to go to hell. Who wants to go to hell anyhow? And so you get him to nod to Jesus and get him on your roll. And he's in a Baptist church, you have him given, you baptize him in the evening service and give his testimony next week.

That's evangelism. And it has a very pertinent part of it, to be sure that the Christ we preach is the one of the New Testament, the one who's prophet, priest, and king of his church. And you don't get in by just tipping your hat to him and all that.

Well, that's the second difference between a true believer and a false believer, is the true believer wants Christ as he's offered in the Bible. The spurious believer says, I don't mind having a Savior, but don't talk to me about those other things. That's a distinct difference.

Now, I'm not saying who they are. That's something else. That comes under God's business.

That doesn't come under the head of our business to decide who they are in every case, or any case, maybe. That's God's business. But it is our business to set before them what that is and what's involved.

And that leads right into the next point. And that's another difference. The false and the temporary believer never comes to Christ and receives Christ, or closes with Christ, and all the inconveniences that follow.

And there are some. This idea that Christ solves all your problems when you become a Christian is a lie. He creates them problems.

He creates as many as he solves. They're blessed. But that business of coming to Christ and to solve all your problems, like he's a psychological grandmother or something.

No, sir, he creates some problems. I know some homes are divided over Christ today, right now. Not something I read in the history of the Bible.

I know homes that are divided over Christ. I met a boy who was thrown out of his home over Christ. He's a Jewish lad.

Years ago I met him. Helped him through school over Christ. I tell you, when he came to Christ, it didn't solve all his problems.

It created a problem he never had before. There isn't a man or a boy or young man or young woman in this building this morning. If you're living for Christ, it cost you something.

It's not easy to be a Christian in school, not even in seminary, I suppose. Much more so out where you don't have any fellowship. Christ causes some problems.

Well, the temporary believer never closes with Christ with those inconveniences that follow. They want Christ, but not the cost. They don't mind this little gospel hairline, but they're not like those disciples who said we left all to follow thee.

And I must say here at this point, and may the Lord forgive me, and I hope he forgives you. I haven't always seen this point, and I've not always been as honest as people, and I believe right here's another place in the evangelist. We must be as honest as Christ was with people at the outset.

We must be honest with them at the beginning. Instead of just trying to think of getting more statistics on our role. Mr. Crowley last night talked about the church.

I say amen from my heart to all he said. That's it. A holy life.

A church. Pastoring people. That's it.

It lives different. But if that's true, and I believe it with all my heart, then we got to be a little honest with them at the beginning, and we wouldn't have our churches loaded, loaded with people who give no Bible evidence of salvation. That's what these young people, that Mr. Crowley, that's what they don't like.

He mentioned it last night. I've talked to some, they say don't talk to me about those God words. They call them the God words.

I'm not interested in God words. Not God's word, but God words. They're God words.

It's all at the bottom of it. Because our people, our churches are full of people who do not give Bible evidence of being converted. And I think we do them great harm to keep on telling them they are.

When down in our heart, if we read our Bible, we'll know they don't give Bible evidence of it. Now, I don't suggest that we get up every Sunday morning and tell them they're not saved and all this kind of thing. No, no, no.

I think it's terrible to drive people to despair. But we can err the other way. We can err if we count them all out.

It would be terrible. But we err just as much when we count them all in. Neither is necessary.

We're not God. Well, let me come to this difference. I say it comes back to us by not being honest, because if we're a little more honest at the beginning about this business.

You see, I believe true evangelism involves integrity. And integrity in two particular areas. And one is at the outset, and the other is in the area of assurance.

Giving people assurance. It takes Bible integrity. And it's harder to be honest with people spiritually.

I was in business 20 years before I retired. And I say this thoughtfully, not off the top of my head. It's harder to be honest with people spiritually.

And it is to be honest in business. It's harder. It's harder.

It's hard to be honest with people spiritually. But I'll tell you, Jesus was. Paul was.

And may God help us that our integrity may increase in this area. Now let me just show you how honest Christ was at the outset. Just look at a couple of his invitations.

You see, in what these second work of grace people do, they take these invitations to discipleship. And they say, well, they were Christians. Now he's invited them to be disciples.

Well, the disciples were called Christians because they were following Christ. And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch. Why were they called Christians? Because they were following Christ.

So we're disciples as long as we live. As long as we follow Christ. Jesus defined a disciple, best definition given.

I don't have to turn to any theological books. What is a disciple? John 8. You shall know the truth. If you continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed.

And you shall know the truth. The truth shall make you free. If you continue in my word.

That's a disciple. Luke 8. Chapter 3, verse 32 or somewhere around there. But I want to show you, not only did our Lord preach it, but he practiced it.

Take the invitations of discipleship. You know the chapters. I needn't turn to you.

Luke 8, Luke 14, where he said, let a man count the cost. This is at the beginning. He said, a man doesn't start to build a building or build a tower unless he anticipates that he has enough money to finish it.

He said, he doesn't go to war with a little army against a great big army. He anticipates the strength of the enemy. What's he saying? Well, if you read the parable, it comes right there.

So is everyone that comes after me. He's talking about coming after him. I say Christ was honest and we must be honest in evangelism.

So let me just show you how keenly honest he was, not in a general way, but in a specific way. I think that's specific enough, but here's something a little more vivid. Luke chapter 9, verse 57, it says this.

And it came to pass as they went away, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I'll follow thee whithersoever thou goest. Boy, oh boy, I'm looking for you, buddy. I'm looking for you.

I'll follow. Boy, oh boy, we'll have him in by, we'll sure, looking for you. We've been all over this town looking for you.

I'll follow you. That's the kind of fellow I'm looking for. And if he'd have been one of these half converted Hollywood stars that still have most of Hollywood in them, they'd have had him parading all over the country, giving his testimony.

Or if he'd have been one of these big Christian athletes who live in open rebellion against God's holy day, they'd have paraded him all over the country, giving his testimony. Or if he'd have been a big successful businessman, made a lot of money, he'd go on bragging about how he trusted Jesus and got rich. That's evangelism of our day.

That's the result of phineism. That's the result of having at least a semi-Pelagian view of man. Christ was more honest.

I want to tell you, he didn't say, come on over, we'll get you baptized tonight. I'll follow you wherever you go. Jesus said unto him, foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have their nests, but the son of man has nowhere to lay his head.

Not a very good way to get customers. But it's honest. It's honest.

It's honest. I know when you deal with young people, my heart bleeds. I stand up there and look at those young people in our church in high school and college.

I look at them every Sunday. Some of them don't make a profession of Christ. And I look at them and try to invite them the best way I know how to invite them to Christ.

But down in my heart I know that if they come to Christ in a saving way, it may mean for some of those girls, no husband. It's meant that to some others. It may mean to that young man who looks like a real candidate for the law, it may mean something else.

To live on a poor preacher's wages, it might mean that. These men that teach you in this seminary, with their education, the amount of years they put in, and what they have upstairs, and they wouldn't be here in the business world with the same amount of education unless they'd be making 50 times more money. It costs them something to teach in this seminary.

A lady said to me once, she was trying to get her out to church. She got her out a few times, and she says, I like your preacher. He said, if he just didn't get paid for preaching.

I said, get paid? I said, he pays us about \$20,000 a year to preach. Didn't you know that? She said, does he really? I said, yeah. I said, he was on the dean's list in his school.

He's got four years of college, three years of seminary. I said, that's seven years. I said, the people that were in his class that were half as bright as he is, they're making about \$30,000 a year now.

He's not making \$10,000. So I figure he's paying us about \$20,000 a year to preach. Well, what am I saying? I'm saying this, that to come after Christ in a saving way, it costs something.

There isn't a young man in this seminary, if he's real, that's costing him something, and it hadn't even begun yet. And further, I'm saying that Jesus Christ was honest at the outset. That's evangelism.

You know, we have it. We're like this. I like to illustrate like a great big funnel.

Our churches, we have a great big funnel. And boy, if we can just get them in the end of that thing, we got them. And then we start bearing down on them on discipleship and consecration and a thousand other things.

We start trying to squeeze them down through the little end of that funnel. And boy, they kick and squeal like stuck pigs. Let me tell you something.

Jesus turned the funnel around. That's right. He made it narrow at the outset, and then they had liberty when they got in.

Liberty of Christ that set them free. Real liberty, real Holy Ghost liberty, real Bible liberty, all the liberty they want. You know, I tried to find some principles on follow-up work in the New Testament, and I've been pressed on that thing, and I haven't found much.

You know why? They did all the follow-up work at the beginning, and when somebody got saved, he did the following. You didn't have to run around, won't you please come to church, would you please come to prayer meeting, wouldn't you like, oh, wouldn't it be nice if you'd give a little bit of something and try to get into their pocketbook and all that foolishness. Follow-up, follow-up, follow-up, follow-up.

There's no such thing in the New Testament. Oh yes, we instruct and we teach to the day we die. There is growing in grace, but I tell you, it's a million miles from teaching and instructing and people growing in grace and following up, trying to twist their arm to get them out to church.

I might get fired in my little church someday. You know, I visited people going to church about three times. They said, well, did you visit so-and-so? I said, no, I was over there, and I'm not going back again.

I said, until they come out to church. Come to church every three months. I said, there's people I gotta see that might be interested.

They might get saved. They might be converted. No, no.

What's the point? The point is this, that the true believer follows Christ with all the inconveniences that follow. My dear, one of my dear friends who's going home to heaven now, businessman, had a son. He loved him much.

The boy had all the marks of a lawyer. The father wanted him to be a lawyer, not first, but that was the goal. He was in a big law school.

The boy was a Christian. Come to Christ. The father wanted him to come to Christ.

But that father did not know that involved in that coming to Christ was a call to that shrewd, sharp, young, potential lawyer out of law school, South America. And there he died with a lance in his side trying to serve Jesus. And I look at that young man in my congregation, and I know, because I read the Bible, that it may mean South America.

May not. May mean law. We need some good Christian lawyers.

May mean law. May mean a doctor. But it may mean South America.

That man was Theo McCulley that I just referred to. One of the men that I love dearly. You know, it reminds me, when I think about this cost business, I don't, I don't usually tell this around little children, because I don't want to encourage them to run away from home.

But I, I left home when I was 16 to join the Navy. And I, I, I got to there, and the recruiting office examined me very carefully. I guess he went through the motions.

But I think he knew I was lying my age as I look back on it now. But anyhow, they turned me down. I couldn't get in.

He said I didn't have the proper bite. Now, something wrong. That's right.

Well, years later, and several years later, the war came on. And I remember I was really enamored by this Navy. I used to love the Navy.

I'd see a billboard with a picture of a sailor on a ship. I'd stop. A little boy, you know, Navy, Navy, Navy.

That's all I wanted was the Navy. And I remember asking this old recruiting officer, sir, is it true all this stuff is free? You get these clothes, this nice hat, and these nice shiny black shoes? He said, yeah, that's right. I said, did he, is it quite likely that you might see the world, like they say, join the Navy? Oh, yeah, yes.

He said, in fact, as we pay you, go around. I'm sitting there in my heart. Can't go in.

Improper bite. Six or eight years later, the war come along. I thought I'll try again.

He felt me back to the head. He said, you're warm. You're in.

You know what I found out? Everything he told me was true. My shoes were free. Nice hat, white hat, free.

Nice shoes, free meals when you could eat them. And, uh, didn't get quite around the world, South Pacific, twice to Japan. Everything he told me was true.

It was just some things he didn't tell me. That's all. He didn't tell me what time you had to get up.

He didn't tell me who had to peel the potatoes. He didn't tell me who washed the dishes and scrubbed the deck. He didn't tell me that.

He didn't tell me all the hell and the horror of war. Everything he told me was true. He just didn't tell me everything.

Now, I believe to some degree that we got to be honest with the beginning at the outset in evangelism as Jesus was, because there's battle, there's enemies, there's a war against sin, there's sacrifice, and there's self-denial. But I believe we must make this distinction. Well, my time's up.

I have one more thing I wanted, one more difference that I wanted to point out. What are these differences that I have pointed out? We must recognize, if the Bible teaches something about vain faith, dead faith, devil's faith, and true faith, the Bible also teaches some of the distinctions of each of these classes. It's not

our, it doesn't come under the head of our business to decide who's in each class.

That comes under the head of God's business and God's alone. When our Lord Jesus Christ was here on earth, he could look into that harlot woman's heart and say, thy sins be forgiven thee. We have to say thy sins be forgiven thee on the basis of faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

And when he went back to heaven, he only left one person here to do that holy task, and that's the Holy Ghost. Thy sins be forgiven thee. You see, the grounds of assurance is not only the promises of God made real by the Spirit as part of it, but it's also the witness of the Spirit within.

And assurance has something to do with Christian character and conduct. Read the birthmarks in 1 John. He that is born of God, so-and-so.

He that is born of God, so-and-so. There's about eight tests there. He that hath my commandments and keepeth it, he that is at love with me.

Hereby we do know that we know him if we keep his commandments. That's assurance. He's not telling people how to be saved, or he'd have said what he did in the Gospels.

Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. We must make some distinctions in our preaching and in our outworkings of our methods. And if we understand this, we may not say these things to every individual just like this.

Of course not. But these principles will so undermine our counseling and our preaching and our personal evangelism, it'll so permeate us that whatever comes out up here will come out because these principles have us gripped. We don't run around and say, give these four tests that I've gone over this morning, or three.

That's not what I'm suggesting. I'm them suggesting, though, that these are Bible principles, and they must undergird our evangelism. What's the difference between a true believer and a spurious believer? Well, there's a lot, but one of the differences the true believer says, I want Christ without exception.

The spurious believer says, I want Christ if I can do this and da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da. I want Christ and I want Christ da-da-da-da-da-da-da. Second difference, the true believer says, I want Christ as he's offered in the Gospel.

I need a priest because I'm a sinner. And I'm a Christian sinner, so I need somebody to intercede for me. That's the work of the priest.

But I'm ignorant and I need to be taught. Originally, yes, but continually. I need a king because I'm weak, and I need somebody to protect me and subdue me and look over me.

Yes, when I come to Christ, but today too. It's not something once and for all. There may be that initial time, but there's also the continuing.

The true believer says, I need all this. The spurious believer says, I don't want to go to hell. Just give me a savior.

Tell me about the cross. Tell me about the free gift. That'll do me fine.

Thank you. It's fine. That's all I need.

Thank you, sir. That's wonderful. Yeah, just go on and live like you were before.

God never forgives sin without changing the sin. God never justifies anybody in heaven by the blood of Christ. He doesn't do something on earth by the spirit of Christ.

There's a difference between justification and sanctification, but they're so vitally joined together that you can't separate them. And when he does something in heaven by the blood of Christ, he does something on earth by the spirit of Christ. And if there's nothing been done by the spirit of Christ on earth, a man has no reason to believe that there's anything done in heaven by the blood of Christ.

And last point was, the true believer wants Christ and all the inconveniences that follow and there are some spurious believers ready to go back to the hog pan at the first little time the wind goes. Luke 8 13 says they believed for a while, but in the time of temptation, they fell away. How long is a while? I don't know.

Might be two weeks. Might be 20 years. They believed for a while, but in the time of temptation, they fell away.

Let's pray. Oh, blessed Father, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, how we thank you today that you have taught our lips to frame that word, our Father, and today give us an experience and in our feelings all that's implied. And as we seek to do your will on earth, our Father, grant to us thy power, thy wisdom.

Oh, how we plead for thy church and thy servants. How we plead for this institution and its great work. Lord, we plead for those men who are being trained here now.

Oh, we pray that their name would be Legion. Lord, make them mighty preachers of the gospel. Change our generation.

Oh, Lord, send the heavenly wind into their sails that they may sail this stormy sea in victory. We pray, oh Lord, tomorrow as thy people meet that you would anoint thy servants afresh. And as they proclaim those eternal verities, we pray that the breath of heaven, that holy pneuma would be upon them in an unusual way.

Hear our prayer, oh Lord, today for ourselves and for thy church and for all of thy servants. For Jesus Christ's sake, amen.

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