

Living Jesus

by G.W. North

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living Jesus Christ and experiencing God's life, which is a shared life that God wants to share with us.

Duration: 1:09:00

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Philippians 1:21, Philippians 4:4, Philippians 4:6-7, Philippians 4:11, Philippians 4:13, Philippians 4:19

Topics: "Jesus"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of learning and knowing Jesus Christ. He encourages the audience to seek contentment and to rely on the further supply of the Spirit of Jesus. The preacher shares the story of Paul in the Roman prison and reflects on the wisdom of God in sparing Paul's life. He also highlights the generosity of Paul towards the people of Philippi and reminds the audience that God will supply all their needs according to His riches in glory.

Transcript

I'd like to share with you tonight a little from the Philippian letter. That's funny, we should change places like that, isn't it? About the wonder, really, of the life of Jesus Christ. I don't mean objectively, so that, if you like, we study the life of Jesus Christ.

You could buy books about death and all sorts of things of that nature. But I mean as a life to be enjoyed, not just to be admired, as certainly he must be, as he appeared once in the end of an age, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Or, when he comes to be admired in all his saints, when he comes back again.

But, Jesus to be known and enjoyed his glorious life in us now. For that's the whole point of him shedding his blood for us. God hadn't got a sort of a lot of objects that he wanted to say from hell, objects, but he wanted to, and just sort of put us in heaven and say, His great desire and concern was to give his son in such a way that everything that was standing between us and God, so that we couldn't enjoy life as it really should be lived, should be dealt with, put away, and that all took place at Calvary.

Just as a preliminary really, wonderful as it is, because all God's actions are wonderful, but a preliminary to us really coming in and living and enjoying and glorying in the life of God. This is really his basic goodness, that he wants to share his life with us. He could stretch out his arm and say, I decree that this batch of people doesn't go to such and such an end, and this batch of people doesn't go here.

I mean, it isn't his power we want to speak about, not so much, but his great and marvellous love. The glory of our God is this shared life that he found a means whereby he could share his life with us. Now, then I think I ought to ask you a question immediately.

Are you doing that? Because if it's only a matter of destinies, so far as we're concerned, where we're going to finish up in the end, then of course we've missed the point. If we see that that's all it is, but oh, to know the glory of living this life. And you know that dear old John, in his epistle, he is a very simple fellow, is John, and he sort of gets down to basic things, because at times we need to have basic assurances.

We being the sort of people we are, and I suppose you really do know the kind of person you are, if you don't ask the person you live with, they'll tell you. But if you know the kind of person you are, then you know you're the sort that has had sort of big mental conflicts, and you've wondered this and wondered that, and doubted this and doubted that. So John, the great man of basics, he tells you quite plainly that if you've got the Son, Jesus, then you have life.

That's right. So now have I got this, or haven't I got it? And so dealing with simpletons like me, and he says he's writing to babes, so on, then he tells me how I know that I have this life. That this life is in his Son.

This is the record, this is the message, this is the testimony that we have eternal life. God has given it to us, and it's in his Son. If we have the Son, then we have life.

Amen. That's wonderful. But I want to come, as I said to you, into the Philippian letter, and share with you a little on the greatness of this marvellous life.

For instance, if you look with me into the fourth chapter for a start. Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved, and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. I beseech you, O dears, and beseech sin to keep, that they be of the same mind in the Lord, and I entreat thee also, true yoke fellow, help those women which laboured with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow labourers, whose names are in the Book of Life.

Hallelujah. That's a marvellous thing. Our names are in the Book of Life.

Praise the name of the Lord. And you know, of course, that that's your and my entitlement to all the life of God. That's what it's about.

My name is in the Book of Life. This man is to have all of my life. Isn't that glorious? You think of that.

Your entitlement to live this glorious life. To have it. And, of course, the next verse will tell you what will be the result of that.

Rejoice. Rejoice. Amen.

Rejoice. Let it come into your mind, he says. He's on about the mind very much in this epistle.

Think joy. Think joy. Have you got thoughts that really rejoice? Have you got rejoicing thoughts? Do your thoughts rejoice? Or are they sort of slowly curdling down into a sort of a sticky mess, or mess? Or are they galloping away like something orbiting the moon? What is it that's so wrong? Rejoice, he says.

Rejoice. Rejoice. Rejoice.

Rejoice. This then is really the keynote of the life that's in Jesus Christ. To really rejoice.

Amen. Again, I'm not much of a one for banging tambourines, but sometimes you can understand people getting hold of one and rattling them around and banging them, and they seem to enjoy that sort of noise. It can't be music, but at least the whole glory of it is to rejoice.

Rejoice. Really rejoice. I mean, this isn't just saying, well, I've got joy.

This is joy let loose, rejoicing. Hmm. Amen.

You have heard the word maficking, I suppose. Ever heard the word maficking? Well, it rather dates you if you're not careful. It's not a word that's used very much, but now and again, perhaps far too often, because they coin kinds of words that I'm not too keen about, but in languages we coin words.

There's something that happens that can only be described in a certain way. Now, how in the world can I make people understand this? And then the mind fixes on something that's happened, you see. And you say, well, now, it's like that.

And that's what maficking is. They used to speak about making maficking. And, of course, in history you've heard of the siege of Mafeking and how when this place was really relieved and when it was taken and when all the bloodshed was stopped and all the needless murder was over and all the days of hardship gone, my, in England.

I didn't live in Victoria's Day, but I can tell you what they did. By what they did, say, on V-D Day or V-J Day or V-E Day or whatever it was. Everybody, I can even remember the First World War.

I don't mean the original one. The First World War. When they signed the Versailles Treaty, I tell you, I lived in London in those days.

We had a marvellous time. We really did. And we just went wild.

Made maficking, you see. That's what they did in Victoria's Day. Of course, it was done with antimacassars and aspidistras and things like that and very sedately, but nevertheless, they enjoyed themselves.

Now, beloved, here then is something like rejoicing. That was called rejoicing. They played all the church bells.

They brought out the brass bands. Everybody made speeches. Some people stood on their heads.

Everybody thought it was time to dig into their pockets and provide a feast for all the poor little wastes like me. I don't mean maficking. I mean in the First World War when that was all over.

And all sorts of things like that. Had tremendous times. Rejoiced.

Everybody didn't... Well, you know, don't you? Need I enlarge on that? Well, now, this is what Paul is really saying. Something much, much better than that. Rejoice.

Isn't it a precious thing to know this glorious thing? Dare you rejoice? Dare you rejoice? Do you think it's proper to in your present state or stage? I mean, what do you think about it? Do you think, well, this wouldn't be right? I mean, I'm not in a place I... It would be hypocrisy or something like that. What do you

really think? He says, your names... Those people whose names are written in the Book of Life. Rejoice.

Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice. Glory be to God. Isn't that a marvellous thing? You see, Paul had made some reference like this.

Once your name is in the Book of Life, and you have this great life of God, think this is the end to which you've been predestinated. This word predestination is being used in our midst tonight. And it simply really means that before you get to heaven, you've already got into heavenly states and heavenly likenesses, and the predestination is sure that you're going to come to your destination.

Your destination is God himself. Your predestination is becoming godlike on the earth. That's your predestination.

I mean, if you were in a theological college, they wouldn't say it like that. They always take about two-month lectures to get you understanding what can be said in a sentence, really. Because they have to go around all the corners for clever people.

Because clever people think there's always another corner to go around. But the simple to them goes straight on with the Lord, and he understands everything. And he knows God's not trying to pull a fast one over him and sort of deceive him in coming up against something else in the Bible.

Or, you know, it's ridiculous, really, when people get like that. But you and I, the simple truth is that we've been predestinated. Amen.

Now, I shall see that if you've been predestinated. I mean, I shall see that your heart's outstripped everything else and arrived at its end already. And then Jesus Christ is there, and you've got the look of glory on your face, and everything is being filled with joy, and it's all so lovely.

And Paul, you know, has got this written in the first chapter. Let's go, shall we? He says, verse 21, For to me to live, there it is, is Christ. You see? For to me to live is Christ, not to die.

Do you see that? Although, he says death is gain, but he says, to me to live is Christ. Now, that's the simplicity of it. That's all you've got to do.

All right? Now, notice he didn't say, now, for me to be a Christian is to live. He didn't say that. Don't let it get turned in your mind.

What he said was, for me to live, well, it is Christ. That's it. Isn't that lovely? You see? And that's what your name's in the book of life for, for that reason.

That's why it's there. So that you should live Christ. Isn't this precious? Now, that's it.

That's what it's got to be. You do understand that, don't you? Every one of us understands that there's no deviation, so far as God is concerned. You can live Christ, you see.

In other words, that's all that Christ is really, livable. He's only livable. I mean, first he's believable.

That's right. Then he's livable, believable, receivable, livable. That's Christ.

It's as easy as that. He's very simple to live Christ. That's why your name is in the book of life.

Not the book of those who have a home in heaven, you notice. That's not what it says. I mean, God hasn't got a big wrench to say, we're going to put her in that little place there, and he's going to have a mansion there, and she's going to live in number 51, that one in number 52.

That isn't it. This person's going to live in Belmont Road, and the other persons don't come anywhere, or something like that. Not as far as God is concerned.

The great thing about God, Jesus Christ, is that he's livable. Hallelujah, he's livable. Amen.

He's livable. You do know that, don't you? Oh, this is the life of Christ. This is the tragedy with so many people.

They can't get this right. They sort of think they've got to see Jesus Christ and try and copy him, and try and do that. But that's not right at all.

He's got to be lived. Now, the object of living Jesus Christ, what do you think the object of it all is? Well, when I have a marvellous reward, I've got a place, I'll get in heaven. Well, I think you've got that wrong.

Let's have a look, say, at the end of chapter 3. It says, verse 20, Our citizenship is in heaven. Pardon? Do you think Paul slipped up there? Do you think he meant, it is going to be after I've left the earth. Do you think he meant that? No, he says very plainly, for me to live is Christ.

My citizenship is in heaven. Oh, I tell you. Our citizenship is in heaven.

That's right. Glory. Because this citizenship is spiritual citizenship.

Bodily citizenship, maybe in dingy old Exeter, or something like that, you're bodily, but you see, he's going to change these vile bodies, or the body of our humiliation. He's coming to do that. Praise God.

We're really citizens of heaven. So you see, already, I'm a citizen of heaven. That's all settled.

That's fine. People sort of get this, am I going to heaven when I die? A business so fixed on their hearts. I'm already living there.

That's my citizenship. Actually, I was born there, and I've been loaned to the earth since I've been born again. Hmm.

I'm only loaned to the earth. I don't know how long I shall be here. I hope you've got this right.

I'm not telling you a fancy story. I'm telling you the truth. This is what the cross is all about.

It cuts you off from your life, or from your former life, when you used to live in the earth. It might have been something like this. Verse 18.

In fact, same chapter. Many walk with whom I have told you often, and now tell you, even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. Now, if you're an enemy of the cross of Christ, your citizenship's still on the earth.

Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame. They mind earthly things. They what? But if by the cross you've been cut off, and you've been born of God, then hallelujah, your citizenship's in heaven.

That's wonderful. And it's got to be your conscious citizenship. I'm not saying, oh, you're very, very earth conscious, very, very world conscious, very, very self conscious, very, very sin conscious, and all these things.

You're living in the wrong place. I mean, you have to go to work. You have to do all these kinds of things.

But not so that you should be absorbed by these things. You and I have got to be absorbed in heavenly things. And I think that you'll agree with me that education along these lines sometimes comes very slowly.

Isn't that right? But nevertheless, it's true. Jesus Christ is livable down on this earth. Now, the object of living Jesus Christ is told us in this same third chapter.

Do you know what the object of living Jesus Christ is? It's in verse 10, that you may know. Now, until you live him, you won't know him. How do you know yourself? Because you live yourself.

You know whether you like pickles with jam, or whether you don't. You know yourself. You know whether you like three spoons fulls of sugar in your coffee, or whether you don't.

You see, don't you? You know whether you like ties with spots on, or stripes on, don't you? You know whether you can stay up all night, or whether you can't. You say, oh, I can do it for three days, but after that I'm done in, people tell me. You know whether you can do with five hours sleep, or fifteen.

You know yourself, you see, don't you? You do, don't you? Why? Because you live with yourself. And by the looks of some people's faces, it's pretty bad. That's right, isn't it? The object of living is knowing.

And nobody knows Jesus Christ who doesn't live him. Isn't that lovely? Now this is why so few people know Jesus Christ. Now in our country, everybody knows something about him, I should think.

But to know him. Have you ever had such an experience in your life where you say, well, you know, I don't know myself. I didn't know myself, I was so changed.

You see? I don't know myself. I say this to people over and over and over again, sometimes when I'm allowed to talk to them, minister to them. I'll say to them, in six months time you won't know yourself.

I make this promise to them. I promise you, in Jesus' name, that in six months time, you won't know yourself, you'll be so changed. Do you make statements like that to people? If not, you don't really know how to counsel them.

You're not sure enough to come right, you see. This is what makes some people so positive and so true. They know you know.

They know. And they can commit God, and it's tremendous, to doing certain things. Because they're living in Jesus Christ.

For me, he says, Paul, to live is Christ. Glory be to the name of the Lord. And this is why he says in that third chapter, I forget everything else.

Everything else is done to me. Everything else is lost to me. Mind you, he's come a long way.

And he's writing this letter at the end of his life. This isn't the letter he wrote when he first took up a pen to write. This is the letter he wrote after all years, decades of living, living, living the past.

And he could write these great things. Everything's done, everything's lost. I've suffered the loss of everything.

Count it all done. Well, I haven't suffered the loss of everything yet. Have you? Have you? Have you suffered the loss of everything yet? See, there it is.

Mind you, this isn't voluntarily renouncing everything and going and getting yourself bricked up in a cave up in the Himalayas or something like that. That wasn't what he was talking about. He had so lived.

He had so gone on with it all. He'd suffered the loss of everything. And at this moment, when he wrote this letter, he was even contemplating suffering the loss of his breath, finally.

Not the loss of his life. He couldn't ever lose that. The loss of his breath.

I trust you heard what I said. You see, Jesus didn't lose his life. He laid it down.

For me, my God resigned his breath. I like Wesley, his meticulous carefulness. He didn't lose his life.

He laid it down, took it up again. That was marvelous. He resigned his breath.

And he was at this very point, actually. And resigning your breath is the last thing you can resign. Hallelujah.

Lose your breath and to die is gay. It's a wonderful approach to life. It's what the Lord intends for us.

I'm living Christ. You want to live Christ, don't you? In all his fullness. And God wants you to live Jesus Christ.

Because this is the only thing that's pleasing to him. The only thing. My efforts in themselves are not pleasing to him.

My works, as my works, as of myself, are not pleasing to him. But Jesus Christ's are. They're pleasing to Father.

And when he's really living in me, and I'm living Christ, that's pleasing to Father, but it gives me the great compensations. I'm in this great joy of the Lord. I'm in this life of the Lord.

And oh, it's so precious. Alright, that I might know him, as he wrote, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death. Glory be to the name of the Lord.

The fellowship of his sufferings. This is the precious thing, beloved, that you can't go through suffering alone, you see. The fellowship of his sufferings.

When you go through the Lord, when you're living his life, you come to this place where everything is a fellowship. In everything it's fellowship. Ah, that's glorious, isn't it? Eh? Fellowship in everything.

Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter. And so, to know this glorious experience, if we go back to the first chapter again, we see this. He's in prison.

He talks about his bonds in verse 14. Do you see that? But brethren, waxing confident by my bonds, as Paul says. He was a bound man.

He had no liberty by men's standards at all. He was in prison. He goes right on, and he says this.

I know, verse 19, that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Glory. Now, you won't live Jesus Christ unless you have the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

That's quite important. You can't live Jesus Christ by constantly reading the Bible and setting him before your eyes as an example. You can only live Jesus Christ, of course you won't be away from your Bible if you do this, but you can only live Jesus Christ as the Spirit of Jesus Christ is supplied to you.

Amen. And that's why on the cross, his last words were, the very last words of Jesus on the cross were, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. Amen.

His spirit went into Father's hands, and he's fairly careful who he supplies that spirit to, his Father. Amen. All right.

But he'll give the Spirit of Jesus Christ to us. Amen. That's when we're really a son.

We're really a son when he's supplied the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Beloved brothers and sisters, you do see that we are people who are in need of having supplies. See, we're lacking.

We're lacking the essential things. They've got to be supplied to us. We are not complete, so that we can start off along the trail of some religious order or set up, and now all I've got to do is to try.

We've got to be supplied to us. We're missing the things. When we're born, we're less the things that we ought to have.

You do understand this, don't you? And God had to devise this means of supplying you with what you hadn't got. He did this by sending his Son onto the earth so that his Son may do precisely what I have said. The last utterances before his eyelids closed in death were, Into thy hands I commend my spirit.

You see, that's it. Glory. Supplied to you.

Isn't that lovely? Supplied to me. Now, actually this word in the Greek, you probably know this, is the Greek word which means further supply. The further supply.

Tremendous this, isn't it? In other words, all the time we're needing further, more supplies of the Spirit of Jesus. Glory be to the name of the Lord. What are you going to do with a man when he's bound up in prison, when he's in desperate need physically, when everything you can see sort of shouts at you to exercise faith and have an earthquake and all the prison doors open? I mean, this is the sort of thing which you can stupidly get in these so-called great exercises of faith in these days.

Now, why in the world didn't they pray that there was an earthquake? Well, I mean, he was writing to the Philippians and I said, Do you remember when Paul was here? We had an earthquake. You can ask him, he was the jailer. Weren't you? You were there, weren't you? You see, they were in this Philippian church.

It all took place in Philippi. Come on now, we'll all get together. Surely we can get.

Let's try praising. Come on, everybody sing. It was when they were singing when the doors were open.

Come on, everybody sing. This is the way we've got the key to it. You see, we've got the key.

That's how mad you can get. It seems to be based on the Bible. Seems to be.

This is the tragedy. With people. God save us.

He says, All I want is the further supply of the Spirit of Jesus. Glory to God. All I want is the further supply of the Spirit of Jesus.

Oh, glory be to the name of the Lord. He was in a Roman prison. Why ever they cut off Paul's head, I cannot tell you.

Why didn't they crucify him? It was the Roman method of killing. Why did they cut off his head? Can anybody tell me? Well, you know, I think there's the wisdom of God in this, you see, because I'm just going to share a little secret with you on this. You can dismiss this if you want, but as I said last Thursday, I'm on my home ground, and so I don't have to be too particular.

You see, there were people saying, I'm of Paul. I'm of Paulus, you know. I'm of Cephas.

I'm of Christ. I won't say what kind of people they were. But, you see, was Paul crucified for you? He had his head cut off.

God's very, very wise. Yeah, yeah. You know, if you really live as you should, he'll make everything in life be consistent.

Everything. Even your death. And Paul wasn't the head of the church, so he had his head cut off, just like old John Baptist.

He wasn't the head of the church. Jesus Christ was the head of the church. Isn't this marvellous? You do want your dying to glorify God, don't you? See, that's what the Lord said to Peter.

He said, told him by what death he would glorify him. Glorious, isn't it? Paul didn't care. He didn't care.

He said, all I want is the supply, the further supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. That's all I want. That's precious, you know.

Isn't it? The Spirit of Jesus Christ. Go on, and on, and on, and on, and more, and more, and more, and more. Lord, I want to know you.

It's this Spirit that I have that determines my disposition to everything. It's the Spirit of me that determines my attitude, not my education. It's my Spirit that determines my attitude to life.

Everything that I need, everything that I can, that comes against me. My Spirit. What you say, the way you react, the look of your eye, the way you toss your head, or whether you don't, is determined by your Spirit.

Everything. It speaks volumes to those that know. And there is a volume written, it's called The Book of Life.

On how we are to live, beloved. And it's so simple. When we have this great supply of the Spirit of the Lord Jesus.

Why? Mind you, when we rarely, when we rarely live like this, when we're rarely in this position, God will do greater and greater things for us. And he'll undertake for us in ways that this epistle gives us a little glimpse into it. For you know the epistle was written because the Philippians had sent him a food parcel.

He was in prison and he, well, you know, it wasn't like today where the commissioners come round and have a look and all things like that. He was just slung in there and it wouldn't matter if he died so very much. So on.

But they sent him this gift. And, oh, it was tremendous. And, you know, normally if you'd heard people supplying anybody a gift, for instance somebody out in China or somebody out in Africa or somebody out in India.

And these parcels are very much appreciated, I can tell you that. And, you know, they're a wonderful crowd there in that church. And they think about their missionary friends abroad and they send parcels and they do this and they do that and they do the other.

You know, they're great benefactors of this person abroad. But you hear old Paul, he says now, my God is going to supply all your need according to his riches in glory. That's in the fourth chapter in the 19th verse.

My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory. And you know, beloved, this man had been such a benefactor to these people at Philippi. This man was the first one that had brought to them the knowledge of Jesus Christ, really.

I know he had others in his party, you can read about it in Acts chapter 16, when they went to Philippi. But he was the one that God used. He was the great apostle that spoke the word.

He was the foundational man. And oh, how they drank in from him. You think of it, when they got this letter from Paul with his Philippians, what do you think they thought? What do you think they thought? Do you know what they did? I'll tell you what they did.

Unless I don't know their spirit at all, I'll tell you what I would have done. Well, I think anybody that had the spirit, they'd have all dropped down on their knees. And they would have said, Lord, we thought we were doing him a good turn.

Ooh, he's way ahead of us, Lord. He's way ahead of us. He's talking about our needs being supplied.

Glory. How this man lived out of himself. How he was saying to them, oh, it's wonderful here.

My God will supply all your need. And then you see, when you look at a man like that and you see the way this life is lived, you think, what are these things that we keep saying are necessary in our lives? If I said to you now, what do you really think is necessary? Now, don't get all spiritually minded and say, I mean, what have you been talking about over the last month as being necessary to you in your living? I must have this. I must have that.

I must. Go on, you'd better face it. You'd better.

If you want to really live this life, if you really want to live it to the full, you'd better face it. For the city in which you live isn't filled with the Joneses. You haven't got to keep up with them.

You see. Mind you, there may be some dudes whose name is Jones on earth. We were at a conference at Fifth last week and the man there was John Jones.

He's a dear brother. But do you know what I mean? When the chief ruler of the city died, he had nothing. He hadn't kept up with the Joneses.

You understand that, don't you? I tell you about it. You say, oh, and it's miserable. Yeah, well, of course, if you think it's miserable, that's one thing.

If it's all joy, if it was all joy, the point wasn't misery. Oh, you've got to give this up now. I've got to lose that.

I've got to do something else. I've got to do something else. Horrible.

You see. Better tell people not to become Christians. Look at the demands that are made on them.

It's not like that at all, beloved. As a matter of fact, unless the heart rejoices in all this, it's just valueless. You see, this is why he said in the second chapter, let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus.

Let this mind be in you. Will you let the mind of Christ be in you? Now, be careful. Because God's evaluation, you see, is absolutely different from everybody else's.

But, oh, he is concerned, beloved, that you and I should come into the wonder of the realization of this glorious life that he has for us. Praise his wonderful name. You know, it would be wonderful if we could come to live with that which God gives us.

It's a blessed thing to come to live on and with and by the things that the Lord gives you. That's blessed. Amen.

And the Lord wants us to do this. It has a very, very practical application, beloved. But there's also a compensation.

I mean, to go along to a chap in prison, and I tell you, in prison, as it was in those days, and hear him saying, Come on, cheer up, rejoice! My, my. What do you think of that? I mean, you went in there as a visitor to cheer him up, didn't you? That's what you went for. Rejoice! Oh, Paul, I've gone a week with you.

I'm sorry, we haven't got enough faith to pray you out. He says, Come on, rejoice! Get out of these queer ideas of what faith's supposed to be. Amen.

If you can have faith to rejoice in your circumstances, if you have enough faith to bring you to joy, you're qualifying for another move. On. And on will mean having less.

So be careful. Because there's a great cult about today which says, On means having more. There's a big cult.

It's called faith. The tremendous thing about this apostle Paul is that he saw what life was all about. You do see what life is all about, don't you? For to me, to live, is Christ.

Hallelujah. You know that, I suppose you know, that the word is in that verse isn't in there in the Greek at all. For to me, to live, Christ! Glory! He was ready to shout hip hip hooray.

You see. Glory! This is the one word. For to me, to live, well he was overwhelmed, he was full of it, Christ! Life and Christ are synonymous words.

So the Lord wants us to move right on. And we'll look, shall we, in the fourth chapter. My word, the time is really flying, isn't it? I'll soon be finished, or at least I'll soon stop.

And in chapter four, we'll read something like this. Where shall I start? This fourth chapter is so full. I'll tell you what we'll do.

We'll start here. He says, um, verse eleven. I have learned.

I have learned. Have you? What have you learned? What have you learned? It's no good you living if you don't learn anything. What have you basically learned about Jesus Christ? You say you know him.

Living Christ. Well, what have you learned? Eh? Well, contentment. That's one word.

Content. I don't want anything. I'll give you a car.

Keep your car. I don't want one. Put your wallet on.

He says, I've learned. You see, you do understand, Beloved, don't you? He says, I've learned. He's a sage old teacher, sitting on a dirt floor with his feet in the stocks.

He's better than Diogenes who said, all I want you to do is get out of the way. Keep the sun. Keeping the sun from shining on me.

You know what he said to Alexander, don't you? The man who wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. He went and stood in front of the old tub, the barrel in which old Diogenes was living. He said, what can I do for you? He didn't put it like this.

I was born in London. He said, get out of the way, please. Stop the sunshine.

I don't even think he said please, really. But that's it. That's right.

I mean, he didn't live in a drawing room. He lived in a barrel. You see, I've learned, he said.

I've learned. Praise God. It's no good you living if you don't learn.

Have you learned, contentment? Now contentment has to be learned. It's not a gift in the sense, now you've got it. Now, what you can have is joy as a gift.

You can have peace as a gift. You see, he says this. Look at verse 6. Be anxious for nothing.

Well, of course, you see, this is what makes most people anxious. They've got so much. They've got so much, you see, that they're anxious about it.

If they lost it all, they couldn't be anxious about it. It's as simple as that. You see, I didn't think it was like that.

Well, of course, it's like that, beloved. Do you know I never stay awake nights thinking whether people have taken the tyres off my car because I haven't got one. Simple, you see, you say.

Well, that's logical. He's not clever. Well, that's right.

God isn't trying to be clever. He's very logical. You see, it's right.

I don't stay awake nights wondering whether they're pinching my wife's diamonds. She hasn't got any. You see, but if she'd got diamonds, I might have a fellow round with a gun or say, Securica dogs, or something round here, you see.

But you see, I'd be very anxious. Don't you see? Simple, isn't it? You see, you say, well, what if the thief does come? You say, what have you come for? I want your coat. Well, take the cloak too.

If my overcoat's hanging out there, you can take the elsewhere. You say, really? Now, that's being stupid. It's not.

It's your attitude. It's your disposition to like, possessions, everything. Jesus Christ hit it on the Sermon on the Mount, as we call it.

That's the way he was living. Take the lot, he said. Take the lot.

Gamble for it if you like. I don't know. Naked came I into this world.

Naked go I out. Wouldn't you love to live in a state where you have no anxiety? Well, you can. The peace of God, verse 7. Passing all understanding.

You will not understand this, you see. Everything that God gives is beyond understanding. It isn't peace alone.

You see, because you read it in the Bible and preachers preach on it and make a great thing of it, but everything that God gives is beyond understanding. Everything. Everything.

Beyond understanding. I mean, does a river bed understand a river that flows through it? Do you think it does? If you could speak to it and say, well, all I know is that I'm wet all the day long. The water's flowing over me.

It doesn't understand it. Say, ah, but we've got brains, you know. But God's bigger than our understanding.

And He doesn't want us to understand much, really. Amen. He wants us to know Him.

Praise God. He wants us to know Him. We can go on.

He says, I've learned to be content. Isn't that lovely? In verse 11. I've learned to be content.

It doesn't matter what state I'm in, to be content. And I know, I know how to be abased. I know how to abound everywhere.

And in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. Isn't that lovely? Now this will explain a lot that happens to you as you're living. The Lord will take you into circumstances for this reason.

To instruct you. You've got to be instructed. And you've got to be instructed in how to live.

Not instructed in the Christian faith, particularly. But to be instructed in the life of Christ. How to live.

And so all sorts of things are going to happen to you. And that's lovely. I can promise you, I think I might be, you know, bracketed with the oldest in the room.

You know, I'm not exactly the oldest, but I mean, I'm in that group. I can assure you that this is delightful. It's lovely to let the Lord deal with everything.

Just let Him do it. And it's a constant instruction. All the time.

I've learned. Oh, hallelujah. You know, when a man's learned, there's one thing you're sure of.

Listen. He never talks like a know-all. He never talks down to you.

He's never condescending. He descends. He doesn't condescend.

That's what you get about Jesus in the second chapter. He said, He was equal with God. Humble himself.

Lowered himself. Until death. Right through to the end.

Hallelujah. He lived a life of this being led about. Being taught of God.

And that's why, beloved, you and I are going to go through lots of things. But, you see, you'll have the Spirit of Christ supplied to you in that thing. And you'll be able to do it.

I can do all things through Christ, which strengthens me, He says. Then, you know what you and I have to say? Well, so can I then. That's why he wrote the letter.

So can I. And don't grit your teeth and say, No, this is terrible. You know, I'm being robbed of everything. I'm being stripped of everything.

It's awful. No, not that. It's this wonder.

If you can, I can. Amen. I can.

I can. That's true faith. That's the language of faith.

I can. That's the language of unbelief is I can't. I can, Lord.

It names in the book of life. And it may be, I don't know who's allowed to look into this book in heaven, but it may be that the angels might be looking in this book to see what's next for you. What's the next thing for you? Maybe.

Glory. All right, I think I'm going to finish in a moment or two now. And it says this.

Keep your thoughts, really, in verse eight. Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things. Hallelujah.

This is much better than going to some guru who says, now what you want to do is to fix your eye on a spot somewhere and think of nothing. You see, this is the complete opposite to what the gurus teach. Shows you how wrong they are.

That's where devils come in and bring in all kinds of things. And they do produce some kind of a passivity. But the direct instruction of Christ and the apostles was to think on these things.

Hallelujah. And you can. But of course if you're thinking what's happening to your bank balance, or you're thinking what's happening to your this and your that and your the other, and your house and your all.

Mind you, Paul didn't even have to think about a wife. I don't know whether he was blessed in that or not. But the whole truth is there.

God can bring you to a place where you can go through with him. You can go through with him. Do you believe you can? To really live Christ? Now, apply yourself to it.

Don't drop back. Don't drop out. Oh, wouldn't it be lovely if at the end, look at verse 9. It would be wonderful if you could say to somebody, someday, those things which you've both learned and received and heard and seen in me, do.

That would be wonderful. You could tell someone, what you've seen me do, you do. Wouldn't it? Have you ever spoken to anybody like that about spiritual things? You just do what you've seen me do.

Things you've seen. Things you've heard. The things you've learned and received.

Me. Oh, glory. Now, that's what it's got to be for them to do that.

I mean, you mustn't think there's any great virtue in sort of picking up the Bible and saying, well, I'll show you what the Bible says. Unfortunately, I can't do it myself. You see, I mean, that might sound humble, but it's not what God wants.

I mean, to be basically honest, you may have to say that. But that's not what God wants. For to me, to live is Christ.

And if it's your life, then of course you can say that, can't you? What you've seen in me, you do that. But if people only hear you screaming, or see you stamping your feet, or hear you going, you see, well, there you are. If that's what they see and hear, well, of course you can't say, well, you just do what I do.

But God wants us to be able to say that. And I want to tell you, beloved, there's a further supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Isn't that lovely? There's a further supply of the Spirit.

You can say, Lord, my name's written in your book. I know it. You see, I'm in this circumstance, or I'm in this situation.

What do I do? The supply of the Spirit of Jesus. I can do it. I can go through it.

Hallelujah. The supply of the Spirit of Jesus. Then you'll be able to say, I've learned how to live in that situation, under those circumstances.

I've learned how to live. How do you do it? How do you do it? You lived, yes. What's the secret? Christ.

For me to live, oh, it's Christ. Isn't that lovely? Now, you do that. You be that.

Shall we all do that? Perhaps we could pray about the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ tonight. No. Why not? Hmm? Tomorrow will be a different day.

Won't it? A better one, even if you've been living Christ today. A fuller one. For that's what the Lord intends.

On and on and on and on. And don't say, oh Lord, I'm living in a terrible place. You're not.

Your citizenship's in heaven. Do you believe that? I said to someone today, would you like to come into our hutch? Would you like to come into our hutch? This is where we're living at the moment, you see. I said, apologize for our hutch.

We're moving out, you see. That's right. These things all matter.

They don't matter. Do you believe that? I mean, you're not exactly of a prison cell, are you? And the only way out of a prison cell for Jesus Christ was the cross. He was taken from prison and from judgment.

Amen. Glory, glory, glory. I think we'd better pray.

Let's ask the Lord to do things.

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