

Restoration Series #1 - Obedience Is Not Works

by James Robison

The sermon emphasizes the importance of examining ourselves to see if we are truly in the faith, and warns against the dangers of false prophets and spiritual death.

Duration: 1:15:04

Scripture: Matthew 7:21-23, Matthew 25:31-33, Luke 13:22-30, 2 Corinthians 13:5

Topics: "Obedience"

Description

In this sermon, the pastor shares a powerful testimony of a woman named Betty who had a life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ. Betty, a member of the church choir, was moved by the pastor's invitation to give her life to Jesus and she came forward, falling on her knees and accepting Jesus as her Savior. The pastor emphasizes the importance of recognizing our need for salvation and surrendering our lives to God. He then references Matthew 25, explaining how Jesus will separate the sheep (believers) from the goats (unbelievers) and invites those who are blessed by God to inherit the kingdom. The pastor also highlights the ministry of Jesus, emphasizing the importance of proclaiming the gospel and feeding hungry souls with the word of God.

Transcript

We're going to look at several passages tonight, and I'm going to take the time to lead you to look at the Word, and let the Word minister to you. Second Corinthians, chapter 13, verse 5, briefly. Second Corinthians, chapter 13, verse 5. I'm reading from the New American Standard Version.

If there is a little difference in the version that you have, I think looking at them together will probably help make it even clearer. Second Corinthians, 13, verse 5. Test yourselves, the King James says examine yourselves, to see if you are in the faith. Examine yourselves to see whether you be of the faith, King James Version says.

Examine yourselves, the New American Standard repeats. Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith. Examine yourselves.

Now I want to just stop there, and tonight I'd like to ask you to do what the Scripture exhorts you to do. Examine yourselves, test yourselves, whether you be in the faith. I've been preaching over 22 years.

I'm told that I have faced as many people or more people in person and preached to them than anyone who's lived in this nation's history, in the country, in America. And as I have preached, and I have watched people come to Christ, I've watched thousands come forward, over a million, to come to say I give my life to Christ. And I've ministered to millions of people on television, and I have visited with thousands of professing Christians, and I've spoken in hundreds and hundreds of churches.

From the very beginning of my ministry, I knew when I preached that many of the people to whom I spoke did not know Christ. I knew that many who came forward in my crusades never met Christ. I knew in the aftermath when I would go back to cities and to churches, I knew that as I watched people, that many of them didn't know Christ.

And as I went in from place to place to preach, there was something I was aware of. I had a gift to discern the spirit of individuals that I preached to. I didn't understand it.

I was walking in enough darkness at that time that I didn't understand spiritual gifts. I'd been taught in certain circles to ignore them or write some of them off, and yet in my heart, I knew that God was doing something supernatural in my life because from the beginning of my Christian life, I was able to discern the character of people and their spiritual relationship with the Lord, almost to the point that God would actually tell me many, many places I would go about people in the room who were not Christians. Now, I don't have the word of knowledge that some have where they can look at people and God will tell them about physical illnesses.

I'm amazed and it's beautiful to watch John Wimber, I referred to a moment ago, look at people and God will tell him where they hurt. And what's wrong with them and many times what to do about it. And these miracles just follow him.

And there are many people who have these various gifts. There's some people who obviously exaggerate. There's some people who may say they have a word when they don't.

And that's really one of the things that turns a lot of us off. We're all repulsed by something that's not genuine. It bothers us.

It really bothers God and it should bother a Christian. But I've not yet been able to just look at people and tell what's wrong with them. Now, occasionally I hear God say, I'm doing something.

Now, maybe this is going to get clearer in my mind. I hope it does, because I'd love to be able to look at every one of you and tell you where you hurt and what you need and how to get help. Now, I believe God has that for the whole body of Christ.

I don't think he has it necessarily for me all the time or any one person, but I believe he has that. I think he'd like to talk to us that way if we'd hear it. And I believe the church is going to begin to hear him like that.

But anyway, I had this gift. From the very beginning, I could tell people's spiritual temperature. I could walk into churches and read their pulse the first night.

And people thought I'd been reading their mail. Husbands would nudge their wives and say, did you tell him I'm here? And pastors would say, who's been talking? And the people would say the preachers tipped him off. But that wasn't the case.

This is a gift. I know the temperature of situations. And I want to tell you that in all the churches I preached in, the hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of them with few exceptions.

When I would walk in to preach, there was a spirit of death over the place. Spiritual death. There was darkness in the room.

There was a spirit of slavery, a spirit of bondage in the church. I would refer to the atmosphere that I faced when I'd go from church to church to preach as being similar to the same atmosphere you feel when you walk in a morgue or a funeral home. And I'm not being facetious when I say that.

There's a similar spirit. It's a spirit of oppression and bondage. And this spirit prevails in most of the churches in our land.

And I could read this. Now, my problem in the past was I would read all this demonic oppression and bondage. And then I'd just sic my demons on their demons.

And we didn't get far. Because I would go into a rage at what I saw. And until I saw the passage in James that says the wrath of man work, if not the righteousness of God, I didn't have my eyes open to know that I can't fix it by telling everybody off.

Now, I think there's a time to tell and to rebuke. But I would do it in my own fleshly energy. And I failed miserably.

I mean, sometimes God would work around me. And sometimes I would do it in the spirit. Even the rebuke and even some of the anger would be God's anger.

But most of the time and much of the time, it was me. But I could still tell this was here. And as I would go to preach, I would look out at people and listen.

The spirit of God would say this to me. Most of the people to whom you're speaking tonight do not know me. And God would tell me in many instances, this happened that the chairman of the deacons was not a Christian.

God would tell me that the pastor was not even saved. Now, that's a startling revelation. But it happened over and over.

Jeannie Rogers, she was the soloist in a week of meetings where Dudley Hall was filled with the Holy Spirit while I was preaching. And literally, his life was changed by the power of God that night in a service that was so wonderful. Over a thousand people just fell on their faces before God and the Holy Spirit consumed them.

During that same meeting, Jeannie Rogers was the soloist. And on Thursday, God told me Jeannie was not saved. I didn't tell Jeannie she was not saved.

I told Dudley Hall's brother, T.D. Hall, I said, T.D., Jeannie's not saved. And T.D. said, how do you know? I said, I know. And T.D. had watched this before and he knew it was real.

And he said, do we go tell her? I said, no, we're not going to tell her. God will tell her. Let's pray for her.

And we prayed for her. And by the way, when God tells me someone's lost, I don't run up to him and say, you're lost. I pray for her.

I've had people come up to me after the service when they know what I'm sharing is true. They'll come up and say, look at me. Tell me, am I saved? Am I lost? I mean, they'll come up here and they saw a person and say, look at me.

Or they'll come sneaking up, kind of cowed down and say, well, you see. Well, I won't tell. Because I'm not the one that does the convicting.

The Holy Spirit does it. But God tells me. And from the beginning of my ministry, God made it very clear to me that most of the people who are sitting in our church buildings do not know Jesus Christ.

He even made it very clear to me that many of and in some instances, most of the activists in your church, the real workers don't know him. And that's one of the reasons some of them work so feverishly is trying to feel good because inside there's so much emptiness. And I can remember so well watching people come from place to place to receive Christ.

Five preachers saved in one night in one of our meetings, five deacons out of one choir coming to be saved one night. Those five deacons are among the most anointed soul winners I know today. One of them heads up our counseling in our church.

One of them has been chairman of our deacons at First Baptist Church, where Dr. Draper is president of Southern Baptist Convention. He is one of the most anointed men you'll ever see. I remember when he came out of the choir to get saved.

Praise God for what he did in his life. I sat with Billy Graham across the table one day after we'd played golf and we began to visit. We were eating a sandwich together and Billy looked over at me and just suddenly said, did you hear about my son? I said, no.

He said, Franklin, you didn't hear what happened to him. I said, no. He said, my boy got converted.

He said overseas all by himself. My boy got converted. Franklin got converted overseas alone.

It was wonderful. He said, you know, we've had tremendous trouble with him all his life. He said in a wonderful Christian psychiatrist said to me and to Ruth said, Billy and Ruth, whatever you do, always love that boy.

Love that boy. No matter what he does, keep the door open loving. And we always did.

But he said, our boy just, he just didn't know God. And I remember I tried to witness to Franklin when he was in school in East Texas at Latino college. And I was at East Texas Baptist.

I called Franklin. I'd heard about him. Some of the things he was doing, his life was not consistent.

And I loved him. I wanted to see him. He had talked to me on the phone, but he wouldn't get with me.

And I wanted to minister to him. Well, God ministered to Franklin overseas alone. Franklin got saved.

T.W. Wilson sitting there by Billy said, James, you should have seen Franklin at his wedding. When Dr. Graham did the wedding a short time ago, Billy was up doing the wedding and Franklin was standing there

with his little bride. And suddenly he said, excuse me, dad.

And he just turned around and faced the hundreds of family friends. And the son of the most famous preacher that's ever lived. The most famous evangelist turned around and said, I broke my mother and dad's heart.

Many, many times I lived so outside the will of God and I'd heard my dad preach, but he said, I didn't know Jesus. And he said, alone overseas, I got down on my knees and I met Jesus and Jesus came into my heart. And I just want to say to mother and dad and all of you, I'm so sorry for all that ever happened in my life, but I want you to know Jesus changed my life.

And now then Franklin Graham has a marvelous mission ministry called Samaritan's Purse and other mission endeavors. And his life's been changed. Franklin Graham's a changed person.

You just get around and you can tell he's different. Now, here is a son of the most famous preacher in the world. I told that story one night, a teenage boy caught me after the service and he was crying.

He said it was Sunday night and I'd been busy with the teenagers after we'd had a huge stadium service. And I went over to the fellowship with young people. This kid caught me.

He said last night, he said, I was drunk and on drugs. He said, I live on drugs. He said, my daddy's the pastor of the biggest church in this town.

And he said, he's one of the leaders in your crusade here. And he said, he said, I'm in such a mess. And he said, what happened to Franklin Graham has got to happen to me.

He said, I can't stand it anymore. And that boy sat down over on the bleachers there in the fellowship area where we were meeting and he gave his life to Christ. He was saved right there gloriously.

Listen, folks, there are many of you who've been in church all your life, don't even know Jesus Christ. I'll tell you something. Over this building tonight, there are very, very kindhearted people who really are into religion, who don't even know Jesus.

There are some of you who've been turned off by religion. You've been turned off by church. Some of you think you've been turned off by God.

You don't even know God. I mean, this building tonight is filled with people who've never, never met Jesus Christ. Now, if we're going to examine ourselves to see whether we'd be in the faith, how would we best do that? Would we not best do it by allowing the Holy Spirit who challenged us to examine ourselves, to allow the Holy Spirit to take the holy word of God and examine us? Could we do that tonight? I want you to turn in your Bible to the seventh chapter of Matthew, the seventh chapter of Matthew, and we're going to examine ourselves tonight.

The Holy Spirit is going to search our heart and we're going to see whether or not we're of the faith. Understand that we're not examining you tonight to see whether or not you are a church person. We're not examining you to see whether or not you're religious.

We're not examining you to see if you're a Baptist or a Pentecostal or a Catholic. Two of the greatest testimonies I've heard in the past six months have come from Catholic priests who were born again by the power of God. I met one of these priests just a few weeks ago in Lakeland, Florida.

He spoke after I spoke. He not only was born again, he got married. He married Jesus.

He married him a wife. And I want to tell you, he's so anointed of God. It's beautiful.

He's full of Jesus. There are people in every church who don't know God, so we're not examining you tonight to see whether or not you've got a religious pedigree. We want to know whether or not you're in the faith, whether you're of Christ.

Verse 13, Matthew chapter 7, the words of Jesus, Enter by the narrow gate, for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to, what? Destruction. And how many? Many there be which enter by it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to, what? If I pause and we're reading, you put the word in.

If I just pause and do that, that means it's your turn. That leads to life and, and few. Did I say that? Who said that? Few there be that find it.

Why is this? Because of the false prophets. Do you want to know why there are few that find the way of life? Because of false prophets. What does a false prophet do? Well, look, it says he comes to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly he's a ravenous wolf, a raging wolf.

He looks good. Folks, false prophets don't look like wolves. They look like ministers of righteousness.

False prophets don't come in and stand up and put the spotlight on and say, behold, a false prophet. They don't come in and say, I'm here to deceive you. They come disguising themselves as ministers of righteousness.

Just like Satan describes himself as an angel of light. Many people think they've heard God. They heard the angel of death, an angel of destruction, an angel of deception, an angel of division.

Many preachers think they got a vision from God. What they got was a spirit of divination of the devil coming to them and telling them to use God's people to do this and this and such. And so we use the people of God like slave labor to build vain visions.

Vanity fills the pulpits of our land more than truth. We trample on the people, use them. Let's look good.

We want to look good on the report. We use the same measuring stick the world uses and God over and over in the minor prophets, one particular place in Micah, he says the same thing in Amos. He says it in several other, the minor prophets, he emphasizes it in Isaiah and in Jeremiah that you're using a crooked measure and you're using a false scales.

In other words, your standard of measurement speaks. It's not what God uses. God uses the word of God.

You use the world. In other words, bigger is better. We got to look bigger.

We got to be bigger. That's not necessarily the case. I'll tell you one thing.

If you ever get right with God and you really flow in the power of the Holy Spirit, you're going to grow, but it's not going to be by might nor by power, but by his spirit. And the people are going to come because people are hurting. They want help and Jesus helps people.

But you can be big and not even be right with God. So you use the wrong standard. We've got false prophets.

You know what false prophets do? They bring forth bad fruit. Look what he says in verse 16. You will know them by their fruit.

Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes. You're not going to go out here in an old briar patch and get grapes. Not figs from thistles are they? You're not going to get good fruit from a bad bush.

Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit. And can a bad tree produce good fruit? Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

You will know them. This is talking about the prophets. You'll know the preachers.

You'll know the pastors. You'll know the evangelists by their fruit. Now let me tell you what happens to most prophets.

They become more interested in making good Baptists and good Pentecostals and good Catholics than they are making disciples of Jesus Christ. And my friend, if you will keep all the Baptist rules, rule 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and all the Pentecostal rules, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and all the Methodist rules, and all the Church of God rules, and all the disciples of Christ rules, and all the Catholic rules, then you can fit in that group and totally ignore the Word of God. Because those men have nicely set aside the commandments of God and in vain teach the traditions of man.

God talks about these false prophets in Jeremiah 23 and Ezekiel 34. Make a marginal note. But He talks about them dividing the people of God.

He talks about them not taking care of the sickly. He talks about them not binding up the bruised. He talks about them crying peace when there is no peace.

There's a spiritual war. There's an enemy in the land and we've got to drive him out in Jesus' name. And they say, let's just keep the peace.

Hang in there. I don't want anybody disrupting the service. Listen, we wouldn't want Jesus to come in.

He does things that smash tradition. His services are a little messy sometimes. He messed up everything those religionists believed to this day.

I think He did it on purpose. Did you notice how hacked they were that He kept healing people on the Sabbath day? I think He got to do with making a thing out of that. Some of His biggest miracles were right on the Sabbath day.

They didn't like that. Say, you got six other days. Get healed on the other days, not this day.

Don't heal on this. Can you imagine? They never noticed people were well. Blind people seeing, lame people leaping, paralyzed people running.

And all they can say is, He's not doing it our way. That doesn't look like Baptist stuff to me. It's never happened this way before.

They said that specifically in Matthew 9. It's never happened like that in Israel before. Listen, it's never happened the way He does it where you go to church, most likely. I want to tell you something.

When He just comes in, it'll blow you out. He's going to mess up your traditions. He's going to start some mainline denominationalists.

He's going to start some Baptists that think they're pretty stiff and untraditional. He's going to shake them. And He's going to stop some Pentecostals from shaking that think they got to help God out by shaking the devil out of everybody.

He's going to mess up your traditions. Some of you don't believe the power of God comes on anybody and knocks them down. You're going to get knocked back.

Some of you just dying for Him to knock you down. You're not going to feel afraid because He doesn't want you trusting senses or feelings or experiences. He wants you to trust in Him.

He wants you to believe Him. If you never see it happen, you don't believe in salvation because you saw somebody get saved. You believe in salvation because it's forever settled in heaven.

It is the Word of God. You don't believe in healing because somebody got healed. You believe in healing because Jesus is healed.

If you never see anybody get healed, you don't witness because you always win the lost. You witness because He said, you are my witnesses. And you witness and He gives the increase.

You don't determine what you believe by what you see. To the contrary, you determine what you believe by what is said if you never see it. And then you see it.

And you're not the controller of when you see it because He said, it's not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father put in His own power. You don't know when it's going to rain. And you don't know when the power will be released.

You just do what I said. And you will bring forth fruit. And it'll remain because it's eternal.

And whatever you ask, I'll do it. But the time is mine. You may not see your prayer answered tomorrow.

But I answer your prayers. You may pray three years before you see the answer. But prayer works.

You believe me. A false prophet will say, just, let's just, let's get along now. And you stay away from that crowd up the street there.

I heard some things going on up there we can't explain. Boy, that's the kind of meeting I want to go to. You let that little woman get around town.

I'll be there at that meeting. I love a meeting that no man can control. I like one that gets out of control.

And under God's control. I've heard a little murmuring among the preachers saying, oh, we're a little bit concerned about what's going on through the ministry that James Robinson's involved in now. I think we preachers are losing control.

Let me confirm it. You are. God is taking control.

God's about to take over. But I want to tell you, if you're one of these preachers that likes to have everything under your control, you're real nervous. Boy, he'll get you uptight if you like to always be in

charge.

Because there's a greater than you. He demands to be in charge. He's taking over his flock.

He said, I'm going to shepherd him. You didn't shepherd him. I'm going to come.

David's going to shepherd him. I'll do it. He also says he'll raise up shepherds from among them.

And he will. That scares preachers too. Where'd you get your credentials to teach the Bible? He said to Holy Spirit.

It's interesting that Paul never conferred with flesh and blood. He had Peter, James, and John. Didn't talk to any of them.

He said, I got nothing from those of reputation. He was downright sarcastic about it. He said, I even went up and saw Cephas.

I didn't get anything there. As a matter of fact, I had to straighten him out. I'm telling you, Paul got with the Holy Spirit.

And the Holy Spirit taught him. John emphasized that you have need that no man teach you. You have an unction of the Holy Spirit.

Now, that doesn't mean we don't appreciate teachers and pastors and preachers. We do. But we don't make man our source.

Why? Same thing I'm preaching right here. Because false prophets have gone to the world. That's why John said in 1 John 4, you must discern spirits.

Why? Because many false prophets have gone into the earth. And if a prophet is not confessing Jesus Christ as Lord, that means he's doing exactly what Jesus says. He's doing the ministry of Jesus, saying what Jesus says, doing what Jesus does.

He's a false prophet. Jesus is not his Lord. And he's going to bring forth bad fruit.

I'm telling you, it's bad fruit for us to be good old Pentecostals and good old Baptists and good old Methodists. You say, can't Methodists and Pentecostals and Baptists be good Christians? Yes, but not good old Baptists. Because they just love the whole body.

I mean, they just really love one another. And then the world knows you're his disciples, not just church folks. Man, you've had it up here with church folks.

Some of you are sick of yourself and didn't know why. This is why. You're so busy being religious because that's what man made you to be.

You keep our rules, you can stay. You break our rules, you can't stay. We've even got key questions we'll ask just whether or not you can stay.

We're making religious people, not disciples of Jesus. It's bad fruit. Put your marker there in Matthew 7, or your piece of paper or pencil or something.

But turn over to Luke chapter 13 for a moment. Don't lose Matthew 7. Hang on to it. We'll be right back.

Luke 13, beginning at verse 22. Are you there? Luke 13, 22. And he was passing through from one city and village to another, teaching and proceeding on his way to Jerusalem.

And someone said to him, Lord, there are just a few who are being saved. And he, Jesus said to them, strive to enter by the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, you say, now I want it. Saying, Lord, open up to us. Then he will answer and say to you, I do not know where you're from.

I don't know you. Then you'll begin to say, we ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets. And he will say, I tell you, I do not know where you're from.

Depart from me, all you evildoers. And there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth there when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being cast out. He was saying this to religious people.

He talked about those outside the kingdom coming into the kingdom, but he said the sons of the kingdom will be in outer darkness. You grew up with your religious heritage, which you don't even know. Who is going to be there? Back over to Matthew chapter seven, verse 21, quickly.

Let Jesus speak to you. Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, you may say, Lord, Lord, Lord. Not everyone who says this will enter the kingdom of heaven.

But he who does what? The will of my father who is in heaven. We're not talking about earning our salvation. We're talking about a salvation that works grace into your life.

We're talking about a salvation when received creates in you a new heart, a new spirit, a new desire, a new direction, makes you a new creation. We're not talking about legalism, doing the law to be saved. We're talking about a new creation who has the law giver living in him.

And it's as natural to keep the law of Jesus when he is Lord of your life as it is to take a breath of air. I don't walk around saying, I gotta do this. I gotta do this.

I gotta do this. Let me tell you, every person that's doing that, I want you to hear this. You're lost.

You're lost. Right now, you're headed for hell. Every one of you.

I gotta do this. And I gotta do this. And I'm trying to do this.

And I gotta do this. Oh, God. No.

It's no strain for me to forgive somebody. I don't have to stop and think, I gotta forgive them. I want you to know our churches are full of people who say, I know I ought to forgive, but I can't forgive.

I've gotta forgive. I will forgive if it kills me. Somebody said, I gotta witness.

Oh, God, I gotta witness. I gotta go visit. Oh, my God.

I gotta make three visits tonight. Oh, God. I don't think that way.

There's a spirit of a forgiver living in me. It's not hard for me to forgive people. It's hard for me not to.

It's not hard for me to witness. I have to quench the spirit of the living Jesus not to witness. You see, the lawgiver and the law keeper is Lord in my life.

He changed my life. I talk to him. He talks to me.

I know I'm saying, you can't heap enough guilt on me to make me wonder. You can't get up and say, you don't remember the date and you don't remember your prayer. You're lost.

I'm not trusting a system to get me saved. I'm not trusting a plan to get me saved. I know Jesus Christ.

He's in my life. He is my Lord. He is more real to me than you.

I don't exaggerate when I tell you that. Jesus Christ is real in my life. He's alive.

I talk to him. He talks to me. I've been appalled.

I've been amazed. I've been horrified. And I meet people sitting in church and trying to be Christians and they don't know God.

We have such great fellowship. He loves me. I do what he says because he's in my heart.

If I miss it and I see it here and I didn't do it here, I line up with this. I've got a reputation of changing a lot. They say, you change a lot.

People want me to be ashamed of that. Oh my, I change a lot. Oh God, I'll quit.

I'll quit changing a lot. I'll be like the rest of you. Bless God.

That's the way the world operates. I had a man ask me the other day. He said, I keep hearing people say, where's James Robinson going? Where's he going anyway? We keep wondering where you're going to end up.

They're trying to put guilt on me. Try to beat me down. I don't know where I'm going.

I looked at that man and I said, you know what? Bless God, I don't know where I'm going. Now man, that confounds the wives in their own eyes because the world always, if you're going to succeed, you've got to have a plan. You've got to work your plan.

You've got to stay on target. Man, people try to track me in. They say, where's he going next? What's he doing going over here? What's he over there for? Listen to me.

God whispered in my ear that day. He said, did you ever hear about a man who went out not knowing whether, not knowing where he was going? Did you ever read about a man who went out not knowing where he was going because he was looking for a city whose builder and maker is God? God said, you know who that was? I said, he said, Abraham, the father of the faith. He said, did you ever hear about a man who was strong in the Lord, who led my people? And I told him to take the Ark of the Covenant on the shoulders of the priests and the Levites and go after it.

Because I'm going to lead you in a way you've never been before. He said, if you even try to look at it, it'll kill you. I'm going to take you where you've never been.

You know, that was what God told me two years ago when God set me free. He said, I'm going to lead you in a way you've never been before. If you had told me I'd be standing and watching people being knocked flat on the floor by the power of God, people who didn't even believe God do that.

We've had people walk down the hall outside and God knock them on the floor and they'd be laying out there on the floor and everybody leaves. Just laying down the power of God on them. You tell me I'm going to see people healed of every kind of disease just because people sitting out here start praying for each other? I'm going to see little believers turn to one another in the crowd, some with tumors, some with cancer, some with diseases and turn and put their little hands on them and the power of God come through them so that they almost look like a light bulb and the power of God released.

You tell me I'm going to see that? I'd have told you you're crazy. But I was going to see God do everything that he said he wanted to do? I don't know. You say, where are you? I don't know.

I just know who I'm going with. That's all I know. And that's just the most wonderful thing in the peace.

I'm going to start with Jesus and I'm going to walk with Jesus and I'm going to end up with Jesus. And just wherever he is, that's where I want to be. Don't let somebody put intimidation on you.

You know where you're going? They say, I don't know. I just go on with Jesus. Let's go on with Jesus.

That's the way Peter and John Paul and James, that's the way they all went. Just go with God. Go with God.

That's the way you go. Folks, I don't have to force myself to live for Jesus. Jesus is in me.

That's the reason why. Hey, listen, that's the reason why I can have the biggest crowds any man my age had ever had in this country. One of the biggest ministries in the country.

As many people saved. There's not many people, a million people come to Christ and me try to kill myself and me want to die. Why you say, why did that happen? because I got caught by religion, and I began to try to play the part that was expected of me.

Make everybody look good. If you come in and double our membership, come in and get us several hundred baptisms, what God showed me is, He said, you're making two-fold more the sons I have. He said, James, you're running all over this country, and you're making those churches look good that clench their fist in my face every week.

And God told me He was going to knock me so flat that I might not be able to get up if I again began to make look good what He was trying to expose. God is not high on idolatry. He's not interested in you making more of what we've got.

He's interested in you making disciples of Jesus Christ who do exactly what Jesus says, who do the ministry of Jesus Christ. Listen, why would I be willing to leave everything I'd ever worked hard to achieve? Why would I be willing to turn my back on my reputation and my peer acceptance and the praise of man and expose myself? Why? Because there is a Jesus living in me that loves you more than I love me. I love Him and I love you.

That Jesus says, you've got to change, you've got to change. That cry was in my heart because I'm saved. I'm saved.

And that's why I had to change, to do the will of the Father. I'm going to tell you something. If your reputation is more important than the will of the Father, with all my heart, I don't believe you know the Father.

I believe you worship your flesh and you worship yourself and I'm going to show you in a few moments what God Almighty says you're going to have. You're not going to have eternal life. Let's go right to the end of this passage right here.

Stay with me in the Word of God. Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father in heaven. Verse 22, many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not preach, prophesy in your name, and in your name we cast out demons, and in your name we did miracles? But then I will declare to them, I never knew you.

I never knew you. Depart from me, you who work iniquity, practice lawlessness. Those have to be the saddest words I've ever read in the Bible.

Depart from me, I never knew you. Listen, he's gonna say that to so many people sitting here tonight. It's enough to make you just, make your heart split.

Break your heart. You say, James, how do we know? If you know him, it's in your heart to do his will. It's in your heart to do his ministry.

Turn just a few pages back to Matthew chapter 4, the last three verses, 23 through 25, and I want you to look at the ministry of Jesus, which the church today, in the 20th century by and large, ridicules and makes a mockery of this kind of ministry. I want you to look what Jesus did. Verse 23, Matthew chapter 4, and Jesus was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom.

The gospel of the kingdom. You know what that means? That means kingdom living. The gospel of the kingdom is the gospel that comes not in word only, but in power.

In power. The gospel of the kingdom is the gospel that causes the believer to move into kingdom living, to understand that he is doing battle in the spiritual realm, and he is no longer wrestling with flesh and blood. His battle's not with folks.

His battle's with spiritual enemies. You understand where the real war is fought, and I want to tell you that all the forces of hell have committed themselves to seeing to it that you never understand the authority that is yours, the church, in the heavenlies. This is the mystery Paul talked about in Ephesians 3, to make known not only that the Gentiles are coming, but to be made known to the rulers in the heavenlies.

What? The authority of the church. Brother, we got churches playing religious worldly games who never touch the supernatural. Brother, we don't pray for the sick anymore.

We pray for the doctors, and then all the time going to the doctor to get well, telling everybody God made us sick. That's why we can't get well. If God made you sick, what are you doing paying a doctor to fight God? I want you to know if you believe God Almighty made you sick, it's a sin for you to go to a doctor.

You've asked that doctor to fight God. You're in a battle with a destroyer. You're in a battle with one who wants to take away your rights.

You're in a battle with the same kind that came in and plundered Israel and tried to take away their promised land victory. You're in a battle with the hordes of hell. That's the kingdom you live in, and you have no idea how the enemy has gotten strongholds in the lives of believers right here tonight who really know the law, but the devil's got you totally whipped, and he's taught you to ignore it.

Play like he doesn't even exist. Demons died and went out when the Holy Ghost went out, went out with the apostles. What a bunch of junk.

Why do you think Jesus Christ told you to deal with them if they were going to go bye-bye? Who do you think it is beating your brains out all week, men? Who do you think it is making you lust like you do, and think the way you think, and be hateful like you are, and unforgiving, and self-pity, and intimidation, and that spirit of rejection, and all that garbage? Who do you think's putting that on you, the Holy Spirit? You're in a war, and you can win this war. Brother, I've been taught to ignore it. I didn't understand living in the kingdom.

I didn't understand the power and authority that you and I have in Jesus' name over diseases. I haven't said one thing against doctors. And those who misrepresent us say, James, against doctors.

Listen, I'm not against doctors. I'm just for the great physician. He's better than doctors.

But I want to tell you, it's good to be healthy, and I need a doctor. But thank God for doctors, Jesus referred to the good Samaritan as the good neighbor and told us to do likewise, and he bound the wounds of the one that was hurt. Jesus said, do this.

It's not wrong to fight sickness and disease if you're a doctor or anybody trying to help each other. But I want to tell you, it's better to have the power in Jesus' name to rebuke the fever, to rebuke the infection, to rebuke diseases, and see it work. And that's an authority that God wants us to learn to live in.

We're not doing very good at it, but that's where we're to go. And that doesn't mean we don't appreciate doctors. Thank God for them.

Jesus preached the kingdom, the gospel of the kingdom. And look what else he did. And what? Healing.

Every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people, this is what Jesus did. And we make fun of people who pray for the sick. You know, this is the saddest thing.

I go around the country now. Pastors, I don't know if you've heard this or not, but I'm going to meet with probably 60 to 100 pastors, and invariably they're going to ask me, Well, if you come here for a crusade, are you going to have a healing line? Are you going to pray for the sick? I mean, let me ask you, what's wrong if you did? Let me tell you why we make a big deal out of this thing about a healing line. Are you going to have a healing line? I will agree more readily than anyone that we have merchandised the gifts of God.

We've merchandised healing. We've made a mockery of God. We've abused the truth, so others are refusing the truth.

But let me ask you something. Why has there ever been a healing line on the face of this earth? You know who had the longest healing lines? Jesus. The whole town would line up.

You can read the last verses of Luke 4, and it says he laid his hands on every one of them. My friend, hundreds or thousands, he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. And we make fun of it.

We make fun of it. Why do we have healing lines? Because you're fortunate if you can find one person that will pray for sick people. That's the only way they can get through.

Do you realize the testimony twofold of somebody praying for sick people? Twofold. Number one, do you understand the love and the compassion and the patience it takes for somebody to sit there and wait and pray for sick people? I don't want any pastor in the whole state of Florida to ever say to me, I don't believe in healing lines. Because I want you to know that every pastor that has ever counseled with someone who had a broken heart, a broken home, a broken marriage, or a broken mind has healing lines.

And they line up all day to come to his office. This business of ridiculing one another and Jesus has got to stop. It takes love to sit there and pray for sick people.

Let me show you something else. Can you see the faith, the love, and the confidence in God that requires precious little hurting people to wait and to line up and wait for somebody to pray for them? And then we're going to stand off and get up in these pulpits and call ourselves prophets of God and make fun of people trying to touch the hurting. Every work of the flesh is an abomination to God.

I don't care if you're merchandising people's hurts and parading sick flesh. All that's not what God wants. But don't you turn off what Jesus does because of what any man did.

You do what Jesus does. And brother, I don't care what the label is on the outside of your church until you go in that church and in your churches and you commit yourselves to do the ministry of Jesus, which means get involved with people's hurts. And start doing it.

All you're doing is clenching your fist in God's face and you're playing religious games and chances are great that you don't even know Jesus Christ. I'll tell you something. If you'll start doing the ministry of Jesus, there won't be a healing line.

The people will be lining up to pray for the sick rather than the sick lining up to get prayed for. You'll have somebody say, I don't feel good. And the whole church will just gather around and pray for them.

That's power. I've had that happen to me. I told the Valley View Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky.

I said, I got a sore throat. I'm sick. And one of the deacons said, well, let's pray for him.

And I thought I was being mobbed. 700 people around that platform praying for me. Man, I had to get well.

The only way I could get out of that is get well. I got well right there on the platform. I've never seen such love pressed on me.

I'm being very honest with you. When I got up from the floor, I was well. And boy, the Lord just seemed to say to me, if my people would come together and pray like this for each other, man, only heaven can record what I would do.

Instead of analyzing everything, just pray. You say, well, what if I don't get well? Well, don't stop. What if you witness and they don't get saved? You're going to quit? What if people make decisions and they don't live it? You're going to stop believing God? No.

Just do what God says. Amen? This is the ministry of Jesus, folks. Look what he did.

Verse 24. I'm telling you, people will come when Jesus' ministry is being accomplished. Turn over to Luke chapter 4 very quickly.

Look at the ministry of Jesus. Verse 18. Jesus is teaching in the synagogue and he picks up the book Isaiah and he reads the prophecy concerning himself.

Luke 4, 18. And the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, Jesus, because he's anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor and he sent me to proclaim the release to the captive, set people free, and the recovery of sight to the blind and to set free, set free those who are bruised, who are downtrodden, and to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord. You know what that means? That means the year of jubilee.

Look here. The favorable year of the Lord is when God gave back to his people everything that the enemies had plundered and taken away from them. Everything they'd lost, it was restored.

And he proclaims that. You know what that means? He wants to give back to you everything the enemy ever took away from you. Then he wants to give you the capacity to overcome your fear.

Perfect love casts out fear. He wants you to be able to walk in boldness and courage. He wants you to walk with a spirit of love and power and a sound mind.

Not a spirit of timidity or fear. He doesn't want you to live that way. He wants you free.

He wants you to be an overcomer and to do the ministry of Jesus. In two different places. One place in Matthew 16 and in Matthew chapter 3. And listen to what Jesus said.

He said, if you try to save your life, you hang on. You're going to lose it. But he said, if you lose your life for my sake, you're going to find it.

You're going to find it. Have you ever really lost your life for Jesus' sake? Or did you just add religion to your repertoire? It's something else you've got in your little agenda of activities. It's just something else you sort of carry along.

I watch so many kids in churches. Teenagers. You know, just church is something you sort of got to do.

They don't know God. Boy, it breaks my heart. It's hip-hip-hooray down at the church.

Hip-hip-hooray in the choir. Hip-hip-hooray in Sunday school. There's no hunger for God.

Sunday school teachers, ushers, deacons, elders, stewards. No hunger for God. Here's church.

Man, they look bored. There's nothing there. You don't do the ministry of Jesus.

You say, James, how do we know if we're saying that Jesus in you is living to do his ministry through you? And every moment that you quench this, it's agony to you. And if somebody just says, hey, here it is, let it go, your heart will leap toward that. When somebody told me I could be free.

When somebody told me I didn't have to live bound. I said, I want that. And God wanted to give it to me.

I want whatever God's got. He'll give it to me. Turn over to Matthew 25, and let's find out where you sit tonight before God.

God's going to reveal himself. God's going to show us where we are before him. Begin at verse 31.

Let the word of God speak to you. But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne, and all the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate them one from another as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will put the sheep on his right and the goats on the left.

Then the king will say to those on his right, come, you who are blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom. This is the kingdom of heaven, the eternal kingdom, prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat.

And I was thirsty, and you gave me drink. And I was a stranger, and you invited me in. I was naked, and you clothed me.

I was sick, and you visited me. I was in prison, and you came to me. Then the righteous will answer him, saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you, or thirsty, and give you to drink? When did we see you a stranger, and invite you, or naked, and clothe you? When did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you? And the king Jesus will answer and say to them, truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of mine, even the least of them, you did it to me.

And then he will also say to those on his left, depart from me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire, which has been prepared for the devil, and his angels, his messengers. For I was hungry, and you gave me nothing to eat. And I was thirsty, and you gave me nothing to drink.

And I was a stranger, and you did not invite me in. I was naked, and you did not clothe me. I was sick, and in prison, and you did not visit me.

And they themselves will answer, saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and not take care of you? And then he will answer them, saying, truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did it not to me. And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. My friend, look right here.

The saved endure to the end. Those that endure to the end shall be saved. The saved man will do the ministry of Jesus.

You will do it to the least of these, his brethren. Now I want you to watch. What did Jesus say? Jesus said, I was hungry, and you fed me.

What does God feed? Hungry sheep. What did Jesus say man must live by, while not living by bread alone? If you do not give people the word of God, you have not done the ministry of Jesus. If you do not give them the word of God, you did not feed them when they were hungry.

They're hungry for this. I want to tell you that every preacher in this city who has a heart for God and loves the sheep, if he hears that there's a feeding station across town, he will plead with his people to go. Let me tell you the kind of revival that's coming.

The kind of revival that's coming so that if a pastor stands and looks at his flock, and he knows the pastor up the street's got a series of sermons going that will build a flock, he'll take his church down to that church if they have to stand on the street to hear the word of God coming from the other pastor. That's the spirit of Jesus. The spirit of Jesus is not protect your bunch, keep them under your thumb.

The spirit of Jesus is get them to the food. That is the reason why God put in my heart to turn to other men all over this country who are gifted. Listen, men who are more gifted than I am to do various things in the body of Christ.

Dudley Hall can teach far superior to anything I can do. Jim Hilton in many, many ways can preach in a way I can't preach and teach and expound the word. That's why I say listen.

That's why I've tried to get the church to listen to Peter Lord, the pastor in Titusville, Florida, who's heard God. That's why I have pled with people to listen to men like John Wimber, who is an apostle today, I believe, in the ministry of healing. The power of God is all over John Wimber, and he hardly raises his voice, and people fall before the power of God.

And he can read your mail before you even get in the building, and it's real, and he's brilliant. And I say, church, hear this man. Hear Jesus.

See, I want you to eat the word of God. That's why I would turn to a carpet cleaner by the name of Milton Green, who's only got a ninth grade education, and beg the church of Jesus Christ, and beg the preachers to come and sit down and listen to this layman read the Bible to you because he's heard God. Even though it meant my reputation was smashed.

I don't care. I read the word of God that said make of yourself no reputation. I want the body of Christ to have food.

Why do you not want to feed people the word of God? You don't even feed it to your children. You don't build their faith. You tear it down.

You can get some people in your church trying to believe God, and you make fun of them, and then you call yourself a Christian. Brother, I've watched little believers get so caught up in Jesus, they just believe God for everything. Some of the things they believe God for are foolish.

They didn't even say it in His word. But I'm not going to ridicule them. I'm going to love them, and if they stumble, I'm not going to stop them.

I'm going to pick them up. I'm going to teach them to get in the word. This is what Jesus says you to do.

He says, I was thirsty. Give them the water of life. He said, I was a stranger.

You invited me in. We don't invite strangers in. We want to know what your pedigree is.

We look more at the carton and the container than we do Jesus that's in people. You ever turn somebody off because you don't like the carton? You may be turning away angels unaware. You better be careful how you treat people.

Some of these little people in your church you've got to turn your nose up at, they're the very ones God's going to use the most if you quit stomping on them. I was an alien. I was outside.

I was lost, but you took me in. You cared about me. I was a stranger.

I might have even been a Gentile. Hey, I might have been a charismatic. And you loved me.

I mean, I was a this or a that and you loved me. See, whatever. We just love one another.

See, we don't do that today. And Jesus says you don't know me. Look at this.

I was naked and you clothed me. What does that mean? I was naked. Hey, what is nakedness? You're not being covered by the righteousness of Jesus.

You know what that means, folks? That means you're a Christian and you flopped. You failed. You messed up.

Your nakedness was exposed. And what do we do with each other when they fail today? We shout it from the housetops what the other Christian did. Did you hear what so and so did? We make mockery of them.

But Jesus said, wait a minute. I was naked and you didn't visit me. You didn't clothe me.

You know where you're going? You're going to go to hell. Because you see, I was naked. I was exposed.

And you covered me. How do you cover it? Love covers a multitude of sins. That's why divorcees never feel comfortable in church anymore.

You say you're trying to say it's all right to get a divorce. I believe it's one of the most tragic things and greatest sins in the life of mankind is divorce. But I'm going to tell you something.

When it's happened, cover them with a whole lot of love. Try to hit it off. Show them that although it looks like it's the only way, it's not the right way.

Show them that. But when it's happened and if it's happened, just love them. And no matter what's happened, love them, folks.

Isn't it a shame that people get in trouble and they don't feel like they can go to church? Somebody gets caught in the act of immorality and the whole church lines up to stone them. Oh, it's got to change. We had a young man come before our church last year and confess adultery.

He'd been caught and everybody knew about it. He was a singer. He came and confessed it.

First Baptist Church. The pastor got up and said he wants to tell you here's his wife. She came up in front of everybody and said, I forgive him.

By the way, that's the Christian way. You need to forgive. The little wife was practicing the Christian life.

That young man sang in our church Sunday morning, did a beautiful job. He magnified the Lord and the people. It's been about a year ago, I guess eight months ago, that he came and confessed.

It's so easy to push them out. Let me ask you something. What if you got caught in everything you've done? What if we just told everybody tonight everything you'd ever done? Would there be anybody here who'd say, I wish there'd be somebody who'd cover me? Well, Jesus' disciples covered me.

I was out in California the other day and there was a pastor of a great big church that talked about how he had had an affair. He said he got involved with a woman in a choir. Boy, he was so ashamed.

God, he was ashamed. He didn't have to tell me. I didn't know.

He said it was terrible. He said, my church, they have forgiven me. He said, boy, it's been awful.

It's been awful. But he said they love me. Boy, I thought, how unusual.

That's a really touchy thing, isn't it? It's a horrible thing. But I'm going to tell you something. We're going to have to learn to live in righteousness and we're going to have to learn to cover nakedness by getting people right with God.

And that's what Jesus wants to do. He doesn't tolerate sin, including the sin of not loving one another. But we've got to do it.

This is the ministry of Jesus. I was in prison. You visited me.

This is not an endorsement of prison ministries, although Jesus is for prison ministries. This is an endorsement for setting captives free. Jesus says you see those people all bound up out there by religious tradition.

You see those people bound up by the devil, bound up by lust, bound up by a spirit of bondage and slavery. Get them free. That's what you want to do.

You want to get people free. That's the ministry of Jesus. Listen, if you don't do this, you don't want to do it, and you're not going to do it, Jesus said, I'm going to say to you, I was there and you never came.

Depart from me. I don't love you. I want to ask you tonight, if you really know Jesus, is he really living in you tonight? Is he crying out to express himself to you? Are you going to let him? If you know him, you can hardly wait to repent of every way in which you haven't pleased him.

And you know what repentance means? It means not only that you agree with him and that you change your mind, but as a result of that you change your walk. And you know what repentance is in your heart? It's a commitment to God to say this, God, I'll never do it again. Most people don't ever repent.

They just say, I wish I hadn't gotten caught. I wish maybe I hadn't done it. But they don't ever come to say, by the grace of God, I'll never do it again.

That's repentance. And then when you do it again, if you do, it'll break your heart, because your repentance was changed. If you're saved, you want to repent.

You really want to repent. But there are those of you here tonight who never have even come to know Jesus Christ in your heart. You're religious, you belong to some kind of church perhaps, but you do not even know Jesus in your heart.

You've never been saved. You don't do his ministry because he's not living in here. You don't communicate with him because you've never met him.

You need to come to meet him tonight. You need to be willing to humble yourself before the whole world and say, I never knew you, Lord. I joined a church.

I tried to do better. I got baptized or christened. But Lord, I never met you.

And you're going to have to swallow your pride and come and say, I want to give my life to Jesus Christ tonight. Don't wait for him to say, depart from me. I never knew you.

You come to him and say, Jesus, I come to you like a child, but I'm not coming to religious systems. I'm coming to you, Jesus, and I want you to be my Lord and my Savior. Don't go out of here tonight and not know Jesus Christ.

Please don't leave here and not know Jesus. With all my heart, I sense that for some of you, this will be the last time God's going to call you to come. And you never come to God when you get ready.

You come to God when he says, come, and you come, and you come to God, not to religion. You come to Jesus, not to men, to Jesus. And you need to come to him tonight.

He's here. He wants you. And he wants to change your life so that you'll no longer stop to say, what do men think? Or what about that religious system? No, you'll just come to say, Jesus, whatever you say, that's what I'm going to do.

And you come to Jesus as Lord of Lords and King of Kings. That's how you come. You come to give him your life.

That's what you need to do tonight. Some of you who have met him, he has rebuked you tonight. You've let men influence you, and you're not doing his ministry.

You need to come in repentance tonight and get right with God. This is James Robison. Now I want to personally share with you for just a moment.

It is my prayer that the message you've heard has been used of the Lord to speak to you, to inspire you, if you are a believer, to walk according to the word of God because that is one of the expressions of love and fruit bearing in the life of any believer, to heed the word, not merely be a hearer, but actually be a doer. I believe that what you've heard will enable you to share the true message and meaning of salvation with others. If you have not the assurance in your heart now that Jesus Christ is in fact your Lord, I want to speak to you personally for a moment because it's my desire, as I know it is the heart's desire of our God and our Father that you personally know Jesus Christ.

We're talking about a relationship. We're not talking about a ritual. We're not talking about a religion.

We're talking about a personal relationship with a living God who desires to be your Father, your Heavenly Father, your personal Father. And He has made it possible for you to enter this relationship with Him through Jesus Christ, His Son. Jesus gave His life for you.

He died for you. He's been raised to live in resurrection power in your life now, making you a new creation in Christ. Holding to religion and to ritual and to practice is not salvation.

You need to enter by faith as a child into a personal relationship now with God. My wife, as an example, was a very active religionist. She was a very good, wholesome, pure, sweet person.

She was the finest, most wholesome person I had ever known and ever have known. She seemed to do everything right. She was extremely active in religious circles.

As an example, she taught Sunday school every week. She was the president of the youth choir. She sang in the adult choir.

She sang special music. She sang in musical youth groups. She sang solos and duets with her sister and with other groups.

She was just as active in Bible study and teaching and in soul winning. I watched her win four girls to Christ by sharing the gospel message in the New Testament with them in one week. So she was a very active person, zealous for religion.

But one night, Betty and I went to a meeting and on the way from that meeting, having heard a testimony of salvation, a very simple testimony, Betty was crying. I said, What's wrong with you? She said, James, I don't know if I'm saved. I remembered that on an earlier occasion I was talking to her on one of our dates concerning how real Jesus is in my life.

I said, Jesus is as real to me as you are, Betty. She said, Jesus is not that real to me. He's just someone I've always heard about.

So on this particular night, I referred to a moment ago when she said, I don't know if I'm saved. I started to remind her, Well, if he's not real, then Betty, you must not be saved. And then I remembered that she's the best girl I've ever met.

And so I started to tell her, You're the best girl I've ever met. You've got to be saved. And in both cases, God through His Holy Spirit said, James, be quiet.

I handed her my Bible. I said, Betty, please read the verses I've underlined in Romans. I drove her home, walked her to the door, told her good night.

I went home and got on my knees and prayed for her. That night, she read the verses. By her own testimony, she said she was concerned and even afraid to go to sleep for fear she might die in her sleep and miss heaven.

The next morning, however, was Sunday. She got up as she always did. She dressed for Sunday school and church.

She went to the youth, the junior department and taught her junior girls class. As a matter of fact, prior to that, she sang a duet with her sister in opening assembly for the teenagers. Then, after going to the junior department and teaching her class like she had taught them for three years, she went to the choir room, put on her choir robe, came out and sang in the choir, left her seat in the choir, went to the pulpit and sang the special music.

Before the pastor came to preach, she went back and was seated in the choir. The pastor delivered the message, extended the invitation to come to give your life to Jesus. I sat out near the front and looked up in the choir.

I saw Betty struggle for a moment there in her lime green choir robe with her golden tie on. She suddenly pushed her way through the front of the choir rail, came down the steps and fell on her knees at the front of the church. There, for the first time in her life, a very good girl met Jesus Christ.

She was born again by the Word of God. She got up from her knees, went to the pastor and said, Preacher, right over there, I got saved. Jesus came into my heart.

The pastor said, Betty, you're the best girl in our church. Betty said, Preacher, quit telling me how good I am. I'm so tired of trying to be what I'm not.

She said, Right over there, Jesus saved me and now I want to be baptized in the name of Jesus. Before, I just joined the church because all my family and friends were members and I didn't want to be the only one left out so I joined the church and I was dunked, but now I want to really be baptized in the name of Jesus because I just got saved. And Betty became a new person.

Fifty-three adults in our church got saved the following weeks. Thousands upon thousands have received Christ after hearing Betty's testimony. They realized that they were part of a religious experience.

They were conformed to the image and expectations of men but they were never born again by the word of God to become a new creation in Christ. That's the case with many people. Perhaps it's your own experience.

Perhaps you've not even become a part of a religious setting. But regardless of whether you're in religion or out of religion, in church or out of church, you can now be in Christ. This very moment you can give your life to Jesus.

I sense the Holy Spirit drawing at your heart now and even now as a little child. Would you simply bow your head and would you ask Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God who died and gave His life for you? The Jesus that God raised by His mighty power on the third day who ascended into heaven who now ever lives to live in you and who will soon return to catch away His people. Would you this moment give your life to Jesus Christ even as a child? Would you pray after me? Dear God in heaven, I know I've sinned.

And I know religion is not the answer. I need a relationship. I need a relationship with the Living God.

I want You to be my Father to forgive my sins and to save me. Come into my heart Lord Jesus. Be my Savior and my Lord and give me a new life.

I give You my old life. Thank You Jesus. Thank You for saving me.

Thank You for giving me a new life. Thank You Father. If you've prayed that prayer you need to make it public.

You need to tell your friends and your family I just gave my life to Jesus. You're not saved by feeling. You're saved by the fact of His love and His Word.

You're born again by the Word of God. You've given your life to Christ. He's given His life to you right now.

Now you need to make it public. You need to confess Him before men. You need to become a part of the church family and fellowship.

You ought to become a part of a local body of fellowship and worship. A church. You need to be baptized in the name of Jesus as a testimony a public expression of what Jesus did in your heart.

Share Jesus with others. Grow by living in the Word of God. Other messages in the tape series on restoration will help you grow.

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James Robison Fort Worth, Texas 76118 I'll send you a Bible study guide that'll help you. I want you to know I'm thrilled at your commitment and I pray now that you'll share Jesus with others.

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