

Accepting the Truth and Living It Out

by Miki Hardy

The sermon emphasizes the importance of accepting the message of the cross of Jesus Christ and living it out, with repentance and humility being essential for true Christianity.

Duration: 1:55:32

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 16:25, 1 Corinthians 4:16, Galatians 1:11, 1 Timothy 6:7, James 1:27

Topics: "Truth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of accepting the message of the cross and living it out in our lives. He shares his own experience of feeling fed up and miserable as a pastor, but finding grace and solutions in God. The speaker encourages repentance, humility, and a commitment to live out the truth of the gospel. He also highlights the importance of leaders in the church accepting and living out the message of the cross for the restoration of families and the unity of the church.

Transcript

This message is brought to you by CTMI. Jeremiah chapter 15. The part of this verse that interests us this evening is to separate what is precious from what is vile.

And let me tell you, brothers and sisters, if you understand the revelation of the cross of Jesus Christ, you have understood the most precious thing that exists on the face of the earth. The most precious thing that exists on the earth. So if you separate what is precious from what is vile, you will be like my mouth.

So we have spoken about a lot of false doctrines, a lot of practices in the church. And we have seen that it's not only important to recognize it, but we need a solution. To know that the church is not going as it should is not sufficient.

But thanks be to God that we have come to understand that the church is not where it should be. It's a good sign. God is at work.

Jesus is not too late. Let's not ask ourselves the question why Jesus has allowed things to go the way they have. But he is still on the throne and he is in control of all things.

If he has allowed all these things, we cannot point a finger at him. He is the Lord. And he is building his church.

But he warns us that it's going to be like this. And it is like this. But Jesus gives us the solution.

Yesterday we spoke of the first part of the solution. And we have seen how the return of the message of the cross of Jesus Christ is so essential. And that there is no other way.

Because I think that the church has tried everything. If only you would accept with me that even in the history of the church, there has never been so many books, information, teachings as what we have today. On every subject.

So, what should then be the result with all that we have? A strong church? A united church? A church where the love of Christ is tangible and present? A church where there is less and less sin that is found there? But how is it that with all that we have, it seems for over the last 30-35 years that the church is in fact backsliding. There has never been a moment where the church has backslidden. So much as it is today.

And everything today is within our reach. So much so that we have become able to resist the adversity of the church. We have become able to resist the adversity of the church.

since Tuesday, an excellent report of what's taking place. Things are happening. A pastor phoned to say this, you remember yesterday I was speaking about the bestseller? There's a pastor that phoned that told us that he paid 300 euros for that book, because the more expensive the book is and that we pay for it, the more we have the anointing of God.

And a pastor that he knows paid 1,200 euros for that very book. He so wanted the power and the anointing of God. A pastor that's like a pastor that's going to give you the power of the anointing of God. And the pastor that's going to give you the power of the anointing of God.

Leaders of churches must accept the message of truth. They hear it, but they need to accept it as the truth. As the fundamental message of Christianity.

Not only to hear it, but to accept it. Accept it for their lives, and accept it for the church. This is the most important step.

It's not only to say, yes, it's great, it's fine. Yeah, it's great. But what do I do with it? What do I do with it? It's so important.

You know, when you hear the gospel, the message of the cross of Jesus, it has to speak to you, to challenge you. It will absolutely challenge your life. Do you agree with me? When I started to understand this message of Jesus Christ and the apostles, I came to understand that I, myself, was in fact a true problem.

And that God needed to do a deep work in my own life. And what did I need to do? You know what my first reaction was? Was to repent. For having hidden, perhaps without really wanting to, for having hidden the truth of God from the people of God.

It's so important. I think that if the church needs a restoration, then the Lord will start, firstly, with the leaders. But the leaders need to be very careful.

God can also work without them. No one is indispensable in the kingdom of God. But God gives grace.

When God restores, our hearts must respond. But if I don't respond, God is able to choose someone else. We mustn't believe that Christians don't understand when something is wrong in the church.

They don't pick it up. We mustn't believe that they don't feel anything. Many are starting to question things.

Questioning things. And they're not in agreement. They don't have the witness in their hearts that what they're hearing and what they're seeing is from the Spirit of God.

God is preparing, touching hearts. He is the one that is preparing the thirst in my heart. He is the one.

And He is the one that prepares the thirst of God in people's hearts. And when that thirst comes to the heart of man, he seeks. And the one who seeks, will find.

That's why we cannot prevent or stop a returning to the message of the gospel. We will never be able to stop it. No one will be able to prevent it.

No one will be able to keep God's people as prisoners. Man can try and do everything that he wants to prevent them, stop them. But when God is at work, all that He can do all that man can do is worth nothing.

That's why it's not man that's in control. It's God who's in control. And it's Jesus who's in control.

He's the one who draws people to Himself. Do you think it's normal for Christians to go from one church to another to another to another? They're seeking, and they cannot find. They look, they cannot find.

They're looking over here, they can't find it. And then at one point in time, they will find it. They will find it one day.

We must not believe because we're a leader. We have all the power. God is above all things.

So, when the Gospel is in my heart, when the message of the cross comes to my life, it speaks to me. It challenges me. And the thing that I need to do is to repent.

And that's hard. That is the hardest part for a leader of a church, to put his two knees to the ground and to repent. But those that do it will find a new life.

A new life. It's humiliating. It's hard.

It hurts. It breaks. But it's that very thing that gives life.

That's why suffering and death are indispensable for life. And the one that doesn't want to repent and accept, he will remain just as he is. He will remain just as he is.

And the true danger is that in these last days, with all the temptation that there is around us, there is a great chance that he might sink. That's why accepting the message of the cross is one thing. But repentance is essential.

God gives us grace because He is the one that opens our eyes. I cannot open my own eyes. He opens my eyes.

Do you agree? That's why Paul says, how are we saved? By grace. Through faith. And if God opens my eyes, He's giving me grace.

Now, He's finished. Now I come into play. Repentance.

It's not God who needs to repent. He opens my eyes. He gives me grace to hear and to see and to receive that revelation.

Now repentance needs to come from me. God cannot do that for me. And He cannot do that for me.

That's why there's a road in life. There is a road for life. I'm talking about the life of Christ.

I'm speaking of the ministry of the Spirit. In the last days, that's where we're going to see the separation. Those that walk by the Spirit, those that are operating under the ministry of the Spirit, and those that continue persevering in their own ways.

If there is restoration, if revival is to come, we need then the intervention of God in our hearts. It's not simply going up and praying and fasting on the mountain. This is the problem of the church today.

We think that we're going to solve all our problems simply by prayer and fasting. No! Prayer and fasting comes and adds. It's a bonus.

It's extra. It helps. But it's not the foundation.

It's not the base. The base is clear. It's clear.

If someone does not renounce his own life and does not deny himself, pick up his cross, then he is not my disciple. And Jesus goes further to say, he cannot follow me. He is not worthy of following me.

It's not me that said that. You have a Bible. You can go and read those very same words.

I didn't say that. I'm simply repeating what Jesus himself has said. If you don't want to pick up your cross, and lose your life, and die to yourself, and humble yourself, and repent, then you're not worthy to follow the Lord.

Am I telling the truth or not? I'm not inventing anything. That's Jesus speaking like that. That's why it's time for us to come back to the Word of God instead of relying on the philosophies of men.

What am I trying to say? I'm saying that the gospel comes to my heart, a return to the message of the apostolic ministry preached by the early apostles. They're coming back to that message. That forms part of the solution.

But now I hear it. It confronts me. It shows me my state.

It shows me how I was ignorant throughout this period of time, and what God wanted to do in my life. And there are many things that have remained dormant, smothered by all kinds of doctrines, where I don't see the necessity to come to a maturity in Christ, to grow, and to become a perfect man complete in Christ. So when I see all this, I humble myself, I humble myself, and I repent, and I break my heart.

And I see from then on shining the glorious light of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And I understand that my life from that day on, all my decisions, my plans, are based on that foundation. Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ crucified.

Solidly anchored. Not perfect. We fall.

We repent. But we continue. It's as though nothing has ever happened.

And it's only true Christianity that can offer you that kind of experience. And the Lord is calling. And He's calling.

He's busy calling. There are many Africans at this very moment that are busy responding and saying yes to the gospel. Many pastors right now who are busy questioning their own ministries.

What they've been offering to the people of God. How they've treated God's people. How they've robbed them, stripped them.

How they've manipulated God's people. We are not here to condemn anyone. God isn't in that movement of condemnation.

God is not trying to crush us. But He's in the movement of lifting us up. To restore us.

To bring us back. That is His heart. His heart isn't to put a big cross on anybody's life.

His heart is to deposit in our hearts the message of the cross of Jesus Christ. The revelation. And then suddenly our eyes see a new faith penetrating my heart.

A new hope for my life. My family. The church.

The ministry. My brothers and sisters. There's a new faith.

Because I understand. That when God does a work in my heart. He's also busy doing a work in your heart.

How can the church remain as it is? Where is the power of the gospel? Where is it? Is it gimmicks? All sorts of little tricks? No. The message of the cross of Jesus Christ. Foolishness to those who don't believe.

For all the wise. It's foolishness. The Lord is calling.

The Lord is calling. Come back. Come back to the true message.

Leave behind. Many things. But come back.

Return. Three, four times a year I preach in Africa. To pastors and leaders.

Leaders of churches. I have too many testimonies to be able to share with you. And then there are people that come to see me afterwards.

They say to me, brother, pastor. I don't know what to do with my life anymore. Today.

It's like I've just been born again today. And I say to him, it's good my brother. It's good.

It's good. And they repent of their lives. And they take new decisions.

And they repent. And they humble themselves. They accept their state.

When the message of the cross comes to the heart of a man. It gives birth to him. It causes him to be begotten.

And he is birthed. In a new revelation. And it produces sons in the house of God.

And it produces daughters in the house of God. That's why leaders of churches like myself. We need to put our knees to the ground and tell the people.

I had to put my knees to the ground and tell the people of God. I've led you in the wrong way. And that took place a number of years back.

But when God touches our hearts. And when he shows us our state. The way that we've served God.

The gospel that you've preached. Without being conscious of what God wanted to do in my own life. Then I cannot just continue to do what I'm doing as though nothing's ever happened.

You know why? Because it becomes the very foundation of my life. It's not something that I simply take and add to what I already had. It becomes the very foundation of my life.

And it's that very message. That the apostle Paul preached in all the churches. As a wise architect, he laid the foundation.

And others came and built upon that foundation. There was something very precious that he had deposited. It wasn't just simply that Jesus is good.

He saved me, hallelujah, glory to God. It's the very foundation of my life. And they're not, they don't have any joy in their service to the Lord.

The service of God has become painful, it's become, it's burdensome. And it's as though that we're doing things, we're doing things, we're doing things, and yet nothing's happening. And many preach the things that they themselves don't even live.

They preach the letter. But they're not ready to live what they're preaching. But a preacher doesn't have the right to preach a gospel that he's not prepared to live himself.

He will never be able to live it completely. But at least in his heart that he has the desire and the motivation to live it. Live that message for himself.

In other words, do what I say, but don't do what I do. It's common today. And it's terrible because they don't see in the spirit that God isn't playing that game.

He's not in that game. He's looking for men that are ready to pay the price. In the last days, we're going to see the separation.

People tell me that the church will be completely united. I don't believe that. There will always be those that will persecute.

And there will always be enemies of the cross. In the days of Paul, there were. In the early church, there were.

Those that didn't want to hear and live the message of the cross of Jesus Christ. They were not ready to accept what God saw in their lives. And they were not ready to be exposed.

Too hard. That's why when we don't want the cross, we enter into religion. You've already heard about the Pentecostal religion.

That's what we have today. Pentecostalism has become a religion. Not completely.

But there are many signs of religiosity, religion. The Pentecostal religion. And that hurts to hear that.

When Pentecostalism, Christianity, needs to be completely distinguished, demarked. It's not a religion. It's a life.

It's a life. It's far from being just a belief. It starts with a new faith.

But it continues. And it becomes our lives. An identification with Christ.

That's why servants of God and leaders of churches, it's not enough to come and say, yeah, it's great, it's good. It all sounds really well in himself, in his mind. But repentance is necessary.

Why? Why? Because the message of the cross unveils, and brings conviction. Religion never brings conviction. No.

The ministry of the spirit, founded, the fruit, of a message, that we are living. This is what produces life. This is what produces conviction.

This is what drives us to put our knees to the ground and humble ourselves and repent. Otherwise, what is it? Otherwise, you know what I do? It's always the Christians that are the problem. I'm never the problem.

I never need to repent. I have the certificate of a reverend. I'm exempt from all that.

You know, it's like the government ministers. They immunize from all the things that the community has to endure. Diplomatic community.

We're from this religious diplomacy. Diplomatic core of religion. No.

No. I ask this question. Leaders and pastors and leaders of churches, when is the last time that you've repented? Perhaps they might say to me, I don't really remember.

Let me tell you one thing. If you are truly living the message of the cross of Jesus Christ with your wife, then you need to repent. Have you understood that? Have you just understood what I've just said? That's why I've understood that the most difficult thing for a pastor is to admit his wrong.

To admit that he's missed it. To admit that he hasn't done what he ought to have done. Perhaps it was by ignorance.

We agree. But still. Admit that it's true.

And this is the hardest thing for leaders of churches. That he has served God in such a way for 15, 20, 25 years, and suddenly, he needs to repent. It's hard, isn't it? It's hard.

But what can we do? And when the message of the cross of Jesus Christ has been a revelation for him, he repents. And then, we now need to accept to live that gospel. I've heard it.

It's true. I've accepted it as the truth. And it's true.

When I look at my life, yes, I didn't bring the message of the cross to the people of God. But that doesn't stop there. We're only halfway.

Now, I need to live this message personally. It's not that I'm now going to take the message and simply preach it to the people of God. I need to make sure that I have accepted to live this message.

So, there are quite a few difficulties that we encounter before finally in serving God in the revelation of the gospel. The problem is that when we have in our lives and in the ministry things that we've accepted in the past to plant and they've become enrooted. That's why there are new converts that come into church.

When new converts come into the church, it's easy to lead them to follow and respond to the gospel of the cross of Jesus Christ. They've tasted of their conversion. There's not much to uproot as false doctrine.

All these extravagant practices. All these things. But when we've been planted in it for a long time, this is now the challenge for us to live the reality of that gospel.

So, we need to accept to live it. And this is the most difficult part. To take one's life and to place it on that altar.

It burns. It burns. So, from now on, I accept to live it.

My life is exposed. I start to discover hidden things within me. I start to discover that there are things in my life that don't, in fact, please God.

And that God wants to deal with. And that's hard. It's never easy.

But it's the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. When we are ready to open our lives, and to accept everything that God wants to do in my life. And I can tell you it's a work that never ends.

But, what a joy. It hurts. It hurts.

It's painful. It's a suffering. It's dying to oneself.

Crucifying one's flesh with its passions and its desires. And the hand of God in our lives that transforms us day by day into His image. What am I trying to show you? It's not only identifying with the sufferings and the death, but it's aiming at the life of the Spirit.

The life of resurrection. That's what I, from now on, desire. This is my purpose.

My goal. My vision. As a leader of the church.

The life of the Spirit. The life of Jesus in me. The impartation of His life.

And I've discovered that that's hard. It's not a principle. It's not a theory.

It's not a technique. But it's the product of God's work in me. And that's why I accept it.

And I understand this as a gift that God is busy giving me. Just the fact of accepting to live it. Knowing that it's God's plan for my life.

So I'm recognizing that it's a gift that God wants to give to me. I don't see it as a problem. Even though it might be hard.

It might hurt. But it's a gift from God. Because in return, it's His life that I want.

It's His life that I desire. I'm no longer interested to be a preacher of the letter of the Gospel. I want more of His life.

And I know that there's no other way. That's why leaders of churches need to understand that it starts firstly with them. I remember when I was tired of church, I was discouraged to the point where I wanted to give up.

There were people in the church, but there was no maturity. Fighting, competition, struggles, each one pulling his own way, going off in his own mission, competition among the elders of the church, and we were tired. We were so tired, completely tired.

But in that state, we sang earlier on, when there is no way, God makes a way. And I thank God for that. That He took me from where I was and He showed me.

Not the church, He showed me myself. That was my biggest shock. I've already shared that with you.

That was one of the biggest shocks of my life. Because when I drew back to find a solution for the church, I found a powerful, I wanted to find a powerful message for the church. I wanted a message.

I wanted God to give me a message for the church. That's what I was looking for. It's like those people that go to the mountain to pray to find a message, to get a message for Sunday morning.

But I wanted a solution because I was tired. I don't know if Brother Roland remembers. I was going down to Black River and Roland was with me that day.

Perhaps he didn't realize what I said to him that day. I said to him, I've had enough. I've had enough.

I can't continue. And I went. Many of you know my story.

Searching for a message. But when I opened my heart, God said to me, you are the problem. I'd never heard of that in my life before.

I'd never expected that because I was in a state of fatigue. Discouraged. Ready to forsake everything.

And I was hearing a message saying to me, I wanted to hear a message that said, don't worry. Everything's going to be absolutely fine. I love you.

But I understood clearly that I was the problem of the church. And it was at that moment that I understood that God needed to do a very deep work in my heart. If I wanted to see a church that was strong, spiritual, spiritually strong, and I wasn't expecting it.

And this was a great shock in my life. And I had a choice. Two options.

Lord, it's not true what you're saying to me. I've served you for 10 years. I've been all over.

I've withheld nothing from you. I've been in tents and in cinemas preaching the word of God. It's crazy.

You know, you've done all that for God and then he turns around and says, you are a problem. 10 years. Week after week.

Putting up a tent. Renting a cinema. Preaching the gospel.

The whole of Mauritius. All over the island. Lord, I've done all this and now you're a big problem.

And now the devil comes with all these thoughts. Have I been wasting my time all these years? No, I hadn't wasted my time. Perhaps God had allowed it to be like that for a period of time, but there was a time to restore my life and the life of the church.

And I accepted that challenge. But I knew it was going to be hard. Because God exposed my pride.

My selfishness. Everything. My character.

And I had a choice to continue. And at that particular time there was this great charismatic movement. Everyone was running here, there, and everywhere.

I saw incredible miracles in the lives of people. But God needed to do something new in me. And I accepted.

And this is the very thing that will be the turning point for many servants of God and leaders of churches. To accept. To be the first one to take that road.

The first one. Because I believe that everything comes from above. I believe in examples.

I believe in models. Imperfect models. Of course.

Full of faults. Full of weaknesses. But I believe in men that show me the road that they desire to take.

I believe in that. And I believe in my heart I can testify and witness and I can follow that person. Do you understand what I mean by follow that person? To see an example, a model before me.

Someone who is ready to take up his cross and follow Jesus. He may fall. But that's not the problem.

He will rise up. And he will continue. But we need to feel in the church men, leaders who are giving the example.

That's why the example doesn't come from behind the pulpit. The example is given by one's life. By the testimony of what God is busy doing in the life of that individual.

By the road that he is ready to take. And it's this kind of man that God is seeking for. Not people who say, oh yeah, it's great, what you're doing is great.

Men who are ready to take up that challenge with everything that is contained in it. With everything that's contained in it. For years, I was an isolated man, a church that was isolated because we had decided to take that road of the cross.

We were accused of everything imaginable. False doctrines. I want to ask you a question tonight.

Have you never heard what I'm busy sharing with you since Tuesday evening? Do you feel in your heart that this is false doctrine? Tell me. And yet, there are enemies of the cross. Paul speaks of them.

That there are enemies of the cross. And they are not ready themselves to take that same road. They persecute the one who is ready to accept that message for his own life.

You know what I've always said? There's something that we say in the world. We say 99 days for the thief, 100 days for the master. It's not an English thing.

99 days for the thief, but there's one day for the master. This is what has aligned with my brothers, their support, their love, their commitment. But I knew that the race wasn't the race of one day.

It's not just a one-day experience, a once-off experience. I always knew that we need to finish the race. That's why we need to accept it as the truth.

And we must be ready to follow and that this applies to my own life first of all as a leader of a church. It's not a book that I take in a library as many people do and look for a message that has absolutely nothing to do with his own life. That he's not even living.

But it sounds so good. And Sunday morning, I'm full of fire filled with the power of God. It's not that.

It's a life. Paul had a life totally linked with the message that he was preaching. That's what gave him the assurance to say, Follow me as I follow Christ.

Imitate me, he says. Be my imitators. Perhaps we can't say that today.

But it's very powerful. It's powerful. It's strong.

Follow a man. Follow a man? Yeah. Paul said, Follow me.

Just as I follow Christ. There was a revelation in that man's heart. He wasn't just following Christ.

He was saying what Jesus had said. In Galatians chapter 1 and verse 11, he speaks of that revelation that he didn't receive from a man or learn it from a man, but from Jesus Christ himself. He didn't take that message, that revelation that he had received and he wanted to live that revelation.

That's why leaders of churches today, we cannot accept just that the Bible is true. We don't just accept that the message is good. We want to live it.

It's a humbling of oneself all the time, constantly. But at the same time, we are filled with joy, filled with peace, filled with love for the people of Jesus. We must know what we want.

It depends on what we want in life. At one point in time, I didn't want to serve God anymore. I saw so many fights in marriages.

I'm speaking of myself first of all. In the church, all sorts of struggles and battles. The list is so long.

And I'd had enough. And I believe that leaders of churches, when they receive the revelation of the gospel, when I see the state of the church today, something needs to happen in their lives for them to be able to declare, I have had enough. I've had enough of serving God in this manner.

Enough. Do you know how many pastors in Africa have told me that? Do you know how many pastors in Africa have told me that? Some have said to me, Brother, I've got no more message to share. I need firstly to let God touch my life.

When you hear a servant of God speaking in that way, you've understood that it's true because it's very humbling for him to come down to that level in that manner. And the message of the cross is a new hope

for him, a new faith not to remain as we are but to enter into a new dimension of the spirit, of life, to be able to live the life of Jesus. Amen.

Paul says, I have been crucified with Christ. I don't live any longer. Christ lives in me.

Do you know what the mystery of Christ is? Christ in you. The hope of glory. Christ in you.

Christ living His life in you. Christ in you. Christ in me.

His life. The ministry of the spirit. That impartation of the life of Christ.

That's what we desire. Leaders of churches, if a leader of a church has the call of God in his life, he must know from now on that it's going to imply tests, trials, opposition, persecution, isolation, and everything else that God places before him. Unfortunately, it's a package.

It's a package. You can't remove a little bit of it. You can't say, Lord, I agree with you and I'm ready, but please, I don't want to be too persecuted.

Not too many great trials, please. Not too many difficulties. I'm not used to these kind of things.

We need to know that when we take that decision, there are many things that come with it. Many things come with it. All these things that come with are ways, the ways of God for us to be able to grow.

Because it's in those times that God breaks us. And it's hard. But we need to know how to take it.

If we take it in the spirit, it will work in our favor. If I take it in the flesh, it will destroy me. If I take these situations in the spirit, that I accept them and I allow God to do whatever he needs to do.

In other words, I want to live this message, Lord. I don't want to read it, but I want to live it. Because as I live it, as I live it, I see another way to grow.

When I try to live it, I see someone who is surviving. he's loving. Whiskey.

Yes. He's loving. He's trusting it.

He's not dead yet. And Paul saw that as a gift from God. But we in our flesh, in our reasoning, we don't see that in that way.

We see the message of the cross being something too difficult. It's as though God's going to make me go through things so as to crush me. And that's not the revelation of the message of Jesus.

No. God is equipping us. He equips us.

I know a sister, when she was born again, at that time when people used to be converted, we didn't have the prosperity message. No. We had a message where our lives were given to Christ.

Anytime, anywhere. If I had to walk three kilometers, I would walk. If I didn't have anything to eat, I wouldn't eat.

If I had to be persecuted, well that was okay too. And this sister, she was born again at that time. And she was serving Jesus.

She was very persecuted. Really persecuted by her family. I mean extremely persecuted by her family.

I'm not going to tell you the whole story. Truly persecuted by her family. One day, you know when God speaks to you, it becomes like a light.

And I said, Lord, how is she able to endure all these things? How is she able to go through those things? I wouldn't be able to. I said, Lord, that would be too hard for me. But I want to show you something.

God, as he forms us, also gives us a grace. A very special grace. Abundant grace.

We don't even realize what others think of me at that particular time. In other words, I see the suffering. And I say, Lord, it's too much.

But that person who's going through that time, there's such a grace on her life that she doesn't see it in the same way that I see it. She doesn't see it like I see it. That's why what you are living and what I'm living is a different experience in our dedication to serve the Lord.

It's incomparable. Because God gives a measure of grace that is sufficient for each one of us. That's why the message of the cross shouldn't scare you.

It's God's plan. It's the will of God. Yes or no? It's true that today I may speak of what my wife and I, we've been through.

And people don't understand how we could have come out of that unscathed, untouched, without hurt, without bitterness in our hearts. It's God. It was hard.

There was a time when my wife asked me, Mickey, I'm sure there's a camera in our home somewhere that they've come to install. I said, my honey, it's not possible that we function with all kinds of thoughts that come our way. But we came out of those experiences unscathed, untouched.

Why? God has sufficient grace for each one of us in his own particular experience, in his own, in his trials. And that's why the message of the cross contains an entire package. It's an entire package.

But it's for our advantage if we want to serve God. How do you want to serve God? I'm telling you, at one point in time I was fed up. I told you that.

Do you know how many pastors are fed up today? They live by positive confession, saying that everything's fine. But inside of them, there's misery. And I know what that misery is all about because I've lived it.

But God is seeking. He is seeking. He's giving us the solution.

And there aren't two solutions. There's one solution. Come back.

Accept that it's the truth. Repent and humble yourself. And then decide to live it.

I've given you four stages, four steps. One is not enough. Two is not enough.

Three steps are not enough. We have to go through to the end. Four steps.

And it's at that point in time that you start to taste this new ministry, a new life, new experiences, a new church, a new marriage, new relationships. Isn't that a gift? Isn't that a present? If I was to serve the Lord without all of that, what would it be worth? It's incredible working with men. Working with men.

For 25, 30 years. The joy that this brings. The support that there is.

The unity that exists. The love that exists in our midst. Of course, with all our differences, our errors, our faults, among ourselves.

But it's always, forgive me, brother. I acted wrongly. And everything starts again.

Where does that come from? Is that coincidence? Do we buy people? Do we buy people to be able to work together? No, no, no. There is a message that we've received. We've believed in it.

We've repented. And we are wanting to live it. That is the product.

That is the product. How many of you here tonight have had families restored? How many of you? Look at all these hands. For years.

I'm going to tell you something, but keep it for yourself, please. You see all these men here? They all have a book that they could write concerning their marriages before the revelation of the message of the cross of Jesus. There were even knives being drawn in homes.

There was everything going on. But look at these men here tonight. Look at what has happened in their lives.

Where does that come from? Is that a theory? Is that a technique? No. They have decided, like me, to be examples and models. They've decided, like me, and this is produced.

With all these men, all these Africans, ask them what's happening in their families. What was happening in their families? In the second row here. If you want to know what happened, go and ask him before he tasted of the gospel.

He was ready to take up his cross, to start loving his wife as Christ loved the church. Have you understood that? I want to tell you something. This is the only relationship in the Bible between the husband and the wife that is compared to the relationship of Christ and the church.

There is no other relationship. The only relationship that is compared to the relationship of Christ and the church is the relationship between a husband and his wife. And we want to serve God in disorder, in a mess.

Paul says, love your wife as Christ loved the church. Have you heard Eric? Love your wife as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her. He lost everything.

His glory. Everything. He was crushed.

And the rest you can go and see for yourselves. Go and discover how to love your wife. I'm not trying to say to you that I've arrived.

No. But I've decided to take up my cross for this woman. This forms part of my life now.

That's why I'm saying to you, not just to accept it as being good, but it's hard. It's hard. There are men of God that have never repented before their wives because they are the boss.

They rule. They decide. They dictate.

They decide everything. Everything is, you need to do this. And that poor wife.

Yes, boss. What is that kind of relationship? The message of the cross unveils many different things. It causes us to discover the heart of God and God's plan for each one of our lives.

But I need to accept it with everything that is contained in it. I didn't ever know that I would have to repent before my wife one day. Even my children.

I would never have done something like that. Ask my children to forgive me because I had acted badly towards them. I never knew that.

But I've discovered it. The message of the cross caused me to discover it. A father who asks his daughter to forgive him.

What can bring that? A determination. To be a model and an example. To live the cross.

To identify with the cross. To participate in the sufferings of Christ. It's a suffering.

It breaks. We feel it. Don't you feel it when that pride of yours is broken? And challenged? But you accept it.

You accept it. And in return, it's life. It's the life.

There is no other solution. And I want to say to you, and I'm ready to shout it out loud. Everywhere.

There is no other solution for the church. There is no other solution. Don't try and manufacture something.

But have this message of Jesus Christ and Christ crucified as the foundation of your church. Let us have that of your life. It will take time.

Because it's not something that happens in one day. Your decision takes one day. But the work of God is constant until the last day.

And this is what it is, to be transformed into the image of Christ, the one who has loved us. This is the only way to be transformed into the image of Jesus. You can pray all your life until you have no more saliva in your mouth.

It will never happen. God doesn't do this kind of miracle to transform someone in one second. God changes his heart, his nature, from darkness to light.

In other words, when someone is born again. We come out of darkness and we go into light. That's a miracle.

We're now justified. We're made righteous. But now, it's an entire life.

We continue to take up our crosses and we follow Jesus. You're going to live times of separation. Right? Do you want the message of the cross for your life and for the church? Don't think that everybody in your

church is going to accept it.

Perhaps when you've taken that decision to accept the message of the cross of Jesus Christ, half your church disappears. It's not a big deal. It may be.

It depends. But you should expect that there should be some shaking that goes on. You should be expecting that.

Pay the price for that. Pay the price. It's terrible because I know people, pastors, who love the gospel.

Yeah? There are even those that listen to CDs and messages in secret. They listen to them. But they're not ready to pay the price.

They're not ready to rise up and say enough. I've preached these things enough from now on. I accept the message of Christ in my heart.

It's challenging. Because if they think that they're going to lose people, it equals less salary, less income. You see, this is why it needs to be a revelation.

The veil needs to be removed. And to say, despite anything, if they go, if they all leave, it's not my problem. I know the truth.

And I want the truth. It's not what's going to happen that's the problem. I want the truth.

Despite the circumstances. And there will be circumstances. There will be consequences.

But that shouldn't stop me. Because when revelation comes, it's that that drives us. It's the revelation.

And it drives us. And nothing stops us. No money? We don't fast by force.

If it's for the truth, I don't fast by force. There's no money? So what's the problem? Isn't God the one who provides for all things? And if God decides not to provide that day and He thinks that you shouldn't eat? Is there a problem? Is that a message of defeat? No, it's a message of victory. It's a message of victory.

There's no defeat in that. Why do we need to do a 180 degree return? A 180 degree return. There will be all kinds of financial, material, spiritual trials.

It will shake from every side. I remember I was in Kenya. When I first met our national black beauty.

And it's true. He was in the midst of all kinds of problems. Of battles, striving and fighting in the midst of the church.

Competition. And we had just started to share this message between ourselves. And he had started to catch it.

And he needed to make a decision. Because there was everything that the church had, everything that the church possessed was under the name of two people. Himself and one other person.

And because they were now divided and everything was under their two names, there was a great fight. I want this. No, that's mine.

Et cetera, et cetera. And I sat down with him. I said to him, you love the message of the cross, don't you? And he said, yes.

And I said, you know, everything that's under your name and under the name of the other person, don't get involved in it. Give him everything. Give him everything.

Be ready to lose everything. And by God's grace, he did it. And today, he doesn't regret it.

Because God has done in return much far greater. That is the message of the cross. We are ready to lose everything.

Because we desire the life of the Spirit. And what God has started to do in his life with his wife and his children, I don't even want to mention the things that went on between him and his wife in their home and their children. That's another book altogether.

But go and taste of the treasures that God has put into their hearts. These two here today are serving the Lord together, united in their hearts, as well as with their children. And I give thanks to the Lord for that.

And we need to be ready for that. We need to be ready to lose. And when you lose there, you gain the life of Christ.

And the one who wants to preserve his life or keep his life will lose it. But the one who is ready to lose his life, he will find it. He will find it in Christ.

He will find it in Jesus. We never lose with him. We lose a car.

But in return we gain the treasure, a treasure. That is the message of Christ. That's why I love Africa.

There are so many situations. Pastors fight over two chairs. They fight over a piece of ground, over a land, over a tent.

You don't even know what's going on in the body of Christ among the leaders of churches. That's why I bless the Lord that we can speak and there are thousands of brothers and sisters that are listening to us tonight. That is the gospel.

The losing of one's life. Yes. And we must be ready to accept to live that.

What has he become for the church? An example. A model. With all his weaknesses, with all his failings and his shortcomings.

Like me. With all my shortcomings, my failures, everything that I am. But what is wonderful is that this message is that God doesn't have a problem with my situation because he sees where my heart is.

And he knows what I desire. That I'm ready to accept this message and to be an example and a model. That's what God is looking for.

And you know how many orphans pastors who are orphans in churches today. Pastors who are orphans. You know what that means? An orphaned pastor alone.

Like orphans of the world. They are children. They don't have a father or a mother.

And they are suffering. They don't know what to do. And the body of Christ is filled with orphans.

That's why God is looking for seeking for men. Yes. With women standing next to them to live a message that is the solution for the Church of Jesus Christ today.

It is the solution for the Church of Jesus Christ today. And it will never be easy. Never.

Christianity was never easy. It's only easy for those who teach false doctrines. But for the one who teaches the truth, it's never easy.

Christian life is never easy. You know how Jesus describes this? He says it's a door. It's a narrow door.

Didn't Jesus say that? It's a narrow door. There's one that's large. Wide.

And there's great opportunity to do whatever we want to and how we want to do it. But there's one that's so narrow where we cannot do whatever we want to do. And this wide door, many go through it.

But that narrow door, few find it. I didn't say that. Jesus said that.

Do we believe that? Do we believe it? That's why today in these last days, it's not the time to follow the great crowd, to follow the great crowds that are all excited. It's not the time for us to follow the great crowd with all their excitements, their extravagance, and all these things. They're going through this very wide door.

Is it true or not? It's not the time for us to go out there looking for this wide door. No. This wide door leads us, Jesus said, to perdition.

But that narrow door leads us to life. What do you want? We mustn't look at the difficult side of Christian life. We mustn't only look at the difficult side of Christian life.

No. We must look at the final product. That's why there are people that say to me, you preach the cross, you preach the cross, this life that is given that doesn't belong to you anymore.

What you're sharing is a very negative message. But no, on the contrary. Because we're not looking at that.

We have to go through that. But there's life after that. And that's where there's life there.

The life of the Spirit. That's what we want. But unfortunately, Jesus said, identify yourself with me.

That's why Paul says in the epistle to the Colossians, he's incredible, this guy. Paul says, Philippians chapter 1, Philippians chapter 1, and Colossians chapter 1. We're going to read two verses. Paul says, This is verse 29.

Verse 29 of chapter 1, Philippians. For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ. Not only not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake.

Colossians chapter 1. Verse 24. I now rejoice in my sufferings I now rejoice in my sufferings for you. And fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ.

What is lacking in the afflictions of Christ. What is lacking in the afflictions of Christ. For the sake of his body I fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ for the sake of his body, which is the church.

He's got a strange language, this guy, no? But it forms part. It's the package. And this is what produces the life that we desire.

To believe in him, but to suffer for him. What is lacking in the sufferings of Christ, I fill up for you. Incredible.

Incredible. But each one has his own path. Each one of us has our road.

That was Paul's road. Don't try and imitate. Each one of us has our road.

Each one of us has our road. The last step is to decide to live the gospel. It's going to cost us dearly.

Because it will bring Christians to say they don't have any faith. We don't have any faith. Look how they live.

They don't have faith. If they had faith, they wouldn't be going through all these hardships. But they would have faith.

Faith is the spirit of the gospel. Faith is not the Torah. Faith is not If you look it's a different way of thinking.

This is the way of thinking in Christianity. Your life will be shaken, but look ahead, look ahead, the heavenly glory, that's what Paul says in the book of Romans, the sufferings of this present age cannot be compared of that eternal glory in the days to come. Hardships, but are you ready to accept them, to live them? And for you, it becomes a glory.

It becomes a glory. And for many of us, it's a whole change of mentality that needs to take place. And this mentality can only change when we have the light of the gospel.

Paul wasn't living a defeated life. Paul was living a gospel of victory. Yes or no? He was a man of faith.

But he knew what it was to identify with Christ, ready to accept the message just as it was. Everything that was contained in it, he didn't try and separate a bit of stuff from it. I'll take a bit of this, I won't take a bit of that.

That's another message altogether. That's another message. Do you agree? Are you following me? How many of us are ready to live it for ourselves and be that model, that example? May all the preachers that are hearing me tonight, and I know that there are many of them in Africa, I beg of you, before judging, before criticizing, I pray that the Holy Spirit would enlighten you.

I know it's hard to accept just on the spot, right there and then, that we've put the gospel of Christ aside, we've laid it aside. And despite what it might cost me, I'm ready. Maybe that's a difficult thing to do.

But I have faith for you. Perhaps it's not for today. But I know that God's word never returns to him void without having accomplished what it was sent forth to do.

And that's why I want to pray with you. Any leader that's listening to me or watching, perhaps you're at home, you're watching this program. I want to pray with you.

If we could stand tonight. We're going to take hold of the hand of the person next to us and we're going to pray. I'm going to pray for all those that are listening to me.

All those that are here. Leaders of churches, pastors, ministries, whatever ministry. I pray that you have the light of the gospel.

I pray that the light of the gospel comes and shines in your heart. And that you would be ready to take a decision. Father, I thank you tonight for the gospel.

We know that it's the solution for the church. We know that there is no other solution, Lord. We know that there are some of them that are right at the point of accepting the message.

They believe in the message. But I pray for them tonight, Lord. That they would also be ready to live it.

I pray that the Holy Spirit would speak deeply to their hearts. Overthrow every obstacle, fortress, lies. Father, I pray that you would place your hand upon them.

And that the Holy Spirit would have access to their hearts. And that the gospel would shine in their hearts. That they would be born in the gospel, birthed in the gospel.

And that they would accept that there is no other solution for the church. And Lord, I finish by asking you that a new faith, a new hope would be deposited in the hearts of every single one. And that they would be able to trust in you.

That your word is truth. And we all need to obey. I give you thanks tonight, Lord.

Bless all my brothers. All these servants of God. All these leaders of churches.

Place your hand upon their hearts. Do not let go of them, Lord. May this word follow hard after them.

I pray in the name of Jesus. Touch their lives. To Jesus be all the glory.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord. Retrouvez-nous sur ctmi.org Find us on ctmi.org

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