

Deny Ungodliness

by Paris Reidhead

Paris Reidhead's sermon emphasizes the necessity of denying ungodliness and worldly desires as essential aspects of true salvation through God's grace.

Duration: 53:41

Scripture: Titus 2:11

Topics: "Ungodliness"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the true nature of salvation and ensuring a genuine relationship with God. He explains that Christ's sacrifice on the cross was meant to permanently set believers free from bondage and redeem them. The speaker also highlights the need to share this message with others, making sure they receive salvation from God and not presumption from human beings. He concludes by urging the audience to memorize and meditate on Titus 2:11-14, as it holds the key to enriching their lives for both time and eternity.

Transcript

Will you turn, please, to Titus, chapter 2. Titus, the second chapter, and our text this evening, verses 11 through 14. May we bow our hearts together in prayer. We thank Thee, our Father, Thy Word.

We thank Thee that the very person of the Godhead who inspired the Word is here to apply it to our hearts and to our lives. And so tonight we welcome Thy ministry. We ask Thee to find us where we are, show us what You want us to be, make clear to us the first step we should take, and then give us grace to obey Thee.

We're so dependent upon Thee, Father. We do ask that Thou will stir us up to seek Thee with our whole hearts. We thank Thee for this, people.

We ask blessing upon each one here, and the influence, the ministry, the testimony, and the outreach of each life. And so, Father, as we're here, we think not just of ourselves, but those who by Thy grace we in turn will be able to touch to that end. Bless Thy Word to our hearts, for Jesus' sake.

Amen. The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave

himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. These things speak, exhort, rebuke with all authority, let no man despise thee.

The apostle is seeking to make clear to the young man Titus that God has only one salvation. And the grace of God that brings salvation does the same thing in every life to whom salvation comes. And it's very important for us to understand that.

I think we have a tendency to feel that God may work one way in one denomination, another way in another denomination. God may work one way in one country and another way in another country, but such is not the case. Wherever you find one to whom the grace of God has brought salvation, that one has been taught identically the same thing.

For the grace of God that brings salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us certain things. Now, it's imperative that we should understand this scripture. If I were to ask how many of you know John 3 16, every hand would be raised.

If I were to ask how many of you know Titus 2 11 to 14, it might be a different matter. You'll soon forget me, but if you memorize these verses, because I'm asking you to, then you will have something that has enriched your life, not only for time, but for eternity. Therefore, I'd like to press upon you that you write these verses down on a little three-by-five card, and you take a rubber band and you pin them on the inside of the visor in front of your car.

And when you come to a stoplight and the traffic's bad, instead of chewing your fingernails or growing ulcers on your ulcers or something else, flip the visor down and start memorizing Titus 2 11 to 14. By the time you get home or after you've made a few trips, these verses will be yours. Perhaps you aren't driving.

Well, if you do dishes, pin it on the curtain over the sink. Do something, but memorize Titus 2 11 to 14. You'll find it coming back to your heart again and again.

I want you to notice the first thing that the grace of God that brings salvation teaches us. I suppose we could look at it in terms of the tenses of salvation. I see four here.

The past perfect tense, the past tense, the present tense, and the future tense. Put it this way. I have been saved, I was saved, I am being saved, and I shall be saved.

Someone comes to you and says, are you saved? You would be justified, I think, in the light of what the scripture teaches. For it teaches these four tenses to say, I have been, I was, I am being, and shall be. Which one are you referring to? Because they're all there.

Now, the grace of God that brings salvation begins in this past perfect tense. I have been saved from the pleasure of sin and the purpose of sinning. You have it here in these words, the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all to whom he brings his salvation, teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts.

Let's take that word ungodliness. Really it means no God. And in essence, that's the very issue that you have recorded in Isaiah when their reference is made to that event before time, when Lucifer, prime minister over the angel, most brilliant, beautiful, intelligent, and powerful creature that God ever created, used his imagination, which in itself is not sinful, and speculated on what he would do if he were God.

But then there came a moment when it was no longer innocent speculation, and it became a personal ambition. And it was, I will be light the most time. I will set my throne above the throne of the most time.

What is that? No God but me. I'll be God. I'll rule.

I'll choose. I'll decide. That's what ungodliness is.

No God but my whim, my fancy, my ambition, my passion. And you recall when this same creature came to mother Eve, as it's recorded in the early chapters of Genesis, his argument was, you shall be as God. You'll be God.

Don't have any other God but yourself. You decide how to be happy. You decide what to do and when to do it.

That's ungodliness. That's the essence of sin. That's exactly what you have in Isaiah where we are told that, by the prophet, that they turned everyone to his own way.

Each individual enthroned himself in his own kingdom of his own heart and governed and ruled and chose and decided. That is the essence of this terrifying horrible thing called sin. Now it can lead in two directions.

It can lead up and out. It can lead down and out. But it's nevertheless, regardless of whether it leads one into culture and those socially accepted types of behavior or out into some other area we would call lawless or criminal.

In its essence, it's the same thing. No God but me. I will do what I want to do.

And so the first thing that the grace of God does to anyone to whom God brings salvation is to teach them to deny the very principle of ungodliness. This is exactly why when the Lord Jesus confronted that large company of people in Luke 14, he stated, if any man hate not his father or mother or husband, wife, brother and sisters, yea, his own life also, he can't be my disciple, he can't even begin to learn about me. The first thing he has to learn about me is that I am God and that I am going to insist upon the place that man refused to give me in his revolt.

And I won't compromise with him. I am God, said Christ, and I will behave as God and I will demand as God only has a right to demand. And if you want to come to me, you have to recognize at the very outset that my sovereignty transcends the right to all human relationships.

Now that's cutting quite deeply, isn't it? But he didn't stop there. He said if anyone doesn't take up his cross and come follow me, he can't be my disciple. He said when you come to me, you have to recognize that I am God and that you have no more right after you've come to me to determine your own course and your own career and formulate your own plans and initiate your own activity than a person has who's nailed to a cross.

I am God and my sovereignty extends to every activity of human life and when you come to me, you are voluntarily restricting yourself as effectively as if nails were through your hands and through your feet. Those are the conditions. I am God, said Christ, and therefore if you've come to me, you've come to God.

If you receive me, you receive God. Only God has a right to make that kind of a demand and I make it because I am God. Then he proceeded to say that a man does not forsake all that he has.

He cannot be my disciple. My sovereignty transcends the right to all possessions of talent, of time, of money, of skill, anything that you possess. When you come to me, you recognize that I am God and thereby your coming, you relinquish all right to everything to which you might have had previously an intrinsic right.

I am not going to compromise, said he. I am not going to, I'm not going to deceive you. You can't even get into kindergarten and start the first lessons in the preprimer until you understand that I'm God.

And that's implied in these words, the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us to deny the principle of no God in my life but me. Deny ungodliness. Now, if this, you say, well, I never heard anything like that.

It isn't a question if you ever heard it. It's a question what you do about it when you hear it. If the grace of God's brought salvation, then you say, aha, that's what I mean.

That's what I meant when I accepted Jesus. That's what, that's what Christ means to me. We aren't interested in trying to correct your history.

We're trying to protect your future. And therefore, we're trying to bring you face to face with the simple implications of the word of God. And if in your understanding of salvation you did not understand that it implied denying ungodliness, then it's high time we got to it, don't you think? It's a whole lot better to find out the worst about ourselves now while we have time enough to do something about it than some other time when it's too late.

And so, I don't mean to disturb you, but if you're disturbed, you ought to have been disturbed. Let's put it that way. And therefore, this is what's involved in denying ungodliness, denying the principle of I have an intrinsic right to rule and govern and control my life.

The essence of sin, and when you, the grace of God that brings salvation, brings you right there. In other words, this is a definition of the concept and idea of repentance. A change of mind and attitude from one that characterized us previously, I'll govern my life, I'll choose, I'll decide, I'll be, I'll have, get, and do, to another attitude, thy will be done.

And so it is, Christ said except you repent, you'll perish. It's implicit in this deny ungodliness. It's just another way of saying repentance.

But you'll notice it says deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. All that's in the world, we are told, are three things. The lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life.

Now there were three basic forms of idolatry in the Old Testament, and these three concepts of idolatry, or aspects or forms of idolatry, were the cause of the downfall of Israel. They're going into chastisement, judgment, and captivity again and again. Let's look at them briefly.

Historically, the first form of idolatry that occurred in the scripture was the worship of Ashtoreth. It really began earlier, it began with that man called Nimrod in Genesis. The word Nimrod, a mighty hunter, literally means a spearsman, but not a spearsman out in the plain finding venison, but a spearsman taking up a spear in defiance against God.

In other words, a rebel. Nimrod was a mighty rebel against the Lord. And in his rebellion, he organized society to concur with him.

And he organized all religion around one concept, namely sexual indulgence. He dignified it with ritual and with teachings. He built a temple dedicated to it, and he installed his father's wife, whom he had taken as his wife, Semiramis, as the goddess to be worshipped at this tower.

And it was there that society found its first legalized, organized, institutionalized of sexuality. And God, of course, visited the scene with great, great judgment. And if you don't think so, you should have been with me in Africa when we came to one little hill in the Sudan-Ethiopian border.

And there were four tribes around this conical-shaped hill. And it probably, at the level where they lived, was not more than, oh, 12, 15 miles around it. And these four tribes were there, four languages, small.

They'd once been large tribes of people in the Sudan. But as the migration of the Nilotic people had come in from Ethiopia, they had made war against the tribes and had driven them. Until now, these little pockets were there.

And strangely enough, in this small, restricted area, the people did not know the other languages. They were so frightened, they just stayed right there in the little area they had. Well, the people that were right next would know it.

But in this area were these four distinct languages, and quite separate, not just in little dialectical differences. They were small pockets, residual pockets, of what had once been larger tribes. And it was proof sufficient of the terrifying nature of the judgment that God brought when he scattered man and he confused the languages.

Well, the next form of idolatry that occurred was the worship of Baal. The word Baal is a Semitic word that means owner. And it referred to the evil spirit that controlled a given geographical area.

You see, in that day, the human family was confined quite much to the Tigris-Euphrates basin. And all the evil spirits, as far as I understand, are the angels that fell with Satan when he was cast out of heaven. And if anybody questions the reality of the powers of darkness, there's only one thing I can say, you haven't been a missionary.

If you've been a missionary, you don't question. You don't question. And the owner was therefore an evil spirit that was given a certain precinct to administer.

And he would make this, through the witch doctor, the demon-possessed or demon-influenced people, he would establish the sacrifice that would be demanded, and the ritual, the tribal markings, and so on. But the idea was to placate the evil spirit that had the power to bring lightning, to burn up the harvest, the crop before it was harvested, or to keep rain from coming, or to cause hail to beat it down into the ground. And by placating this demon or evil spirit, they had crop insurance, if you please.

And in so doing, they could get a harvest, and the harvest would give them money. And therefore, this was the practice. And Baal worship was really an effort to appease the spirit owner in a given place.

They talked about Baal-pior, or Baal-kirjak. But the purpose? To acquire funds with which one could get things. So here's a farmer with a little field, and his wife says to him, dear, you better, you know, you better

sacrifice to the evil spirit.

Oh, we're forbidden to do that. We can't do that. You better do it.

And so, quietly, surreptitiously, kill the little sheep and sprinkle the blood on the rocks. They'd have a good crop. And so, this was what God said about his people Israel, even after, after Joshua.

They feared the Lord, and they served the gods of the land. And they, they sacrificed to the evil spirits. Then the, but you see, the reason for it was they wanted things.

For that, sacrificing the evil spirits might be equivalent to cheating on the income tax, or, or being dishonest in business, or cruel, or some, something else. And then the, the third type of, of, of idolatry that God condemned was the worship of Moloch. Moloch is a Semitic word that means king.

It's the radicals, the consonants of the word melech, which is still used in Arabic language. And it had reference to a sacrifice directly to Satan for the purpose of obtaining the third form of indulgence. The first was a gratification of the senses.

The second was the gratification of the eyes. And the third was pride of life with position over one's fellows. According to the archaeological evidence, Moloch was depicted by a large regal figure carved out of stone or made of blocks of stone, probably 20 feet tall from ground to the top of the figure's head, seated upon a throne, thighs together, arms extended in such a way that the hands carved so would form a basin over the thighs, and a charcoal fire would be built, would start it in the basin.

And there were tunnels through the back of the rock and the priest behind would use large skins as bellows and would force the air up so as to get the fire, that charcoal fire, exceedingly hot. Was a basin lining in there so that the stone itself didn't crack. But here was a fire.

Now the worshiper would come with a little child, 12 days old was the preferable age, just a wee firstborn son, if possible. And the mother, husband and wife, would come with the and they would tell the priest what they wanted. They wanted a position, be mayor of the town or elected to the congress or whatever the equivalent was in that day.

And they would tell him that they were willing to give Baal their son. And this is what the scripture condemns when it says, Israel made their children pass through the fire. The parents would stand down there and they're some 10 feet above.

The ground would be the basin of flame of fire. And the father would take his little son and look at him with whatever tenderness he could, since he was ambitious to the point of sacrificing his little child. And then trying to establish the trajectory as a man trying to make a free throw with a basketball.

He would then throw the little child with the expectation it would land squarely in the fire and be consumed. Now this is why God condemned the worship of Moloch and the passing of the children through the fire. And so when the Holy Spirit says here that he teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts.

He's not talking about something light and little. He's talking about the same thing that you have in in the first John 2 where you read, if any man loved the world, the love of the father is not in him. For all that is in the world is the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life.

And so it is he's saying that if you have, if grace of God has brought salvation to you, you have been taught by God to deny ungodliness and to deny worldly lusts. You've repudiated these idols of sexual indulgence and the acquisition of things and the pride of life position over one's fellow as being the grounds or the source or the means or the measure of happiness. Now obviously if you're a Christian you're still going to have a need for food and all the appetites God has given and pronounced as good.

And there will be things and there will be opportunities of service. But the difference is this, if the grace of God has brought salvation, your happiness no longer is dependent upon the approval of the world. If you love the father, then you are no longer bound to have to placate the world in terms of fashion or in terms of things or in terms of position.

And if you love God, you ought to please God. If you love the world, you ought to please the world. And the first thing the grace of God that brings salvation does is to teach us to deny the authority, the tyranny, the control, the government of our appetites and of things and of position.

And it's a release and a relief and worldly lusts are here synonymous with these three forms of idolatry. That's negative, isn't it? That is a turning, as Paul said to the church at Thessalonica when he wrote to them, he said how that you turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for his son from heaven. Turn to God from idols.

And turning to God is that which is here given as denying ungodliness. Turn to God to rule and no longer under the rule of the God of this world, no longer controlled by his principles, by his government of society. And we can be in the world and not of it.

We can have it and not hold it. We can use it and not love it. And this is what he intended to do, to get a people for himself that were committed to him and to whom these other things had no power, no grip, and no hold.

And that's what the grace of God that brings salvation does. It teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. And then there's the second aspect, the past tense.

I was saved from the penalty of sin. Now you either have to say I was saved from the penalty of sin, or you'll have to say I haven't been saved from the penalty of sin. It's either past or it isn't in your experience.

If you cannot remember a time when you were pardoned of the past and forgiven of the past, then you haven't been pardoned of the past or forgiven of the past. Because there is an event. There is a moment in the experience of a person.

You say, well, I don't remember the time. I'm not interested that you should pinpoint the moment or the day. I just want you to be absolutely sure that you have been forgiven.

You may say, well, I don't know the moment it happened, but I know when I realized it had happened, and that's satisfactory. So we're not really interested in the perfecting your history. We're just, as I said, trying to protect your future.

And therefore, it's extremely important that you should know that you were saved, you are saved from the penalty of sin, that you have trusted in the finished work of Christ, that you are so trusting, and that you have the assurance God gives, that your past sins have all been carried by Jesus Christ. I was saved from the penalty of sin. Then there's the present tense.

The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world. The Lord knoweth them that are his. Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus, said the angel, for he shall save his people from their sins. And if you have the of God has brought salvation to you, then you are being saved from the power of sin. Now you may not have understood as well last week as you do this week, how you appropriate the victory of Christ, how you receive that deliverance from temptation and power of sin in your life.

You may not have understood it as well in some time in the past as you do or as you will. Nevertheless, if you've been born of God, if you've partaken of the divine nature, there is an intense desire in your heart to be delivered from the power of sin in your life. If you've partaken of his life, you can no more make peace with an ugly disposition, with a sinful habit, with that which grieves God and offends you, then you can make, then the Lord Jesus could make peace with the money changers in his father's temple.

You have a desire to please him and to glorify him. Has that happened to you? I have been saved from the purpose of sinning. I was saved from the penalty of sin.

It follows as the night, the day that you are being saved from the power of sin. And then that I, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, that blessed hope. Is it a blessed hope? Well, it isn't.

If you have not been saved from the purpose of sin, and I do not have certain assurance that you have been saved from the penalty of sin, and you are not being saved from the power of sin, I don't see how it can be thought of as a if the grace of God has brought salvation, then you've been taught to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. You've been taught to live soberly, righteously, and godly, and you are looking for what has now become the blessed hope. Has this happened to you? This is what this text is all about.

To give you a yardstick by which you can measure yourself in relation to salvation. Has the grace of God brought salvation? Well, if there's the slightest question in your mind about it, it's a matter of utmost wisdom for you to make absolutely certain. But, perhaps as I speak, you say, ah, this is true.

This is true in my life, but I am concerned about my son. I'm disturbed about my daughter. Oh, my grandchildren, my nieces, my nephews, they claim to be saved, but it's so different, so light, or so war they don't.

Well, there's not one salvation for your generation and another for theirs. The grace of God that brings salvation teaches everyone the same thing. And if those who name the name of Christ have not been so taught, there isn't very good reason to think the grace of God has brought salvation.

We must be honest. Perhaps just considering this word will teach you how to pray for your family and your friends. Because you know everybody talking about heaven isn't going there.

Just because someone has gone through a ritual of going to a prayer room or signing a card or answering some questions doesn't mean they're a Christian. Not at all. But the grace of God that brings salvation has certain hallmarks of genuineness.

And this is what we're so concerned about knowing the word, that we may know how to deal with people. I read years ago the diary of David Brainerd as it was edited, and not the one that Moody Bible Institute put out, which is very fine, but it's quite short. The one that I saw was an old, old copy of the complete diary as it was edited by and put out by Jonathan Edwards, the father-in-law of David Brainerd.

In there he tells, does David Brainerd, about a Lord's Day when he came to a group of Indians in southern New Jersey that had been greatly persecuted, pressed, and he spoke to them from the consolations in Isaiah. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people. And he said when he finished preaching to his amazement, eleven of the company testified to faith in Christ.

That night he was, and before retiring, he said that he thanked God for having brought these people to a testimony of life in Christ. But instead of his having joy, he said, as I sought to express my thanks, my words turned to ashes in my mouth. And I thought, could it be that these who were without Christ had mistaken the comforts of the belonging to the people of God as theirs before they had met Christ? So said he, I resolved that on the morrow I would see them each personally and test whether or not they had grounds for good hope in Christ.

The next day's diary said, day's entry said, alas, today I have gone from hut to hut and talked to the eleven. My worst fears were realized of the eleven who had on the day yesterday testified to faith in Christ. Only one had grounds for assurance.

And it was my duty, my melancholy duty, to bring them face to face to the clear terms of the gospel and disabuse their minds of their false assurance. Then said he, alas, what if it had been that I had died before I could rectify my unskillful labor, and these had died in their sins in the lake of fire, they would have risen and cursed me as an unskillful, unworthy laborer of Jesus Christ. Because I had deceived them about the most important thing in all the world, their souls.

Oh, I think it would be well if we had that kind of concern again. The only person in the universe that has the right to tell us all we're saved is the God that saves us. He is the spirit of adoption.

And how sad it is that we can so lightly usurp the sovereign prerogatives of the Holy Ghost and think nothing of it, when it is his spirit who is to bear witness with our spirit. We are born of God. We do well to be equipped in bringing to those who are dear and precious to us the word of God, that they may test and measure themselves by that word and not rest on the light presumptions that some may have given.

But to bring them back again, what does the grace of God teach? If the grace of God has brought salvation, we've been taught to deny ungodliness in worldliness. We've been taught to live soberly, righteously, godly in this present evil world, looking for that blessed hope. That's what the grace of God brings.

That's what the grace of God teaches. Well, why? Why? Why is God so particular? Because the great God and Savior Jesus Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people. Peculiar, that's a strange word.

Pecuniary is its root. Purchased is its meaning. That he might purify unto himself a purchased people who are zealous of good works.

The great God and Savior Jesus Christ gave himself for us. Nothing less than this. He left his father's home, identified himself with us, took upon himself our form, our likeness, tested, tempted, tried in every

way and manner that we might be, yet without sin.

And then to give himself. It was as though we were, like Samson had been a slave. Samson had given himself repeatedly until he was bound, as had we.

And Samson was, as one has pointed out, he was blinded by sin and bound by sin, grinding in sin. So were we, slaves. It was in this kind of slavery that we were held, of our own consent and our own choice.

The Lord Jesus came to the marketplace where we were held and said, what will it cost to redeem him, to redeem you, to redeem you and me? And the answer, you must give yourself. And so the Lord Jesus gave himself, as we pointed out, to be tested, to be tempted, to be tried. And then to reach out and draw you to himself and become what you were, laden with your guilt.

And in the father's eyes, become as you were. Whatever you had done, it was in the father's eyes and in his as though he had done it. You know the names that would apply to you? The innocent, sinless, infinitely holy son of God was prepared out of love for you to be everything that you were.

He was made to be sin for you, for me. And he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us. There are four words we're told by the Schofield notes that are translated redeem.

The first one means to buy in the marketplace. The second one means to buy out of the marketplace. The third one means to lose.

And the fourth one means to permanently set free, never to be forced back into bondage again. And that's what Christ did. He bought you with himself.

Gave himself for you that he might buy you there with his own poured out life. That he might buy you out of this bondage. That he might lose you from this bondage.

Permanently setting you free. Never that you should be forced back again into bondage. Now that's the testimony the great God and Savior Jesus Christ gave himself for you.

That he might redeem you. Now in the light of this, in the light of all that's been said here in this text, measuring your own heart, do you not see two things? One, to make absolutely certain for yourself that your relationship is sound and real and genuine, not spurious. Secondly, in everyone with whom you deal, everyone to whom you bring testimony, to make absolutely certain that they receive salvation from God and not presumption from you.

What do you do differently now than you used to do in other days? Well, I think it's this. We tell people how holy God is and how sinful they are. We tell them what God did for them in the person of Christ.

And then we tell them what they must do. And then we say now, when you have done toward Christ what you must do, to repent and receive him as your Lord and Savior, that you will know your sin. And when you know, you come and tell me.

You tell me. Last year when I was here, I shared with you that may have been at the same week, though I'm sure many of you were not, experience in my own home that brings this into focus. For several years, some seven years, I've been at Harvey Cedars Bible Conference in Long Beach Island, New Jersey, in just the week ending on Labor Day, where I'll be again this year.

Four years ago, I took my son, both sons with me. Their son James was then, had completed his junior year and was going into his senior year at high school. He'd been with me there the previous summer.

But this particular occasion, his brother had left, and he and I had Labor Day afternoon and the following day together. And right that second day, we were nearing our home in Northern Catskills. I'd been driving and turned off Route 23 to go up the road toward our home.

And as we turned, Jim said to me, Dad, if you pull over to the side of the road, I'd stop a moment. He'd been quiet, as I said, and I stopped and waited. And he said, I don't know how to say this, Dad.

I don't want to hurt you. He said, I listened to you last week, last year, this same week, and again this year. He said, I know how much Jesus Christ means to you.

And he said, Dad, I can't fool you any longer. I can't deceive you any longer. He said, I'm not a Christian.

He said, Jesus Christ is just a word to me. I know. I've tried.

I've just tried my best, but nothing comes of it. And I don't know if there's a God. I don't know if the Bible is true.

I don't know anything, Dad. I just can't go on having you think I'm a Christian. But I know I'm not.

Well, I prayed and waited for a moment. And I said, Jim, do you know the plan of salvage? Oh, sure, I know that. He said, you remember when I was 12, I went forward in the tabernacle and I professed to be saved.

But said, Dad, in two weeks, I knew nothing had happened. Nothing had happened. I've just been feeling so ashamed of myself ever since to think I was fooling you and Mother.

I can't go on that way. I can't start school this year that way. I said, Jim, you know the plan of salvation? He said, yeah, I know.

I said, Jim, Jesus Christ died to save lost people. Someday you're going to realize how lost you are. And when you do, and long since you know the plan of salvation, then you receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and your Savior.

And when you do, he will save you. And you will know you're a Christian. Jim, there's just one thing.

I want you to promise me that when Jesus Christ is saved, you'll come from wherever you are to where I am, if you can, and tell me. I want to hear it from you. But I said, I'm never going to bring the subject up again.

Anytime you want to talk about it, that'll be fine. But I'm not going to raise the subject again unless you wish to talk about it. Why, I'll just pray for you every day, but it'll be between you and him.

Well, I prayed. We went back home. We went on home.

I told my wife. She and I covenanted to pray for him. And he never brought it up again.

I thought he would. Went through that school year, never mentioned it, never mentioned once. He stayed home and worked, staying at home that summer.

And that was his senior year, getting ready to go to college. I could tell how anxious he was getting to go to college. He'd been a noble lad, such an encouragement and help to us.

Not one thing we could criticize. He respected us and was so helpful in the home, I being away a great deal. My wife depended upon him.

He never once let her down. She and I knew, and he knew, we never mentioned it to the family, just waited. That was between him and the Lord.

He went to college, a secular college, to Ag school at Cornell University. One day, my older boy, who was a senior at the same school, talked to his mother on the phone, said, gee, mom, Jim is getting kind of wild. Should I talk to him? And she said, no, no, son, don't say anything to him.

Just pray for him. I think he's fighting a battle. We understand.

He's taught, we know. Well, what could we do? I was ministering to other people's sons and praying for mine, knowing that I had to let him go because it's the grace of God that brings salvation, not a concerned parent. I can't bring it as much as I love it.

It's got to come from God. I came home. I'd been on a trip, came into the yard, and there was a car in the yard.

I didn't recognize. I came in, and there was Jim and Gene Chase, the boy from school. I said, hey, what do you fellas doing here? Oh, he just came home.

We visited for an hour or so, and it was quite late, and I'd been very busy and tired. You'll excuse me. I just got to get some rest, and I started toward our room.

Dad and Jim had followed me. We were in the dining room. I said, yeah.

He said, could you sit down and talk to me for a minute? Sure. He sat down by the dining room table. He said, Dad, you remember our conversation by the side of the road a year ago last September? I said, yes, Jim.

He said, we never talked about it since. I said, no, we thought a lot about it, and I've been praying for you every day. He said, I know.

He said, Dad, I've gone to Cornell, and I found out what you meant. Someday, I'd find out how lost I was. He said, I've done the things that I thought would be so much fun and I could hardly wait to do.

He said, Dad, I'm afraid. I'm afraid of me. I've been afraid of what I do.

He said, Gene talked to me a couple of times, and a week ago, last Wednesday, he asked me to go to permitting with him, and I went just so he'd talk to me. And then last Wednesday night, he asked me to go to permitting again. I didn't get much out of permitting, but I talked to Gene in his car about it, midnight, with laughter.

He said, I went to my room. I tried to go to sleep. He said, I couldn't sleep.

He said, Dad, somewhere in the morning, I suppose between 2 or 3 o'clock, I had to get out of bed. I asked Jesus Christ to come into my heart. He said he'd do it.

I just came home. I got to leave at 7 in the morning and get back. But remember, I told you that when Christ would come in, I knew I'd come and tell you.

That's why I had Gene bring me home tonight. His mother said, you're coming back. I just had to tell you.

I just had to tell you. The grace of God that brings salvation has to come from him, not from pastors and preachers and teachers. It's the grace of God that brings salvation.

It's the grace of God that brings salvation to your heart.

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