

# You Are the Best Christian They Know

by Paris Reidhead

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of being a witness for Christ in everyday life and the need to have a higher righteousness than the Pharisees.*

**Duration:** 1:04:07

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:20, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 17:5, John 6:5, John 14:6

**Topics:** "Witnessing"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker encourages the audience to actively listen and learn from the word of God. He refers to the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapter 5, where Jesus describes the characteristics of a blessed and happy person. The speaker emphasizes the importance of humility and a teachable spirit, using the example of Paul and Silas in prison. Despite being freed from their chains, they chose to stay and save the jailer from punishment. The sermon highlights the need to be open and receptive to God's teachings and to be willing to serve and help others.

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## Transcript

That's the first time I've ever had the name Paris appreciated. I, too, thank you very much. Most of them think I'm something out of mythological history.

Rather, something real. It's a pleasure to be with you. Joy to be here.

Let's bow our hearts in prayer. Our Father, we thank and praise Thee for Thy presence. Thou hast spoken to us.

Thou hast unveiled Thy face and heart to us as we've sung together, as our hearts have been thrilled by the ministry and song. And now as we come to the Word, we do rejoice. The very Holy Spirit that inspired the Word, that guarded its being recorded and kept for us, is here to apply it to our hearts and to our lives.

Father, there are no two of us in the same place tonight. Our needs are so different. Yet Thy name is El Shaddai, the God who is enough.

Thou art enough for every burden, every failure, every heartache, every aspiration, all the desires that Thou has placed in our heart. Thou art enough. And so we ask that this may not be just listening to words about Thee, but a meeting with Thee.

We may sense that Thou art as near as the air we breathe, as close as the light upon our faces. Thou art not the light, Thou art not the air, Thou art God. But in Thee we live and move and have our being.

So we plead the precious blood of Christ over and upon us as we think together about Thy word. In the worthy name of Thy Son, the Lord Jesus, we pray. Amen.

How many of you know and love Christ? Could I just see your hands? Thank you. Thank you just as I suspected. You know, the Sunday evening service is a rather recent addition to the church life of the Christian world.

I think it actually had its beginning in colonial America. You know, in those days, the biggest auditorium in the community was the local church, as you've seen if you've gone through the towns of New England in the east where the population of the land was. And so at Sunday evening, on Sunday evening, the whole community would gather in the church auditorium and politicians would come to speak and there would be various debates on subjects.

And because the church permitted the community to use it for its assembly hall, they gave the preacher the privilege of adding an exhortation to all the sinners that were there Sunday night that hadn't come Sunday morning. And so it was called an evangelistic opportunity. But my experience has been that if you call Sunday evening, the Sunday evening evangelistic hour, all the sinners come on Sunday morning and the saints come Sunday night.

Now, I'm sure that in a company of this large, there are several that do need to meet and know our Lord. But since most of you have testified to your trust and faith in him, I think it's wise to speak to you. Now, you see, you're supposed to be part of the force, not the field.

That means that the service begins when you leave tonight, not at the time we started. This is a time of being instructed. This is when you learn to use your manual of arms.

This is when you acquire those disciplines and those principles and precepts that you're going to use as you minister to the Lord throughout the 168 hours until you meet again next Lord's Day. And I trust you'll be here midweek for prayer and for refreshing. But basically, you know, God's strategy was not that the people should be one to the Lord inside the hall, but should be one to the Lord in the home, in the shop, in the office place, in school.

Now that is based on this principle. After that, the Holy Ghost has come upon you. You shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and out of the uttermost part of the earth.

He didn't ask if you wanted to be. He didn't say, how would you like to volunteer for a little while? He said, you shall be witnesses. Now, one of two things have happened since you've come to know the Lord.

You have, you've been a witness. Maybe you haven't been a very good one, but you've been a witness. The moment you name the name of Christ, you've got a mark on you.

And people are looking at you to someone. You are the best Christian that they know. And if they ever come to Christ, it will be because they met you and known you very likely, very possibly.

On the other hand, you may be a stumbling block or a stone of offense standing in their way. So it's very important for us to take seriously this responsibility that is ours of being a witness. But we live in a day

when there are so many voices on the radio, on television, and in so many other ways.

And there are voices that are saying, Lo, this is the way or that is the way. Come this way, go that way. And there is confusion reigning.

Oh, if somehow the Lord Jesus could just stand again and talk to people the way he did, and then there would be authority. Then when he spoke, they would understand. Well, that's precisely what I want to try to help you to do so that this week you're going to be able to stand in his place and permit him to speak for himself.

Now, you'll have to agree, I'm sure, that the Lord Jesus understood the subject of salvation better than anyone else in the world. You'll also have to agree that he loved the lost people more than anyone else has or could. You're going to have to agree with me as was spoken, said by him, my word is spirit and it is light.

And remember when the silence of heaven was broken and the father spoke, what did he say? This is my beloved son, hear ye him. Now, isn't that what you want your unsaved neighbors and friends to do? Well, I'm going to ask you to do something tonight. Most of you didn't come prepared with notebooks as they did in the seminar for the last two days.

But the people that made your Bible were so sensitive to the fact that on this night there would be a need that they put five sheets of white paper in the back of your Bible. Now, I'm suggesting that you just write one through five. I may even get through five, but at least I'll go as far as I can.

And I want to give you five verses of Scripture and I want you to familiarize yourself with them so that when you're talking to someone about Christ, and may I say this, I do not know, of course, by whom you are employed. Perhaps you are an employer and you will appreciate what I'm saying for your employees. And if you are an employee, I'm certain that you'll understand the rightness of what I'm saying.

I do not believe that the people that pay your wages are paying them so that you can use your time to witness to people about the Lord. They're paying you to work at the task that they've hired you for so that you can make a profit so that they can stay in business and continue to pay your wages. But you have the responsibility to witness by your life and by your prayers.

And there will be someone that'll come to you and say, you know, I've been watching you and there's something different about you. I'd like to have a chance to talk with you. Now don't take the opportunity right then and say, well, I'm so glad.

Make an appointment. Meet them in the local cafe or somewhere and then you'll have plenty of time. But what are you going to do when you sit down with them? What are you going to say? He didn't say he shall be philosophers and metaphysicians and scholars.

He said you'll be witnesses. And a witness tells what he has seen and heard and experienced. Now, if you heard the Lord Jesus speak these words to your heart, then you're entitled to use those same words to speak to their hearts.

Does that make sense? All right. But you got to know where they are. So the first one is Matthew chapter 5 and verse 20.

It's in that portion we familiarly call a sermon on the mount. And it was in the portion in which the Lord Jesus is giving a full-length portrait, a picture of the happy, the blessed person. Now you know that the blessed person, the happy person, is the one that knows God in a vital, real, genuine way.

And therefore, it is a description of the new man. But always you've got to remember that every thesis has an antithesis. Or if you wish, every positive has a negative.

Or if I still will carry it one step further, every front has a back. If you see what looks like the front of a hand, and you quickly run around and there's no back, you didn't see a hand. You saw a representation of one.

Because there has to be the opposite. So when he's describing the blessed man, the happy one, there is going to be the opposite. And so here in this 20th verse, the Lord Jesus is telling the people what he doesn't mean.

Now he's told them what he does mean. Blessed are the poor in spirit, theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, they shall inherit the earth.

And you know what's happening to these people sitting on the hillside listening? They're thinking, oh, he's talking about our rabbi. He's talking about one of the Pharisees. And so they look back and they see at the edge of the crowd, a rabbi and the Pharisee.

And they sort of wave, you know, a little timid wave. And that's you he's talking about, you're so meek. And you're so poor in spirit.

And so the Lord Jesus, to disabuse their minds, becomes very, very candid. And this is what he says. I say unto you that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Now that's pretty straight to the point, isn't it? He's saying now don't look back to the rabbis and the Pharisees and the scribes, because I'm not talking about them. And if you don't have more than they've got, you're never going to make it. Well, the important thing is for us to find out what the scribes and the Pharisees had, what their righteousness was.

Then we've got a frame of reference. First, scribes and the Pharisees were fundamental in their theology. You see, they were in contrast to the Sadducees.

Now the Sadducees did not believe in the inspiration of the Bible. They did not believe in the inspiration of the Torah. They did not believe in life after death.

They did not believe in the necessity of blood atonement. They did not believe in the existence of angels. They didn't believe in very much, except make the best deal you can with the Romans.

That's what they were interested in. They wanted to get as much as they could out of this life. Now, so the scribes and the Pharisees are the fundamentalists of their day.

Fundamental in their theology. They believed in the inspiration of the Bible. And they believed in the existence of angels.

And they believed in life after death. And they believed in the necessity of blood atonement to wash away sin. All of that.

And Christ said that except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of scribes and Pharisees, you're not going to enter the kingdom of heaven. So, their theology was fundamental. The second thing we discover about the Pharisees is that they were evangelistic in their zeal.

It was said of the Pharisees that they would encircle the globe to make one cross alike. No trip was too long. No trip too dangerous or arduous.

Too full of hazard. If at the end, there was a possibility of converting someone to Judaism. Now, is there anything wrong with evangelistic zeal? Nothing at all.

What's the matter with it? Well, like fundamental theology, evangelistic zeal, good as it is, isn't enough. The next thing you've got to understand about the Pharisees is that they were devout in their practice. They prayed three times a day.

And the shortest of their prayers would be about 12 minutes unless they rushed. And some of them rushed. And some of them stood on the street corner so everybody could see them pray.

But the fact is that the Pharisees and the scribes were devout in their practice as far as prayer went. They did pray. And they memorized the Torah.

That was their schooling. And they also tithed. They tithed, oh, down to the ridiculous.

Mint, a little bush or shrubber grew by the side of the house. You used to flavor tea. And somebody would pick a handful of mint and take it to the local Pharisee.

And he'd say, oh, thank you, dear friend. And he would count out the sprigs of mint, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. And then he would take that 10th one and give it to somebody else.

He tithed the mint. The anise that they used for flavoring cookies, a little spice, he'd break that into 10 piles. And cumin, which was a spice and it was also the cheapest kind of money.

It was about a hundredth of a millim. Just the poorest of the poor used the cumin. And so he would tithe even down to the ridiculous.

So, here he is. Fundamental in his theology, evangelistic in his zeal, devout in his practice. And Christ said, if you don't have more than that, you're never going to make it.

But there was something else. The Pharisee and the scribe were premillennial in their hope. They were looking for the personal bodily coming of Messiah to set up his throne and to give back to Israel the glory that she'd had under David and under Solomon.

And Christ says, except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees, you shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven. Now, you can understand when you're sitting over a cup of coffee and you're reading that, somebody's reading it with you and you talk to them about what the righteousness of the scribes. And most of the people you meet are a member of some church, some time that went somewhere, something's been done to them.

They have, like the scribes and the Pharisees, most of them, a lot of them at least, a lot of religion and no life. What you've got to do is find some way to understand that what they brought with them wasn't enough. And so you've got to let the words of Christ as the sword of the spirit pierce the heart.

And so you come to Matthew 5.20. That's the first verse that you wrote on the little white page in the back of your Bible. And then it'll help them to understand that what he's talking about is something other than average, ordinary, run-of-the-mill religion. Be it Christian or Jewish or Islamic, whatever it is, it's more, it's other.

You see, dear friend, there are so many people in the churches today that have thought that salvation is a plan. Isn't that tragic? They don't realize that salvation is not a plan, that it's not a scheme of doctrine, that it's not a list of scripture verses, that it's not a decision, but that salvation is a person. He that hath the Son hath life.

Not he that hath the plan of salvation hath life, or he that hath a list of scripture verses hath life, but he that hath the Son. Because life is in the Son. That's why Paul said to the Corinthians, examine yourself whether you be in the faith.

Prove your own selves. Know you not your own selves how that Christ be in you, except you be reprobate? Salvation is a person. So, what do we find? This verse lets us get right through to the heart of the matter, and we don't have to be offensive, and the Lord Jesus is talking for himself.

These are his words, and you don't have to defend them. That wasn't me. Well, what of the Pharisee? What was his righteousness? You can remember those things I said, can't you? He was fundamental in theology.

He was devout in his practice. He was evangelistic in his zeal, and he was premillennial. That isn't hard to remember, and you can just tell those things to him, and one of them is going to get right home.

Who? It means me. Now, the second thing. That's found in Luke chapter 13.

Turn to Luke chapter 13, verses 3 and 5, and we see the second word. This, you know, is an occasion when people are around him, and there have been a couple of current events. Pilate had killed some Galileans in the temple and mingled their blood with the blood of the sacrifices, and then the Tower of Siloam had fallen, and 18 people were killed, and so the subject is brought up, and the Lord Jesus said, answering unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all Galileans because they suffered such things? I tell you nay, but except you repent, you shall all likewise perish.

And then in verse 5, I tell you nay, but except you repent, you shall all likewise perish. Now, who's saying this? The one who loved people more than anybody else in the universe, enough to go to the cross for them. And what is he saying? There's an absolute condition for escaping perishing, and that is they have to repent, and except they repent, they'll perish.

Now, that brings us to a question. Now, the next scripture you take them to is Isaiah with you, Luke 13, 3 and 5. They read it, and you know what they're going to say to you? Well, what does repent mean? Is that the logical question when you hear it? If you've got to repent before you can, or perish, the people listening to you and you're talking to are going to want to say, Well, what does it mean to repent? Now, you've got to watch here, because you ask the average person, What does repentance mean? And you know what they're going to tell you? To repent is to be sorry enough to quit, because in Corinthians it says, Godly sorrow worketh repentance. And people have gotten the idea that sorrow and repentance are somehow tied together.

But they're not. Let me illustrate it. Suppose I have in this hand a hammer, in this hand the nail, and this is a board.

And I take the hammer, and I work the nail into the board. Did that change the hammer into the nail? I don't have a hammer anymore because I found it. The hammer's gone.

It's changed into the nail. Or because I worked the board, the nail into the board, I don't have a nail anymore. It changed into, No! Hammer is hammer, nail is nail, board is board, and the hammer drives the nail.

So he says, Godly sorrow is the hammer that works repentance into the heart, which is the board. So it isn't sorrow. Sorrow may be a hammer, but that's only incidental.

There are many times when sorrow is not involved. It doesn't have to be involved in repentance. But what is it? The word means to change one's mind from something to something.

Now we're coming down to the issue. What is the mindset of the sinner? What is the attitude of the sinner? Well, I'll tell you what it is. The essence of sin is this.

At the age of accountability, every one of us made a choice as respecting the government of our life. And that choice was, I am going to do what I want to do. Isaiah said it this way.

All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way. What's that mean? We've all said, I'm going to be God in my life.

I'm going to decide how to be happy. I am going to call the shots as to the way I live and how I govern my life. That's the essence of sin.

I'm going to do what I want to do. Now, maybe the sinner didn't shake his fist in the face of God. Maybe he paid no attention to God.

But the scripture says all have sinned. And sin is the committal of the wills of the principle of pleasing oneself. So, what is repentance? If the attitude of the sinner is, I'm going to govern my life and do what I want to do, and to repent is to change one's mind, or one's purpose, one's attitude, one's direction, one's governmental principle of life, what's it going to be changed to? A new principle.

I'll do what you want me to do. You see, except you repent means that as long as a sinner is set to live in treason and rebellion against God, there isn't any possibility of his being forgiven. He has to repent.

And repent means he has to change his mind about who's going to be boss. It's from I'll do what I want to do, to I'll do what you want me to do. That's the precondition for faith.

Now, that's all we got to tell this person. So, we're sitting in a cafe or a cup of coffee, and you've gone through Matthew 5:20, you take him to Luke 13:3 and 5, and you show him except you repent. He's letting Christ talk to him.

Now, not you. You may help explain a little bit what the word means, but it's really Christ that's the authority, not you. So, you have to press the point.

That's the thing. He's like someone who's shooting and fighting with God. He's got a sword, a spear, and a gun, and he's in warfare with God.

I'm going to do what I want to do. You think as long as he's got the gun and the sword, the spear, that he can turn around and say, now, God, I've been fighting you, and I want you to forgive. No, don't be silly.

He has to repent, and bring forth words made for repentance. That's throw down the gun, throw down the sword, throw down the spear, and sue for peace. I'm going to do what you want me to do.

It's impossible for people to savingly receive Christ except they repent. Let Christ tell it for himself. Give him a chance to speak to the heart.

Then there's a third verse. Matthew chapter 18, verse 3. Matthew 18 and 3, and here we have the disciples gathered around, and it's kind of an interesting experience, because they're saying, who's going to be greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Remember, Peter and James, I mean, James and John got their mother to fix a big lunch when the boys were coming up from down around Jericho, and when they get up to Galilee, to the home of James and John, and they've all had one of her great lunches, buffet lunches that they've had, and the boys are out against the wall, sleeping in the shade in the middle of the afternoon. Mother of James and John comes to the Lord and says, Lord, when thou comest into thy kingdom, let John sit on thy right hand and James on thy left.

Oh, that's what they've been talking about. And so the Lord Jesus, now knowing their hearts, brings a little child and sets the child on his lap, and he says to them about him, Verily I say unto you, except you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. So now you're sitting in the cafe with your cup of coffee, getting cold and you ask for some hot to freshen it up a little, and you turn to a new verse, Matthew 18 three.

And what's the logical question? What's it mean to be converted and become as a little child? Well, what's the attitude? What's the adult attitude? Adult attitude is you can't tell me anything. I know all I want to know. And what's the child's attitude? Daddy, what's this? Why that? Where's the other? Open inquiring and asking.

And what the Lord is saying, that that hard attitude of I know it all and nobody can teach me or tell me go. Give you a case in point. Remember when Paul and Silas, Robert Philippi, and they had that very interesting afternoon when they were publicly beaten and put in prison, and even though Paul was a Roman citizen and it shouldn't have happened to him, they're in the dungeon there, and the jailer is sitting up in a little balcony looking down on the open space for the cells.

And there's Paul and Silas. They've had their hands chained to the wall, and they're standing there, their backs are beaten, and they hurt all over. And after they, whatever, you know what the fellas in the jail are going to say, what are you guys in here for? We're here because we were talking about Jesus.

Well, who's Jesus? Well, he's God's son, the God who came in the flesh, and they're talking. Now, I don't know what Paul said, but in a minute I'm going to tell you what he didn't say. About 11 o'clock, 11.30, Paul's voice is getting a little hoarse from answering questions.

It's been a hard day. And he says, Silas, heist the two. And Silas says, going back to Psalm 27, the Lord is my light and my salvation.

Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked and mine enemies came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Well, who, the angel of the Lord, just sees this song service going on, praising the Lord, rejoicing the way we were a few minutes ago? And no angel wants to interrupt a good praise service, does he? So he just waits till they're finished, and then he steps into that situation, and he points.

And when he points, you hear tumblers and locks begin to grate, and you hear dungeon doors screech as they open, and shackles fall off and swing against the wall. And the prisoners are free. But it's a funny thing.

The prisoners are free, but they don't move. The chains are off, but they stay there. Well, why? God wasn't wanting to disrupt law and order in Philippi.

All he wanted to do was save some folks. And so there's a smart jailer there. He knows that he was way out of line when he beat a Roman citizen.

He's going to lose his tassel on his helmet for that. He's really going to lose his stripes for that. And he knows also that he beat this one who's a servant of Jesus of Nazareth, and this one had an angel that came that opened this, and so he's in trouble there.

And he also knows that all these prisoners that are there are going to run out, and he's going to lose his life for having let the prisoners go, and he's in a bad way. Now, he does the only honorable thing. He pulls his dagger out, and he fits it in between two leaves on his breastplate, and he gets ready to fall on it, take care of the matter.

And just about that time, Paul says, do thyself no harm. We're all here. Now, I want you to see a haughty, arrogant, proud Roman jailer who's become as a little child.

What's he do? What must I do to be safe? You know what I'd like to do if I could? Maybe it's good I can't, so don't worry about it. I'd like to declare a moratorium on the public preaching of the plan of salvation for about a year in America. I'd like to preach the holiness of God and the justice of God and the law of God, because the law is the schoolmaster to bring men to Christ, and I would like to so exalt him in his holiness, in his justice, and set forth the exceeding sinfulness of sin without mentioning the plan of salvation until sinners began to cry out, what must I do to be saved? Because what we're doing is hardening, gospel hardening a generation of sinners of telling them how to be saved before they got any interest in it.

Well, here was somebody had interest in it. What must I do to be saved? That's what it means to be converted and become a little child. Isn't that marvelous? Christ is saying it.

And over that table in the cafe, you were saying, well, that's what it means. You're telling him, hey, listen, what the Lord Jesus has said is you better come to him and let him tell you how to be saved. Then one last verse.

I'll never get to five, but I'll start with four. In John 3.3 and 3.7, it says, except. Now in the King James Version, all four of these have that wonderful little English word except.

Your other versions don't have it. That's why I use it. You know it isn't really, but I use the King James Version.

But it sure helps. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. So what are you talking? What have you said? He said your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of scribes and Pharisees.

Except you repent, you'll perish. Except you be converted, just come as a little child, you've not entered the kingdom of heaven. Except a man be born again, he cannot even see the kingdom of God.

And you have to explain how the only way to go from one kingdom to a higher kingdom is by the action of the higher kingdom. Look, here's a little globule of chemical in the soil. And it says, oh, I would like to be plant.

It's not good enough to be just mineral, just to be chemicals here in the soil. I wonder if there isn't a short course that Dale Carnegie teaches, how minerals can become vegetable. But there isn't.

But I'll tell you what happens. A little tendril from the grass roots reaches down and wraps around that globule of phosphorous or potash, and the first thing you know is born from above. Now it's vegetable.

But the vegetable also has ambitions, and it says, I wonder how I could be animal. I'm all right being vegetable, better than mineral, but how can I ever get out of this ground? Can I pull myself up by my roots and train myself to be animal? The answer is no. But along comes a hungry cow and wraps its rough tongue around a little green grass, and the grass is born from above.

And the cow says, I wonder what I could do. And along comes a hungry man and eats a cow and is born from above. And man says, now what can I do to fit myself from heaven? Can I do this? In India they say, if I measure the continent, if I lay down, stretch my fingers out, make a mark, put my toes where my fingers were, go across the continent that way, that'll help me.

No, no, dear friend in India. That won't help you. You see, the only way you can be born from above is when one reaches down with a nail-pierced hand and in response to your believing faith, raises you, imparts his life.

You have to be born from above. Born from above. Salvation is a person, and an answer to that faith, Jesus Christ comes into the heart, tells us that we've been born of God.

Now, do you see what's happened? You've been sitting there for 15 or 20 minutes, you've been taking someone through these scriptures, and the sword of the Spirit is beginning to do the work. That's what we're so anxious to see happen. Why, you've got 164 hours ahead of you before you'll be back here next Sunday morning.

Look at the privilege you have of sharing Christ with someone. But what are you going to say? Why don't you let the Lord Jesus do the talking? Let Him say it, and you just point it out and watch what happens. Let's bow in prayer.

Father in heaven, should there be some here tonight among us who, like the Pharisees and scribes, have everything but life from above, O Spirit of God, grant them the mercy to discover the worst about themselves while there's still time enough to do something about it. What a tragic thing we read, our Father, later on in this Sermon on the Mount, when the Lord Jesus said, Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, and I will say away with you, I never knew you. So might it be, Father, that everyone in this hall knows on the authority of the witness of the Spirit that they've been born from above.

Then our Father, for each of us as we go into the place of study or work, office or shop or factory, home, wherever it is, help us by thy grace this week to be effective witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ. Give us the joy of making a situation, using a situation, where the Lord Jesus can speak to him, for himself, to someone whom he would see brought out of death into life. We might be effective laborers together with thee in this great task.

He's acting for this church and this people and this privilege of sharing together. We ask now, our Father, that which thou wouldst do in these closing moments might be done to the glory of Christ in his worthy name. Now we'll turn to John chapter 6 and write this down as the fifth scripture.

You have to have a bit of background on it. Begin with verse 47, though the actual verse I wish to refer to is 53. In 47 the Lord Jesus said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead. This is the bread which came down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die.

I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. And the bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then said Jesus unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day, for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him, as the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father.

So he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead.

He that eateth of this bread shall live forever. These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood.

What means this? That's the question that the one sitting across from you, on the table in this little cafe, is going to ask you. What does it mean to eat his flesh and drink his blood? What means it? It's so important. This is how we have eternal life.

How is it done? And it's up to you to understand that when we repent of our sin and savingly embrace the Son of God. Savingly embrace. Did you hear the word savingly? Embrace the Son of God.

I said at the seminar, I never ask people anymore do you know the Lord? I never ask that because I found there are so many that think they know the Lord. The question isn't do you know him? The question is does he know you? Not do you know him, but does he know you? And so what we're talking about here is that company of people that in true repentance and in true faith have savingly received the Son of God. Now, the result of this is that he becomes the life of our life.

When one drinks and eats that which they have taken in is going to become flesh of their flesh and bone of their bone. And so it is that when we savingly receive the Lord Jesus Christ he becomes our life and he it is that tells us that we are born of God. You understand, of course, do you not that salvation if it be, as we've said, a person the person has to be capable of revealing his presence.

So when we're talking to this person in our little cafe where we're witnessing, sharing we have got to have them understand that whereas we can tell them something about how holy God is and how sinful they are and what God did for them and what they must do we cannot tell them when they are born from above. You see, God the Holy Ghost is the spirit of adoption and he has never abdicated his sovereign prerogative. He said we are to be witnesses but he never said we were to usurp his prerogatives.

We are to be witnesses to him but we are not to take the place of God the Holy Ghost who is the spirit of adoption. So when one has savingly received the Lord Jesus Christ here it is said, eating his flesh, drinking his blood for he becomes the life of our life. When he joins himself to us making us anew then he is going to tell us that we're born of God.

So what you're going to say to the person to whom you're speaking Dear friend, this is what it means the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross for you under the weight of your guilt and your sin he was there publicly vindicating the holiness of God he was satisfying the law of God that God might be just and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus and now when you have repented of your sin and you have received him safely he is going to join himself to you and you are going to learn that you are God's child because God the Holy Spirit tells you. Now, I pointed out that the only person in the universe that has the right to tell a person that they passed from death to life is God, the Holy Spirit. But what has happened in Protestantism is that we as personal workers have dared to commit a sacrilege.

We have dared to assume that because someone says they agree with what's printed in the scripture that we somehow or other listening to them say yes I do believe this now have a divinely given insight omniscience if you please to say that because they have said they believe we have the authority to say now you're a child of God and nobody in the universe has that right but God. We are to tell them how Holy God is what God did, what they must do and then press them to wait until they hear God tell them they're born again. Not us, God.

Now that's why the churches in England closed to John Wesley because he dared to tell the people of England that they could not assume that they were Christians born into the family of God until they had the witness of the spirit. They knew that inner knowing transcends the necessity of any further proof. Well you say that in most places in America today and you do create quite a fuss because most of our evangelism is based on our giving people four spiritual laws or the plan of salvation and say now do you believe all right now write your name down that means you're saved and then we have the rashness to say and if the devil tells you and never tells you you're not a Christian use this verse to fend him off and so we arm them with the word of God to fend off the spirit of God when God would do a real work in their hearts.

Oh what a travesty. So what is he saying? Except you eat my flesh and drink my blood. What does he say? He's saying I will become the life of your life and you will know it.

You will know it because when you take food you're hungry you're famished you're starving and you have eaten food you can feel the strength you know it somebody doesn't have to argue into it the strength is coming back into your body and so he said when you receive me you're going to know it because I'll become the life of your life so who is the one that can tell someone they're born in God?

God the Holy Spirit listen to this verse in the fullness of time God sent forth his son made of a woman made under the law to redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons and since we are sons he has sent forth the spirit of his son into our hearts crying Abba Father oh the tragedy of it of doing it the other way how marvelous it is when we're willing to take time and let people

come to us and tell us that they're born of God what a tragedy happens when we usurp that prerogative I was speaking in the New York Gospel Tabernacle of the Alliance when I was pastor there much as I have to you tonight and I said if there are those among you that have real spiritual need I invite you to go into Wilson Chapel the little room to the right and I'll be in in a few

moments to talk to you and among the people that went into that room was my son then a freshman in high school I saw him go but people spoke to me before I could leave when I got into the room one of the Christian workers had been with my son and when I came in he stood up and my son stood up from where they'd been praying and he said oh I'm glad to see you pastor Jimmy has something he wants to tell you and very dutifully Jimmy said Dad I've accepted Jesus as my Savior I was sick he said sick? yes because I knew Jimmy but I said nothing we just prayed again and asked God to bless Jimmy but I and my wife were both concerned because what I'd wanted to do with him was what I'm suggesting to you Jimmy when God has met you and you know you're born of him you tell me because I knew my son

demanding reality but he fell into the hands of someone earnest and sincere who thought he could circumvent the divine work and you served him the next summer I was speaking down at Harvey Cedars Bible Conference Jimmy was with me we stayed over Labor Day and then we spent the next day going to see some of the local things historical things in that part of New Jersey and we made our way back toward our home in Green County, New York Jimmy had been driving I'd gotten sleepy on the throughway we turned off in Catskill, New York we were going up Route 23 toward our farm home and as we turned on the road it would go the back way up the mountain to where we lived Jimmy pulled over to the side of the road and he said Dad before we go home I got to stop the car I got to talk to you he said you

remember last year down at the Tabernacle when I told you I was saved I said yes Jimmy he said Dad it wasn't but just a few days a couple of weeks later that I realized nothing had happened that it wasn't any different than I was I didn't have anything and he said I've been trying for all these months to pretend like I'm a Christian he said Dad I don't know if the Bible's true I don't know if Jesus Christ is God I've heard you teach it all my life I know that I don't know if I'm I just I have nothing Dad and I can't be a hypocrite and I can't pretend any longer well I knew what he was going through cause he I've been trying to tell him spiritual integrity demanded we we know the worst about ourselves and I prayed as he was talking oh God guide me as to what I say when he finished I said

Jimmy you know the plan of salvation oh yes you know I do and I said someday Jimmy you're going to realize how lost you are and you're going to realize how desperately you need a savior and someday you're going to open your heart to him and the Lord Jesus Christ is going to come in and he's going to change your life and I want you to promise me one thing son whenever that happens if I'm still alive and wherever you may be and I may be I want you to come and find me where I am and tell me that you're born of God will you promise me that Jimmy oh sure I will Dad well I said I'll tell you something else I'm never going to bring this subject up with you on my own accord again I'll be standing by anytime day or night to talk to you about the Lord but you're going to have to open the

conversation but your mother and I are going to be praying for you every day and some several times throughout the day that God will bring you to himself he said okay that's fair and I promise he started the car and we drove home I told my wife before the Lord that night we covenanted to pray daily for Jimmy to come to know the Lord he went through high school nothing more was said he attended church with the family went through it but nothing more was said then he went to school he went to Cornell University and was there his first year and I was so concerned I didn't know what was going to happen I had to make a

trip down to Texas when I came back on this particular night it was the middle of the week I saw a little Volkswagen in our yard that I didn't recognize and when I went inside I

found that Jimmy was there his friend Gene Chase had driven him from Cornell and they were sitting there visiting with the family and I joined them for a while but I'd come from Texas that day and was very tired so I excused myself and said well I'll see you folk in the morning and you'll have to excuse me I'm going to bed and I started in toward our room when I heard a voice Dad can I speak to you a minute and it was Jimmy we sat down at the dining room table he said I got to leave at 4 in the morning I got a test at 8 o'clock but I just had to come and tell you when I first got to Cornell I started to do everything that I thought I wanted to do I was just waiting to get away from home to do but it wasn't as much fun as I thought it was going to be and Gene Chase realized that I was

unhappy and he came to me he asked me to go to prayer meeting I went with him one night to the Little Alliance Church we talked until about 2 in the morning and then he asked me the next Wednesday and I didn't want to go but I went with him we talked again he said I went to bed about 11 o'clock I awakened about 2 and I couldn't sleep and you told me I was going to realize how lost I was and how desperately I needed a savior and he said I don't know somewhere between 3 and 4 I asked Jesus Christ to come into my heart and he did and he told me I'd been born of him and I told Gene the promise I'd made to you so we left after my last class today and I just had to tell you I had to tell you that I'd been born of God now listen when you eat his flesh and drink his blood you don't need to have

anybody tell you he'll tell you you'll know you'll know now we're going to pray again oh father of Jesus father of Jesus we lift our hearts to thee and among us and around us beside us and near us are so many that have everything but life oh thou God of all grace help us so to live among them that we'll be able to be a living testimony and so share the truth and through us they'll come to discover the need and realize that thou art desperately longing and yearning and ready to meet them if they'll but be totally honest with thee father we would ask thee therefore now bless this people pastor and all who work and carry responsibility and all the members and the friends and let its witness radiate from out this place of worship and fellowship into this community into the factories and

offices and shops until being confronted with the claims of Christ is the norm and it becomes easy for people to talk about the Lord Jesus Christ thank you father for your presence while our heads are bowed and eyes are closed just let me ask this are there those of you tonight who will say I personally have a need that's been represented by these texts that you've read and explained and I do want to be remembered in prayer if you'd raise your hand it would be the first step in dealing with the issue would you do that if there is such a need now let me ask one other question I have neighbors I have friends I have family those close to me and I have good reason to think that they are in desperate need of him oh they know the right words but they're more like your son than I'm happy to to

believe and I want to meet them witness to them and help them I'm committing myself now to be available to share what you've given and what God gives me to give but I want to be concerned about those who have an aim to live but may be dead would you raise your hands and indicate yes all over thank you father for your presence with us and for these that have responded by saying that they're going to be laborers together with thee in this task for bringing them to thee we ask it for thanksgiving in Jesus name Amen

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