

College Conference - 2 Cor. 13:5 & 1 Jn.

by Paul Washer

Paul Washer emphasizes the need for genuine faith and transformation in the Christian life, critiquing modern reductionist approaches to the gospel.

Duration: 50:31

Scripture: Matthew 7:20, Romans 8:9, 2 Corinthians 13:5, Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 John 1:9, 1 John 2:3, 1 John 2:6

Topics: "Assurance"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker highlights the problem of reductionism in our understanding of the gospel. He criticizes the tendency to simplify the message of Jesus Christ into a few basic principles, diminishing its depth and significance. The speaker shares personal anecdotes to illustrate his point, emphasizing the need to truly marvel at the gospel rather than treating it as a basic introductory lesson. He also emphasizes the importance of being sensitive to sin and growing in our knowledge of God.

Transcript

It's a great privilege to be here with you again and I trust that the Lord will somehow take all of this and use it in your life in a permanent way, that you would be changed, that you would be conformed to the image of Christ. You know, there's so many of these things that happen nowadays, conference after conference, acquiring the fire, getting this and getting that. And they motivate our little hearts for a few days and then we go back to being exactly what we were before we were before.

What we desperately need. Is the work of God. There's very little that men of God can do because men of God are so very little.

And there's no such thing as a great man of God. There are only tiny, faithless men of a great and a merciful God. But counting on his mercy and trusting in his word that he will bless the word proclaimed, we'll trust him tonight to do something among us.

Let's go the Lord in prayer. Father. I pray for this people.

That you will open up the eyes, those who are blind. The ears of the deaf. She will take out a heart of stone and replace it with a heart of flesh.

Lord, to call upon the wind. To breathe. On these bones.

That they might live. Lord, you have ordained that through the foolishness of preaching and the smallness of preachers. To do something so that he who boasts would boast in the Lord.

Father, help us in this day. And we will be helped. And we will testify to your help.

In Jesus name, amen. I want to begin by saying something that I said last night, referring to a principle of hermeneutics, it's very important and it is this, I'm going to stand here tonight and I'm going to tell you the great majority of what goes on in Christianity in America is absolutely wrong. I'm going to stand against the tide of most of what's said about Christianity in America, and I'm going to say it's wrong.

Now, by doing that, I put myself in a terrible predicament, who am I? Who am I? But see, there's a principle to hermeneutics, hermeneutics is simply a big word we use to describe the science of studying the Bible. And one of the things that we have to understand, there's a principle there that says basically this, we should always do our theology in the context of the church. And that means that when you interpret a passage of scripture.

And you've come to your conclusion on what it means, you need to take that interpretation of yours and you need to compare it to two thousand years of Christian history. And if everybody in Christian history is in agreement and they all disagree with you, who's probably wrong? Well, I want you to know the better part of biblical historical Christianity would look at Christianity in America and be ashamed. Would be appalled.

We are a people of reductionism. We have taken the gospel of Jesus Christ and reduced it down to four spiritual laws or five things God wants you to know. We can no longer marvel in the gospel because we treat it as something that's just, well, class 101, once you understand the gospel after a five minute presentation, then you go on to greater things.

But there is nothing greater. Than the gospel of Jesus Christ. Of God becoming man, living a perfect life on this earth, going to a tree, the son of God going to a tree and bearing the sins of his people upon himself and then being crushed by his father's own hand.

Someone had to die under the full force of the wrath of almighty God to pay for your sins, justice had to be satisfied, and it was satisfied when God unsheathed. A knife and drove it into the heart of his only begotten son, the wages of sin is death under the wrath of almighty God, in order to save you, someone had to die under that perfect, just, holy wrath, and that was the son of God. And when he died, the transaction was complete.

The justice of God was satisfied, the wrath of God was appeased on the third day, he rose again from the dead as a public declaration, a divine declaration. That his work was complete in the eyes of the father, he ascended up into heaven. And now he is seated at the right hand of God, and no, he is not asking you to open up that little heart of yours and invite him in.

He's commanding all men everywhere to repent and believe the gospel. But now we have taken this gospel and we've reduced it and then we've taken the gospel call or the invitation to Christ and not only reduced it, but entirely perverted the thing. Look at what we've done.

You come to a person and you say. Do you know you're a sinner and if they say yes, you jump to the next question, would you like to go to heaven if they say yes, you jump to the next question, would you like to ask Jesus into your heart if they say yes, you get them to pray a prayer after they prayed the prayer, you

asked them, did Jesus come into their heart if they're unsure about it, you tell them, of course, he came into their heart because he promised they would. He would based on Revelation three twenty and Christ does not lie.

That is heretical. And you need to know that it's not found in the New Testament, it's not found in the history of the church, it's heretical, it is a modern day construct based on a man by the name of Charles Finney and perfected. By a lot of preachers in America who ought to spend more time studying their Bibles and less time preaching.

You ask a man, do you know you're a sinner? If he says yes, it means absolutely nothing. Ask the devil if he knows he's a sinner or not, he'll say, well, yes, I am. And a fine one at that.

You see, the question is not, sir, do you recognize you're a sinner? The question is this, sir, since you have sat under the preaching of the gospel, has God so worked in your heart that the sin you once loved you now hate? That's the question. The sin that you boasted of, you are now ashamed, the sin that you clung to, you now wish with all your might to separate yourself from it. And then the question is not, do you want to go to heaven? Don't you understand, everybody wants to go to heaven, they just don't want God to be there when they get there.

That's what political system and theory is all about, the attempt to create a utopia on Earth for men to somehow gather together and create something wonderful. But salvation is not about going to heaven. The question is not.

Do you want to go to heaven? The question is, this has God so worked in your heart through the preaching of the gospel that the God you once ignored and despised and hated and treated as a little thing, you now desire him and esteem his worth above every other thing. And then the question is not. Well, if you know you're a sinner and you want to go to heaven, would you like to pray this little prayer and ask Jesus to come into your heart? After all, you know, the handle to your heart is on the inside, and if you don't open it, Jesus can't come in.

My friend, Jesus is Lord of your heart, and if he wants to come in, he'll kick the door down. It is never given a gospel presentation in the New Testament of now, as Jesus into your heart, Jesus did not come to Israel saying the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Now, who would like to ask me into their heart? He says, repent and believe the gospel, call upon the name of the Lord, seek his face.

Sitting under the preaching of the gospel, a person might hear it for the first time for five minutes, be struck in their heart by the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit may regenerate their heart, illuminate their mind and they are saved. Right. But there may be the case where a man may go for months.

Seeking the face of God with no assurance that God has graced him with salvation, calling upon the name of the Lord, seeking the Lord, but no, we'll have none of that today. Five minutes of counseling and we get them to make their decision. Do you know how many people are going to hell because they've made the decision? Do you know how many people in America, if I come up to them and ask them, are you going to heaven? They'll say, yes, I made my decision.

They're trusting in a decision instead of looking on to Christ. It's the idolatry of decisionism. Let me give you an example.

I had a lady years ago come forward in a meeting and she was weeping, she had destroyed her life, she had done terrible things with her life. And she says, my life is a mess. I said, yes.

She said, what can what can I do? What must I do? I said, what have you done? And I asked her, I said, have you ever asked Jesus to come into your heart? She said six. I said it didn't work, did it? She said, what must I do? I said, seek the Lord. Until you are found by him.

Go home. Cry out to God as though hell were opening up its mouth to swallow you down and keep crying out to God until he has saved you, until he, not some evangelist, until he has proclaimed over you the banner of salvation. The next night she came back, she was just desperate.

I said, what happened? She said, I cried out to God all day, fell asleep last night, woke up this morning in utter despair. Now, most of you would have run to her and tried to give her peace, peace when there is no peace, you would have tried to heal someone that God was wounding in order to save. She said, what must I do? I said, you must keep on.

Seek him. I said, actually. Dear woman, you have two choices.

Is. You can stop seeking him and go to hell. Or you can keep seeking him until he finds the.

She went home the next night, I was there praying with her father before the service started, the music began, and I went back to my seat and I was praying and all of a sudden I felt someone sit down beside me. I opened my eyes and it was the young lady. And I said.

What's happened? She said, last night I cried and I stayed and I I knelt at the at the door of God, I cried out to him all night and I fell asleep once again in desperation. But this morning I opened up my eyes and I realized the promises of God that they were for me and the love of God was shed abroad in my heart. And if you and all of humanity were to gather together and tell me I was not saved, I would know you are wrong.

He has saved me. It's the difference between that little silly evangelism that's done today and a true work of God in the heart of a man or a woman. So we've reduced it down.

But not only have we reduced down the gospel and the gospel invitation. But the whole idea. Of what we call biblical assurance.

Is. Upon what basis? Do you trust that you are saved? If a person is doubting their salvation. Technically, what usually happens in most churches is this comes to the preacher, says I'm doubting my salvation, the preacher says, well, let me ask you this.

Was there ever a point in time in your life when you prayed and asked Jesus to come into your heart? And the person will say, well, yes. And then then the preacher will say, well, let me ask you this, were you sincere? Well, I think so. Well, then this is just the devil bothering you.

Again, a modern day construct, a heresy. Very convenient for American Christianity, but it has nothing to do with the New Testament. Although we must examine the conversion experience of a person, that is not the soul or principle evidence that someone is truly converted.

And now we come to our passage in Second Corinthians 13. Verse five. Second Corinthians 13, verse five, Paul comes to this church in Corinth, and although there were true believers in Corinth, it is obvious

that there were many among the community of faith that were not genuinely converted.

That were not genuinely converted, even some of those died. And Paul comes to this church, many of whom in this church were not looking like Christians, they were not acting like Christians. He does not come to this church and say, now let me ask you a question, how many of you sincerely prayed and asked Jesus to come into your heart? That's not what he said.

He comes to them and he says this, test yourselves to see if you are in the faith, examine yourselves, or do you not recognize this about yourselves that Christ is in you unless he says, indeed, you fail the test. Paul comes to a group of people and he says, you're not living like Christians, there's a good chance you're not. Now, test yourselves, examine yourselves.

By what standard do we do this, by what standard do we judge ourselves? Now, let me stop here for a moment, just let's just go back in history again. If you go back to the major writings and the major themes of the early Baptist, the Puritan, Presbyterian, Congregationalist. You will find that their chief concern was writing about what is the gospel, how is the gospel applied or how are men called to come to know Christ? And then how can a person truly have biblical assurance that they're really saved? I mean, they wrote volumes and thousands and thousands of pages.

It's what all their books were about. I dare you to go into a Christian bookstore today and even find one book written on these things because we've so reduced the gospel that, of course, everybody's saved. That's why 65 percent of America is saved.

And we're one of the wickedest communities on the face of the earth. I lived for many years in a country where over 95 percent of the people believe themselves Christian. Because they were baptized as infants.

And you say that's absolutely preposterous that I mean, who that's that's heresy, that's terrible, that's what the evangelical community in America would say, well, that's absurd. You're not saved because you're baptized as an infant. But we have done the exact same thing in America, you are saved if one time in your life you prayed a prayer, repeated a prayer, and there are people right now partying all over the campus of Murray State in all the bars in this area doing every sort of wicked thing, immoral thing.

Many of them will be in church on Sunday, but most of them, even those who would never grace the doors of a church, believe they are saved because a preacher told them they were based upon his wrong understanding of Scripture. You're saved, why you did that. Sometimes I'll talk to people and say, are you saved? Don't worry about me, preacher, I done did that.

You done did what? It's not a flu shot, it's not a vaccination. Salvation. Salvation is not a one time thing.

Salvation is found in three tenses. I have been saved by faith from the condemnation and wrath of God, I am being saved from the power of sin through his work of sanctification, and one day I will be wholly and completely saved in my glorified state. But what you need to understand is that the evidence that one time long ago you believed and were justified is that now you are being sanctified and people can see it in your life.

There is no such thing in the New Testament, nor Baptist history, nor Presbyterian history, nor Congregationalist history, nor Puritan history. There is no such thing as the modern day construct of a continuously carnal Christian, a person who truly receives Christ, and then the whole entire of their life they live in carnality. That does not exist.

You see, what you need to understand is this. In every cycle of church history, what we can see is a move of God, reality of God and the gospel in people's lives, but gradually in the very place where that occurred, you see a coldness and intellectualism, a deadness and a creedalism until all these flaming white, hot, living truths of Scripture become nothing more than a creed. That's what's happened.

That's what's happened. Even to some of you. You prayed a prayer one time in your life.

But there's no progressive sanctification. There's no growth in godliness can live like the devil, but you're still saved. But that's not New Testament.

You say, Brother Paul, I repented a long time ago, the evidence that you repented under salvation a long time ago is you're still repenting today. Brother Paul, I believed and was saved. Well, the evidence that you truly believed and were saved at that time is you're still believing today.

Brother Paul, God changed my life, if that's so, he's still changing your life, he who began a good work and you will finish it. The Bible teaches. The perseverance of the saints, or as it's commonly called today, the security of the believer.

That the same power of God that saves a man keeps a man, but the evidence that God has truly saved a man is that you can see God keeping a man. Now, we talk about examine yourself, test yourself upon what basis Paul told the church in Corinth something they were doing that is very common in our own country. You compare yourselves to yourselves and you are not wise.

You look at other people who profess faith in Christ, you say, well, I'm doing as well as they are. Well, it could be because both of you are going to hell. To what should we compare our lives? Well, let's go to First John and this is where we'll stay.

First, John, chapter five. Verse 13. John is marvelous in his writings in this sense, he tells us why he wrote the gospel so that men would believe that Jesus is the Christ, the savior of the world.

But he tells us also why he writes his epistle, first, John 5:13, these things I have written to you who believe in the name of the son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. What is their assurance that they have eternal life, that they truly know him? It's based upon the things John wrote in this book. John, in this epistle, gives us a series of tests.

And we are to compare our lives to these tests to gain a biblical assurance or that our false faith might be exposed and we truly repent and come to know Christ. So we're going to look at these tests. And I want you to examine your life in light of them.

Let's go to chapter one of first John. Now, let's look at another teaching of Christ. Blessed are those who mourn.

For they shall be comforted. One of the greatest marks of the Christian life is contrition. Brokenness and mourning over sin.

Let me ask you a question. And. When was the last time you wept? Over your sin.

Now, let me just give you one more illustration before we go on to the next test, and many times when I say this, preachers especially notice that this is true. Let's say a preacher is preaching, it's a Sunday night or a Wednesday night, and he's preaching in his church and the Holy Spirit just begins to break people. I

mean, people just for some reason, he might not even be preaching on sin, but it seems that God begins to move in the congregation and people are broken.

Isn't it amazing that almost every time that happens? It is the most pious and most godly and most Christ like people who come forward weeping. And the most carnal, cold. People who never serve, who never get involved, who have no signs of piety, sit back there in their seats as cold as a stone.

What's happening? I'll tell you what's happening. It's a predivision of the sheep and the goats is what it is, not that every time there's a movement, all true Christians need to be affected. But we do see this, don't we? The godliest people that we know are also the most broken and contrite people.

And the people often most carnal and cold to the things of God. Are untouched and unmoved. By their sin.

And. So the first great proof of Christianity. Is that your lifestyle conforms to what God has revealed to us about his character and his will, and the second test is this, the true Christian.

Will battle against sin. Sometimes it will be two steps forward, one step back, a raging battle. But they will be broken over their sin.

And their sin will lead them to confession and over the years. They will become more and more sensitive to sin. So that things that they were unaware of in the earlier stages of their Christianity, they become acutely aware of.

As the days pass by. Now, let's go to the third test. Now.

Let me stop here for a moment, this is not necessarily a lesson on literature or interpretation, but so many times we look at the scriptures as though it was just poetry or a pretty thing that God wants to say. But I can assure you in the economy of God, every word has meaning. And he means what he says.

So let's go to the next text in that light. Verse three of chapter two. By this, we know that we have come to know him.

Now, how could it be any clearer? By this, we know that we've come to know him. How do you know you've come to know him? He says by this, we know that we have come to know him if we keep his commandments. Now, just look at the text.

Don't try to explain it away or figure out some way around it. We're very good at that. Just look at what it's saying.

By this, we know that we've come to know him if we keep his commandments. And then he goes on and it's even stronger, the one who says I've come to know him. The idea, the emphasis here is the one who says, oh, I know him.

I know him. I'm a Christian, too. The one who says I've come to know him and does not keep his commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him.

Now, again, is he talking about sinless perfection and that the true Christian obeys God all the time? No, throughout this epistle, John specifically uses, I think, in a very important way, the present tense verbs in order to indicate style of life, just like when he says that that the one who knows God doesn't sin, the one that's been born of God doesn't sin. He doesn't mean sinless perfection. He means doesn't live a lifestyle

of practicing sin.

That's the same thing here, he says, the one who's come to know him. Keeps his commandments, does that mean that their lives are perfect? No, that means that their lives are marked by a new relationship to the will of God and the commands of God. Let me give you an example, when I married my wife.

Fourteen years ago, my relationship with my wife changed. But my relationship with every other woman on the face of the earth also changed, so when someone comes to me and they say, Brother Paul, I've come to know him, I have a new relationship with God. I will ask him, well, do you have a new relationship with sin? Has your relationship with sin changed, because if your relationship with sin has not changed, your relationship with God has not changed.

I said, Brother Paul, I have a new relationship with God, do you have a new relationship with his will? Do you have a new relationship with his word now? Let's go back to the words of Jesus, shall we? No. Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my father who's in heaven. He will enter.

Now, many people will think this smacks of youth, are you saying that we're saved by faith and also by works? No, what I'm saying is this, the same thing that James is saying. The one who has believed in Christ has been born again. I know in modern day evangelism, born again has been reduced down to nothing more than a decision that a man makes.

But born again refers to the doctrine of regeneration, whereby God makes someone into a new creature, not just poetry. They are ontologically changed from the Greek word ontos, meaning being their very essence is changed. Their very essence, they become a new creature.

Let me put it this way, I believe and others would follow suit throughout history that the conversion of a man. Manifests more of the power of God than the very creation of the universe, God created the universe in Latin ex nihilo out of nothing. But he creates a man, a sinner.

Into a saint out of a corrupt mass, and in that is great power, you see, salvation is not just some little human decision that an evangelist got you to make, it is a supernatural work, a recreating work of the same Holy Spirit that hovered over the waters and brought form into chaos, brought form from chaos. When a man is saved, that same spirit. Creates a new man.

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Are you, are you, are you? Do you have a new relationship with the commands of God for the lost man and the religious lost man who fills our churches? Is. The commands of God are a burden.

But for the new believer who's been recreated in the image of God and true righteousness and true holiness, the commands of God are a joy. Let me give you a perfect example, let's say I'm pastoring and I go to I come to this church, a new church, and I begin to pastor and they tell me, well, so and so lives over there in a trailer. He hadn't been in church in five years, used to be a member of the church.

So I go over there. He's very polite, he opens up the door for me, the man, and I walk in, he says, pastor, can I get you some tea, have a seat? And I say, I hear you haven't been in church in five years. Yeah, pastor, you're right, I just need to I just need to do the right thing and I did get back in church and I hear that.

You've really gone to drinking, frequent the bars and yeah, pastor, you're right, I just need to quit that old stuff and I just need to do what's right and I need to get back into church and I hear that you're pretty much the adulterer. Yeah, I've failed my wife there so many times, you're right, I just I just need to do the right thing now, most men, most pastors would walk out of there thinking, well, I've won a victory, I've brought a lost sheep back home. No, you've just talked to a lost man.

Because you know what he's telling you, you're right, preacher, I need to stop doing all the wicked things I love and start doing all the righteous things I hate in order to go to heaven, that is not a new creation, that is a man with just enough religion to go to hell. But get a Christian burial, of course, you see. Something changes in your relationship with God, something will change in your relationship with his word and his will.

Now, let's go on to the next test. Chapter chapter two, verse six, the one who says he abides in him ought himself to walk in the same manner as he walked. They say, well, Brother Paul, now we're all going to hell on that one.

Who walks like Jesus? Well, let's just understand something of what that means. First of all, remember, he is talking not about perfection, but style of life, the characteristics of one's life, the same thing Jesus said when he said, you will know them by their fruits. And the best illustrations I can give you.

Sadly, comes from my own life. When I was a little boy, about five, five and a half, six years old, we lived on a we raised quarter horses and charlotte cattle, and my dad would come in there about 530 in the morning and he would always say, Paul, boy, get up, no rest for the wicked. And back then.

When your dad said, get you better be up before he gets to up or you're in trouble. And I'd pop up out of that bed and it'd be a lot of maybe snow on the ground. My dad was a really big man and he would grab one bucket of feed or bucket of water with one hand and another bucket with another, and he'd go walking out there through the snow across the feedlot.

Well, as a little boy, I wanted to be like my dad, I'd pick up a bucket in one hand, another bucket in the other, and I'd begin to walk across that feedlot and I would see his prints in the snow. And because I wanted to be so much like my father, I would stretch out with all my might to put my foot where his foot had been. Now, of course, I looked absolutely ridiculous at times, I was stretching much farther than I could actually go, I fell down sometimes, which is not very advisable in a feedlot, and so it always didn't go right.

But any outside observer would have had no doubt. By looking at me walk as strange as my gait may have been. They would have had no doubt that little boy wants to walk like his dad.

Someone looks at your life. Would they say that the prominent thing about you is that you want to walk as Jesus walked, the one who says he abides in him ought to walk. As he walked.

Let's go on to another test, which is maybe one of the most powerful tests. He says this. Verse nine, the one who says he is in the light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now the one who loves his brother abides in the light and there is no cause for stumbling in him.

The one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes. Now, brother here is not referring to the poor. Even though we ought to love the poor and brother here is not referring to someone of another race because.

That doesn't exist, there is no person of another race, that's a racist remark in itself, there's only one race and it's a human one. But it doesn't refer to someone of another color, another creed, even though we ought to love all people regardless of color and creed. When he says the one who's truly Christian will love his brother.

He is saying the one who is truly Christian. Will love Christians. Will desire to fellowship with Christians.

Christians. Want to be with them to talk about Christ. To learn from them, to grow with them, to serve them.

Let me give you a really good example of how scriptures can be twisted. And what it means to really love. You've all heard the passage, Jesus speaking there about the division of the sheep and the goats, and he says, I was I was in prison and you did not visit me, I was naked, you did not clothe me, I was hungry, you did not feed me.

And so because of that, we say, well, we need to feed people who don't have food and we need to visit the prisons because that's where Jesus is at and so on and so forth. That's not what that text means. I mean, we ought to have prison ministries, but that's not what that text means.

Jesus is not saying I was the pedophile in prison and you didn't visit me. Jesus doesn't identify himself with those in Adam. There are only two spheres of existence, you are in Christ or you are in Adam.

Let me give you the scenario, when I lived in third world countries, one of the things I noticed is that if you get thrown into a prison, you're in really bad shape. And I'll tell you why they don't provide for you food in prison. Our clothing, our water, many times.

Or shelter. Or shelter. Did you know that? In the one prison, Lorigancho, there outside of Lima, Peru, for a while it was such it was that way, if you went to prison, you were going to die.

Unless someone from outside of that prison was willing to identify with you and go and take you food and clothing and money and whatever else you needed to survive in there, if they did not, you would die. Now, let's look, let's say that we're a church. And we have a meeting one night in the catacombs, we're hidden there in the Roman Empire, we're hiding out because we're persecuted and have a wonderful time at church.

And while we're all dispersing. Two of our elders go one way down a street. And the Romans are there and they grab them.

And they take our two elders to prison. Now, the next morning. All of us gather back together because we find out what's happened.

And we say our brothers are thrown in prison. And we begin to discuss, we say, well, we've got to go take them food. We've got to go bandage their wounds.

We've got to take them clothing or they're going to die. And then someone says, well, but if one of us goes. We may get caught, too, soon as they see those those Romans see us identifying ourselves with those Christians in there, they'll grab us, too, and then someone says, I'll go.

That's what Jesus is talking about. You see how we can just look at a verse and because everybody in our culture and our time says the same thing, it must be true. It's talking about a love for the brethren.

And. That makes you willing. To lay down your life and leads you to real practical service on behalf of the congregation.

Now. Do you remember in Romans chapter three? One of the signs of reprobation, that means someone who's lost, unapproved by God, one of the signs is they are useless. They've all become useless.

Now, it is a common fact among these church growth experts. The 20 percent of the people in the church do 80 percent of the work and 80 percent of the people do nothing. One of the reasons is a great majority of that 80 percent don't know Christ.

Or we have people who come to church and if the pastor doesn't shake their hand immediately, they never come back or we have people who come and consider themselves among the faithful because they simply come and fill their pew on a Sunday. Such dedication is admirable. They even sing and then they leave and go to Denny's or wherever else you go, you think that's Christianity, Christianity, one of the greatest evidences of Christianity is that someone can look at your life and there is a service to the saints, there is fellowship to the saints, there is you loving the saints.

Let me ask you, who do you hang out with? Birds of the feather really do flock together. You like to be with worldly people who never want to talk about Christ. If you're not there to witness to them, you like to be with them because you're just like them.

You're lost to you say. Brother Paul, don't talk that way. Somebody has to.

Many theologians have said that if we take the New Testament seriously. We would have to confess that less than 10 to 15 percent of all the people who proclaim to know Christ in the United States of America, less than 10 to 15 percent of them are lost or are saved. And the rest lost.

If we just take the New Testament halfheartedly, we will see that. You are not saved by works that is the greatest of all blasphemies, you are saved by faith, but faith is dealing is based, founded upon this great work of regeneration whereby God makes someone into something new. I really quickly, I just want to go to one last test.

I'm going to try to sneak to and really quick, verse 15, do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life is not from the father, but is from the world.

The world is passing away. This text can also mean it is being pushed out and also its lusts. But the one who does the will of God abides forever or lives forever.

Do you love the world? You say, well, in my heart of hearts, I don't I don't care about your heart of hearts. Your lifestyle, does it demonstrate a person who loves the world? Isn't it amazing people always tell me about their heart of hearts in my heart, you can't judge my heart, you don't know what's in my heart. Do you know what heart refers to? It's the very essence or core of your being.

So what you're saying is. The very essence and core of my existence has been radically changed by the conversion experience, the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit dwells there, and yet it hasn't affected one other aspect of my life. That doesn't work, do you love the world, what do you think about most? I just identified your God as Christian.

Our goal. Is whether you eat or drink the most menial task, you do it for the glory of God. Frank Lombok, who taught everybody in the Philippine Islands how to read the most amazing missionaries, he did so with one purpose, that they might be able to read scripture.

I was preaching in Las Vegas last week and actually I was talking about Frank Lombok from the pulpit and a Filipino man came up to me and said. My father was converted under the ministry of Frank Lombok, and he went and started a Christian school afterwards, and I'm the product of that. Frank Lombok.

Did all that, but you know what his greatest passion, if you read his diary, the greatest passion and goal that that man had in his entire life that he sought for every day of his life as a Christian was this, he wanted to spend one entire day only thinking on Christ without one interrupting thought. You ever hear people say, well, he's so heavenly minded, he's no earthly good. We're so earthly minded, we're no heavenly good.

Frank Lombok, all he wanted to think about was heaven, and he taught all the Philippines to read. Everything we do, we're to do for the glory of God. And now, lastly, going to skip over quickly to the last chapter of this book, we're going to skip over many tests.

I want you to look at verse 12 of chapter five. He who has the son has life. He who does not have the son of God does not have life.

One of the tests, although we have talked so much about evidences of true Christianity. The greatest evidence possibly is an almost craving for the son of God and a passion to be found only in him. To cry out with the old hymn writer, nothing in my hands, I bring.

Simply to the cross, I claim. That Jesus Christ is not a part of your life, like some little accessory or a belt or a buckle on a shoe. He's not a part of your life, he is your life.

He's not a helper for your salvation, he is your salvation, he's everything I hate. Hate, loathe, whatever word I could ever find is not strong enough to describe my animosity toward those preachers today who will sit there and go, you have a wonderful life, you have a wonderful job, you have a wonderful family, you have a wonderful home and a house and a three car garage and everything you just lack. One more thing to make your life complete.

You need Jesus. That is blasphemy. If you have not Christ, you have nothing.

He's not the cherry on the top of an already wonderful life. You come to him knowing this, that without him your life is dung and less than refuse, that it is only Christ and Christ alone. And.

Let's pray. Father. Please, I know that you will get glory for yourself.

It has always been that way, and I know that you can get glory. From justice and from mercy alike. But show mercy.

Those who are Christian lead them in a way everlasting. Those who do not know you. Those whom you do not know.

That they might. Be brought in through the tender mercies of God revealed in the face of Jesus Christ. Amen.

God bless you.

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