

A Proper Orientation

by Robert B. Thompson

Robert B. Thompson emphasizes that the true goal of salvation is transformation into the image of Christ rather than merely escaping hell or reaching heaven.

Duration: 1:18:00

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:1

Topics: "Salvation", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of accepting Christ in order to avoid going to hell. He refers to Matthew chapter 25 and highlights the scriptural basis of his teachings. The preacher also mentions the need to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit in evangelism, as different approaches may be necessary for different individuals. He explains the concept of being crucified with Christ and rising with him, and how this relates to the believer's experience of living in the flesh while also experiencing resurrection life.

Transcript

It is with great thanksgiving and praise, Lord. Great thanksgiving and praise. We feel the power of your word.

We know you're working in the earth mightily. We thank you for the good reports we've heard. I pray tonight, Lord, you keep your hand on our families while we're away.

Keep them safe and healthy. Bring our loved ones into your kingdom, we pray. And help us, Lord, as we're here tonight.

Keep us safe on the highway going home. But, Lord, open our hearts and minds and grant that we will cover just the ground the Holy Spirit would have covered and that he will give the insight to us, Lord, so that we'll understand. We'll understand.

Help us to understand your word as it is unfolding in Jesus' name. And everyone said, Amen. I guess, Angelique, we'll have to... Yeah, can you give that... Can you do our overheads? Okay.

I don't know when Bill Ott will be back. He's on a trip, so... I think we're on page six. Sister, I don't know your name.

You've come a couple of times, three times before. Do you have a background in the Scriptures at all? Okay, well, if anything comes up you don't understand, don't feel... Don't worry about asking it. Just ask.

Because I never know. Sometimes a simple explanation... You may hear things here you've never heard before, possibly. And if a thing strikes you as strange, there's nothing wrong with saying, What are you talking about? That's what this class is all about.

So don't be backward about going forward. Ruth. Now, that's a good name.

We're off to a good start with Ruth. No, we're on five. I'm sorry, Angelique, we're on page five.

That's where we stopped last time. The third dimension may be thought of as the fullness of God. To know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

And where's that expression, all the fullness of God? Ephesians 3.19. Because we are kind of pioneering, it's very important to know where it is in the Scripture. An awful lot of evangelical preaching is on Scriptural. An awful lot of it is on Scriptural.

And when you begin to search the Scriptures to see what the Bible says, it's quite a shock. All right, now this third symbol, this booth, is the peculiar message of this church. Where some are preaching that the altar of salvation, some at Pentecost, and we preach those things too.

But this is, you don't hear about the fullness of God too often. The fullness of God is the goal. The atoning blood of the Lord Jesus gives us the authority to press toward the goal.

The Holy Spirit of God gives us the ability, the ability to press toward the goal. The goal is not a change in location, but a change in personality. Now that's very important to understand.

The current teaching, and it's almost total, is that we are saved from hell to go to heaven. Now, I'm not going to really get rough on that. An awful lot of people have got saved and have met the Lord from that preaching.

So we're not running down what anyone has done or is doing or will do when we're talking. So please understand, we're not taking a shot at anybody's preaching. That's not our purpose.

Our purpose is this. God is giving to his church today. He's doing a lot of stuff.

But one thing that he is doing, is he's giving us a mid-course correction in doctrine. And the way that you verify your faith is by the word. Tradition will not stand in our day because evil is coming to such proportions that the doctrine must become closer to the scripture than it ever has been.

So, I've been part of, you know, I've talked to you for years that the goal of salvation is not to go to heaven. That's not the goal. And although there certainly is a heaven, and I'm sure it's very desirable, but if you make it the goal, it feeds back and it alters the way you approach Christ.

It's really not very helpful. If you see the goal as being transformed into the image of Jesus, and coming to know God, then that's something that you do every day. You don't have to wait until you die.

It's something that is happening now. And of course there is no New Testament scripture for the idea, either in the Gospels or any place else, that we're saved to go to heaven. It simply is not present.

And I'm sure that must come as a shock to people. But you will look in vain, because Jesus didn't point toward heaven as the home of the saints. We've heard it so much, we think, surely it's got to be in there somewhere.

But it isn't. And there's a reason. Because that's not the goal.

That's not what it's about. Actually, our goal is to come to the Father. To be made in the image of Jesus, and to come to the Father, to please the Father.

That's our goal. Not to go to a place, but to be changed. The Christian salvation is change in us.

Change in us, so that we can please God. The Christian salvation is change in us, so that we can please God. Alright, now, of late, the other end of the spectrum has been brought to my attention.

And again, I have been absolutely flabbergasted to find that it is not scriptural. Now listen to this. You want to hear a shocking statement? Get ready.

Fasten your seatbelts. There isn't one single verse in the New Testament that associates the salvation that's in Christ with salvation from hell. Not one.

Okay, let me go through that again. Ordinarily, we say that you accept Jesus to be saved from hell. We're associating the salvation that's in Jesus with escape from hell.

Or, however you want to put it, our pass out of hell, so we won't go to hell when we die. Okay? Are you ready for this? There isn't one single New Testament reference for that belief. Not one.

You'll look in vain. I tell you, I did a computer search. The expression, saved from hell, you know, a devil's hell and all this, is not scriptural.

Is hell mentioned? Yes. Sometimes the Greek term is Hades. Sometimes it's Gehenna.

Gehenna is really the lake of fire. Yes, Ruth has her hand up. But the wrath of God, yes, exactly.

See, the issue is always life and death. See, and the issue there is life. But we translate it into hell.

But you see, there's a difference between death and hell. There's a difference between death and hell. Death is a place of... A death is separation from God.

Hell is a place of torment. The rich man was in hell. He wasn't in death, he was in hell.

There's a difference between hell and death. And there's a reason, and I'll get to the reason in a minute, but first of all I want you to see that wherever the New Testament talks about hell, like the rich man in hell, or in Hades, or have your eye plucked out, it's better than to be cast into hell, into Gehenna, is never associated with receiving Christ. It's always associated with your conduct.

Now that's very important, because we have come, in evangelical teaching, to use accepting Christ as an alternative to righteous conduct. See, that's how we present grace. As an alternative to righteous conduct.

We ought to try to do good, but basically we're saved by grace. That is, it's a salvation that is an alternative to righteous conduct. The general evangelical thinking is that under the law of Moses, you had to live right.

But under the New Testament, that's not the important thing, because we're saved by grace through faith, and not of works. Works we translate as righteous behavior. So then grace becomes an alternative to righteous behavior.

So then, if you present hell, you're going to have to think, is everybody thinking? If you present hell as the thing to be feared, then grace appears then as salvation from hell. But it's never presented that way. Grace is never presented as salvation from hell.

Always as salvation from death. Now there's a reason for that. There's a very great reason for that, and it's this.

Hell is something you will not experience until you die. But life and death are daily matters. You see the enormous difference? So if you see the impact that the teaching that we're saved from hell has on us, it has to do in the same way with the preaching that heaven is the goal, has on us.

It doesn't really matter about this life. See how skillful Satan is? It sounds so godly, but what it does is it destroys your day of the necessity for meeting Christ today. Because what it is, is a pledge on what happens after you die.

But the issue of your Christian life and mine today is not hell. It's are we pressing into life or are we letting death overcome us? See that's a decision that you made today. You and I made today.

We were tempted, every one of us, we were challenged today with the forces of death. And we were challenged today with the forces of life. And we chose life or we chose death, but not hell.

That's why the New Testament does not mention salvation from hell in connection with Jesus. Only having to do with behavior. See the Old Testament, you have to go to the Old Testament to find out about hell because the New Testament says so little about it.

But see, the Old Testament says the wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God. The wicked, the wicked. And in the New Testament, if your eye offends you, see if your behavior is wrong, it's better to correct your behavior even if you hurt yourself than to be cast into hell.

See it's not talking about accepting Christ, it's talking about behavior. And because evangelical teaching doesn't stress behavior but stresses forgiveness through grace, you can't insert accepting Christ in there. See it's better to pluck out your eye than to be cast into hell.

It's not the same as saying it's better to accept Christ than to be cast into hell. See this may take you a while to puzzle about it, but I wouldn't deal with it if it were mere academics. This is vital because the teaching of making a decision for Christ.

The word decision is not used in the New Testament. Much less decision for Christ. The word decision itself is not used.

I'll tell you another one that Mark Overton pointed out to me. The word unsaved does not appear in the New Testament. So much of our vocabulary, and you know these seem innocuous, like well it's synonymous with other things, it just doesn't say that.

You can't pass it off that simply. Like you can't make hell, you can't insert hell when the Bible says death. You can't change the words of the Scripture.

See the words in the Greek and in the Hebrew for hell are one thing and for death are another. You can't play around without problems. And so there's nothing wrong, and I know you'll agree with this, with going back to the Bible and making sure your expressions are biblical.

I'm sure we would all want to do that. And sometimes it wouldn't make any difference. I'm sure in the case of unsaved, though it doesn't appear there, I think by inference it's unsaved.

So there's no problem there. But the problem with inserting hell when you mean death creates a terrific problem because death and life are the issues today whereas hell is an issue in the future. And so since you can't jump into the future of what you're dealing with today, then it has a very practical effect on you.

For example, for example, one of our favorite verses is Romans 6.23 the wages of sin is death. See? Well, in our mind we convert that, pass out a tract and the tract says sinner, the wages of sin is hell. And there may be a picture of flames on the cover.

But two things are wrong there. One, Romans 6.23 is not talking to the unsaved but to the saved. And secondly, the context of Romans 6.23 shows you that it shows sin and therefore died spiritually.

So if you make it hell, you bring up a really, if you'll accept this, a mythological salvation. And I think, and this is, and I'm not disparaging the Catholic Church, whatever I am, and he was as fine a Christian I've ever met, devout Catholic, so please, I'm not shooting at the Catholic Church. But I think the doctrine of salvation was changed back in the second or third century by the Catholic Church.

And it changed from salvation being a change in the person to being hell, purgatory, and heaven. I think that's where that originated. But God has never found it necessary to correct the hell and heaven concept of salvation in evangelical thinking because it wasn't necessary to this point.

But it's necessary now or God wouldn't be doing it. So this is back to the Bible hour. Now, let me show you another thing.

This is very important. This is new to me because I've always assumed that people out there are saving souls from hell. But I never realized that expression is not found in the Scripture.

And if something is not found in the Scripture, you better watch what you're talking about. If you don't find a synonym that's pretty close, maybe you better give it some thought. So, as I've been thinking about this, I sensed that there was something profound here that I was missing and it was on the back of my mind but I couldn't bring it up.

And I was talking to Eddie Ryder last night after the council meeting and it hit me. And I didn't intend to bring this out tonight but I will be including it. Mark just gave me back a galley proof of my book salvation from hell to heaven or from death to life.

But now I've got two pages to add to it. I woke up at 5.30 this morning. We were up late last night.

5.30, I got wide awake and this was in my mind that I've been talking about with Eddie Ryder and I had to get out of bed. I mean, I suffered for it all day. If you preach salvation to people as making a decision for Christ to escape hell do you know what you do? You give them an incorrect orientation to the Christian life.

You're not correctly oriented. And that incorrect orientation will follow you all your days unless you happen to hit on a church that explains what salvation is about. Now let me tell you the proper orientation for the Christian life.

How you become a Christian. And you'll see the difference immediately. You become a Christian by receiving Jesus as Savior and Lord.

You say, I cannot save myself. I'm a sinner. I was born in sin.

No matter how hard I try to be righteous it isn't going to wash. I need the blood of God's Son. Okay? On the basis of that God gives you eternal life in the form of His Holy Spirit and Christ is born in you.

Check so far? Okay. The next thing God says and of course I'm not giving you a sequence here but merely the isolated facts. Put them together how you want to.

Then God says repent which means what? Turn away from what? From your life in the world or sin or whatever. It's mainly what we repent from is our life in the world. We really haven't been awakened to sin.

Let me point that out. We take it by faith that we're a sinner. But we're not awakened to sin until quite a bit later when the Holy Spirit begins to bring it up.

And let me show you that in Israel. When Israel kept the Passover blood they didn't even have the law. They had no consciousness of sin.

The Passover was not given in terms of sin. Do you see that? They didn't even know sin until they came to Sinai. The Passover it has to do for covering them.

We have a general idea that we're in Egypt and in bondage. But we don't become aware of the jealousy and the pride and the hatred and the anger and the backbiting and the lying and the stealing and the arrogance and all the rest of it until we're well along because just like Israel didn't enter the land of promise in fact until quite a while after they had the law in the tabernacle. But you see Israel did no fighting when they come out of Egypt.

But you fight to get into the land of promise. So when you come to God God isn't asking you to fight against your sins. He isn't even dealing with sin.

He's telling you to come out of the world. He does all the fighting on Calvary. But for you to enter into your land and begin to get rid of the enemy in your land the arrogance and the pride and all this you've got to fight.

He didn't do that on the cross. You have to do that through the Spirit of God. If you through the Spirit do put to death the deeds of the body you shall live.

So that's what Wayne and Diana if they come with their ministry that's what they're doing. They have a ministry to help us identify the enemies in our land. That's what their ministry is.

It's not psychology. The fact that she's a psychologist is incidental. This is a ministry that is helping us to identify the enemy in our land.

I mean there's things in us in our family relations for example that have to get straightened out. Our attitude toward our kids our response toward people. And all these are enemies in our land.

They're not like Christ. Christ is courteous, kind gentle, patient, loving, joyous. We're not that way all the time.

We want to be but there's enemies in the land. And just when we decide to be patient out he comes. Or long suffering or pure in our actions or whatever.

See the enemy's there. He hasn't been dealt with yet. But as far as the judgment of the world is concerned that was taken care of on Calvary.

And so we come out clean covered with the blood even though that sin is still in us it's forgiven. But what God says and now this is now we're coming to the question. God says repent.

That is turn away from the world. Then he says reckon that you have died with Christ on the cross and that you have risen with him to the right hand of God. Where's that from? Romans 6. Okay.

Now that's what the old time holiness teachers used to say that's your position. Your position is you are dead. You reckon yourself dead.

I am dead with Christ. And my life is hidden with Christ and God. Check.

Okay. You have a position but then you have an experience of what you actually how alive you actually are in the flesh. And so your Christian life becomes a closing of a gap between your position and your experience.

See I know by faith that I have I count myself now right now as crucified with Christ. Do you? You're better. That's the meaning of water baptism.

Yes Belinda? Isn't that on a daily basis? Yes. That's the experience. The daily basis is the experience.

I'm talking now about the position. There's a position. God sees you in a certain position.

When you're baptized in water you are baptized into the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. That's why it says count yourself dead. Okay? It's very important.

This is the correct orientation. Your Christian life will be a series of seemingly unrelated and random ups and downs. So God has given you a vision.

He's called something as though it were which is not as yet an experience. And he says you are dead and your life is hidden with Christ and God. Now that's true in God's vision and probably is true in the sense of a first fruit.

But we know that our Adamic man many times manifests life. So he hasn't been crucified yet. He's in the process of being crucified.

He's in the process. So, but the important thing is that you establish your position. If you don't establish your position which is your orientation to the Christian life you'll be all over the ballpark.

That's why every time a person is baptized in water it should be explained to them then or soon after this is what you did. And read to them from the 6th chapter of Romans. Know ye not that so many of us were baptized to reckon ourselves dead.

Appropriate. The word is appropriate. It's still possible, but it's not appropriate.

See, why are you sinning? If you counted yourself dead, why are you sinning? It's not appropriate. That's the meaning of Romans 6. It doesn't mean you can't sin. It doesn't mean that God doesn't know it if you do.

It means that it's not commensurate with your position. If you are crucified with Christ why then are you continuing in your Adamic life? So do you see how important the position is? So every day when you get out of bed you should say to yourself I was baptized. I am part of the crucifixion of Christ.

I have been raised. See, in Colossians 3 it's in the past tense. If you then be raised with Christ.

Past tense. Set your affection on things above. It's also in Ephesians the second chapter.

He raises up above every name. Okay, now. That is past tense.

In fact, that happened for us before the foundation of the world. That's our calling. Our calling is to be part of Christ's crucifixion and part of Christ's resurrection.

Well, I'm glad I got on. I see some of you never heard that. If you don't have that firmly fixed vision in your mind you have not, you have never been oriented properly to the Christian salvation.

Yes. What would I do? You are risen with him. Romans 6. That you might walk in newness of life.

You are an integral part of his crucifixion. You are an integral part of his resurrection. And that's why you can't be overcome.

Because in order to overcome you Satan would have to overcome the resurrection of Jesus Christ. You are of his power and everything else. You are raised with him to the right hand of God.

That has happened in the vision of God. Yes. But in the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you.

He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit who dwells in you. That's teaching. That's talking about the experience not about the position.

You've got to see this people. Now here's the next question. Are you ready? The question then comes How do you respond when God calls something as being true when it's not as yet true? I wrote a book on that called Fulfilling the Vision.

Because you can fulfill the vision but there's only one correct way to fulfill the vision of God. Let me give you an example of some incorrect ways. It's not possible while we're in this world.

It was true in the first century but it's not true now. I already have it because the Bible says so. The Bible says I'm healed so I'm already healed.

So I ignore my symptoms. See that's not the way you fulfill the vision. When God calls something then how you respond to that determines whether or not you make a success of the Christian life.

How you respond to the vision of God determines your success in the Christian life. And there's only one correct way to respond to the vision of God. You must through faith and patience inherit the promise.

So first you've got to know the promise and then secondly you have to persevere in patience and faith. Those two things are not identical. Patience and faith.

Faith and patience. Until you get it. And that's the only correct way to respond to the vision of God.

Now you want to read Romans 6 for us. Read it out for me please. Tenth of the burden.

Were. Tenth. That.

We were. Read on. Crucifixion.

I am crucified with Christ. Read on. And that future.

Crucifixion. But it's a daily. See I am crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless I live. And you live in newness of life. And that life is his resurrection.

You'll find that in 2 Corinthians 4. We studied that last week. You remember that though my natural man is experiencing crucifixion the life of Christ is raising me up and spilling out to others. And that's true.

Yes. And I'd like a. Someone read it. Sophia I hope you're getting this.

Where's Angelique? I'm nervous about Angelique. Okay she's. Alright.

Yeah these are my warriors. Shining in the sky. Alright.

Tenth. That. And this is not talking only about resurrection but about ascension.

As well. Alright. Ephesians 2.7. Everybody knows 2.8 and 9 but they don't know 7 or 10.

If you've been a navigator you know 2.8 and 9 but you don't know 7 or 10. Somebody read it. Oh the preaching must be verse 6. Alright read on.

Yeah. 129 or something like that. Far above.

Far above. And then see then chapter 2 verse 6 tells you that you already are there. Right or wrong? Okay.

That's your position. And you'll never get anywhere until you orient yourself to that position. Your life will be up and down and sideways and backwards.

He has crucified you. Your resurrection doesn't matter and your crucifixion doesn't matter. A lot of people crucified in the Roman Empire.

That was their favorite way of dealing with criminals. That didn't mean that did them any good. It's the crucifixion.

And it isn't just to be resurrected. Now if you you will never address your Christian life properly until you take that position and claim it by faith recognizing that your experience isn't there yet but that it shall be if through faith and patience you follow God. Now that's the Christian life in a nutshell.

Now you see in our day in our generation the Christian life has become getting a better life at home better job, better school Christ has become some kind of a help so you can live a better life. That's an improper orientation to the Christian life. And when you're brought low and your daughter runs away from home and becomes a prostitute and you have a lump and all this this idea it's not it doesn't have the iron that will cause it to stand.

This life is not a happy scene for everyone's crucified. Christ was crucified on the hill. I'm earthly good at that.

This particular fleshly gospel that appeals to the flesh comes has one of its roots in Gnosticism. To the idea that Jesus did it all and it doesn't just by identifying with him you're automatically an overcomer. The word Gnostic means knowledge and the idea is that salvation is all in your knowledge.

It's like Jesus Christ did not come in the flesh. See that's what John was talking about was Gnosticism it's not in the flesh it's all ethereal. Well our modern doctrine that it's all by Gnosticism which means that there's no law binding on the Christian because Christ we have a lot of that but now Tony I wish you had heard the first part because now remember I said what the Lord showed me last night talking to Eddie was that preaching that when we make a decision for Christ we're saved from hell orients you improperly to the Christian life.

Can you see now why? Boy if you can't see that. What is orientation? That you're crucified with Christ and that you have risen with Christ. Now what's that and that that's your position your experience isn't there yet but every day you should be closing the gap between your position and your experience.

See isn't that what Paul said? That I'm pressing to attain the resurrection that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings. See so each day you are establishing the fact that you have been crucified with Christ and you have been raised with Christ in the right hand of God and that's the only correct orientation to the Christian life. You establish and you close that gap because God will send things that if you take them correctly will crucify your identity.

Really? You know so it's not just a doctrine but becomes an action and if you take it correctly you have to say that you're crucified with Christ and risen with him and your actual experience which when you begin is you're still very much alive in the flesh and your resurrection life is minimal. Now how many can see that simple model? Do we need to go through that again? Yes? Huh? I thought you were asking how many see that? Okay. Alright I would be glad to go over it again if it would help.

I guess Brian's... Brian you got the phone? Yeah. Okay. I will.

I'll do it for Pat because she's got a sore back. What she says mi centura dolor dolor and centura. Alright.

I have to keep alert to phone calls. Huh? Sometimes there are emergencies. Alright let's go through it again.

And this is found Pat in the sixth chapter of Romans. Okay. Have you been baptized in water? Okay.

This is what happened. When you went down into the water what you were saying was I now am part of Christ's crucifixion. That's what you're saying when you go down.

You went down into the death of the cross. Okay. You make it too difficult.

Look. I'm telling you I don't care what you thought about that time or what you experienced. I'm talking about this is how this is the proper way of seeing it whether you did that time or not.

When you went down into the water you went into Christ's death. Okay. Does that make sense? When you came up out of the water that was a sign that you had risen with Christ and then ascended with him to God.

You went down into his death and then you ascended with him up to God. Okay now. That hasn't actually happened to you.

You're not you haven't died yet and you're not with God in heaven. Okay. So we say that is your position that you take by faith.

In other words you kind of hold it out as a goal and say this is what is true of me even though I don't see it yet. This is what I am saying is true because God says it's true. Okay.

I died with Christ and I've been raised with Christ and I worked that out in water baptism. I mined that out like Karen does. I mined that out in water baptism.

I showed the devil and God and everybody else I'm going into Christ's death and I'm ascending with him. Okay. Now you have something else to deal with.

That's what you take by faith but you have an actual life. And you get up in the morning and there's this problem and that problem and Mimi has problems and the kids have problems and everybody has problems. Okay.

Well, if you're actually crucified with Christ you don't have any problems. I mean if you're crucified you're crucified so there's no problem. And if you're raised up with Christ there's no problem.

So your position remains unchanged but your experience now is in an uproar. But because you have said that is true you know how to face it now. You don't get angry at Mimi.

You don't get angry at the kids. You don't get all upset and say, God hates me and the world's coming to an end and everything else. You say, I'm crucified with clear enemies of God so therefore I'm going to and this anger I'm going to let it die and I'm going to walk in Jesus' strength today.

And you've probably done this many times and you found out that he solved the problem. That's the experience. The position is what God says is true.

The experience is when you take the things of daily life and make them you work them out in terms of that position. Is that a picture you're saying, I'm crucified with Christ I'm part of his death I'm part of his resurrection the devil can't hurt me I'm over him in the spirit now father how do I work through this in terms of what you have said of me then God's strength comes to you and that day you pass from death into life. Not totally.

There will be a new tomorrow. There will be a new challenge tomorrow. But you're hella steady because you've got a right orientation.

That really means that you picture yourself in a correct way. This is what the Christian life is. I expect tribulation.

I expect to be crucified because that's what it's all about. And I expect that God's life will come into me and lift me up above all my enemies. Now if you don't have that if you picture the Christian now here's what God showed me last night when I was talking to Eddie.

If you preach that you make a decision for Christ which first of all is not a Scripture. The Scripture doesn't say you make a decision for Christ. The Scripture says no man can come unto me except the Father who sent me.

Draw him. So that's why the word decision does not appear in the New Testament because the word is of God. All the Father gives me shall come to me.

I mean it isn't like it's a democratic thing where you make a decision for Bush or for Reagan or for Clinton or for somebody else. See that's you make a decision. But Jesus said you have not chosen me but I have chosen you.

Therefore the correct preaching of the gospel is not to go out and see how many will quote make a decision for Christ but it's to find those you're going out to seek and to say that which God considers. Then I lost a fellowship with him. You remember in the book of Acts God said to Paul, I think he was in Corinth, he said you hang around here buddy I've got a lot of people in this city.

What he meant was that there was people there of God's elect that God knew that he wanted to teach them about Christ. That's the way the gospel is supposed to work. Hey I want to tell you something thrilling.

You know I've heard of God sending angels to people and preaching the gospel. God does these things. Probably you know the story of Sammy Morris the black it was a black and left to die and Jesus appeared to him and led him to the coast.

He met a missionary, got saved, came to this country and became a tremendous power for Christ in this country. See God can do those things. And I know when I was in Israel I heard Israelis, young Israelis testify how Christ had appeared to them.

That's Messiah. Sovereigns. I heard them over there.

Israeli young people tell how Christ but this latest one beats everything. It came from Bill Bright in Campus Crusade and he's working with the Kurds and you'll never guess what Jesus Christ is appearing to the Arabs personally and telling them, I mean not to one or two but this is happening on a great scale. And the Arabs are going to each other and saying, did you see him? Did you see him? Yeah I saw him.

And presenting himself as the way of life. And in fact in one case, the Bible says Christ can't do that. See we've made a business out of something that's supposed to be supernatural.

The Lord added to the church daily. Such as should be said. That's what the Bible says.

And we've made a thing, you go out and make a decision for Christ and count the numbers. I don't want to go into it, it's so phony. But I knew there was something wrong but I couldn't lay my finger on it and it came to me.

It talking to Eddie Ryder. When you go out and you say to somebody, you're a sinner, there's a hell to shine and a heaven to gain, make a decision for Christ and he does, you have not told him that he must repent, turn away from the world and be baptized into the crucifixion of Christ, know the crucifixion oriented him, cockeyed, you've given him a wrong impression that this has even acquainted him with the plan of salvation. The plan of salvation is not escape from hell.

So there's great death in the pot in that approach to saving people because that is not salvation. If that were salvation, if salvation were a ticket out of hell that you get by making a decision for Christ, then what would you do with the second last verse in 1 Peter 4? Listen, for the righteous scarcely are saved. What would you do with it? It doesn't fit anything.

If salvation is a bomb that goes off when you make a decision for Christ, where's the difficulty? But you see, the whole fourth chapter of 1 Peter starts off saying, arm yourself with a mind to suffer, for he that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin. And then it goes on and says, judgment has begun in the flesh. And then it goes on and says, do not be amazed at the fiery trial, which is a strange thing, and then it goes on and explains that this fiery trial is judgment, which makes no sense because they haven't been oriented correctly to what the Christian life is all about.

But you see, if the Christian life is turning away from the world and identifying yourself with Christ's crucifixion and with Christ's resurrection, then that scripture, that even the righteous are saved with difficulty, makes perfect sense because salvation then is seen as a process in which through suffering we cease from sin. And that suffering is a judgment, but otherwise it isn't even applicable. And how about work out your salvation with fear and trembling? That's not even applicable.

What fear and trembling? I've been saved by hell, now my job is to go out to help other people get saved by hell. It's not God. It's something that must have originated in the Catholic Church in the early centuries, that salvation is not something you experience today.

If you go through the proper ordinances of the Church, when you die, hopefully you go to purgatory, not into the flames of hell, and then through proper prayers and so on you can pass from purgatory finally into heaven. But it is certainly not found in the scripture. It's at least in some instances unnecessary by my own experience, because the night that the Lord took me out of the world and delivered me, the only issue was whether I would say that he was God.

There was no other issue. I knew it, and I was fighting it, and I just kept heading towards this thing. At the last minute I broke it and told him, okay, you're God, but I can't get away from this garbage I got myself into.

And then the whole thing came back and I was born again. When I heard the pastor preaching from Ezekiel about God's love, I was born again. A man came to me and said, have you accepted Christ? It was a God.

And I had a hard time believing in God, and I prayed one night, I said, God, give me faith. Think of these Kurds, see, this guy in Iraq had vowed to and now the United States has kind of an umbrella over them to

protect them, and now they're getting saved. Jesus is appearing to the Arabs, and they don't know what to do about it.

It's the most marvelous thing, and so he's asking for millions of dollars, I need to get this film over there about Jesus, because they're overcome, these Arab people are overcome. I knew it was coming, I knew it had to come, and here it's coming right today. So just knock them off their camel, say get saved and go as an apostle, and I'll tell you what to do.

It's just a business, it's like a dope business, this is what you do, work the numbers, we've got so many to do this. You know, the thing is, you know a lot of people have got saved that way. What I'm saying is God has something richer and fuller and more in line with his word today, because evil is increasing, it's not enough.

You were baptized into his death, and you're risen with him so that you can stand, because if you're faced with the death, you can't have a picture, you've got to know at that moment, I'm cool, and then when suffering comes you're oriented to it, you say that's just crucifying my damning nature, but if you're not oriented to it that way it seems like a series of ups and downs and haphazard and unrelated incidents. Yes? For those people who God hasn't been calling, in other words, are they going to get a chance at the very end to... That Abraham prayed for Lot, and Lot said, just be faithful in prayer. See, it's a lamb for a house.

It's a lamb for a house. That means that if you will stand true to God, God will save your household. ... will be saved.

I can't guarantee that. I can't guarantee that you will be faithful to God every day. Can you get your friends in on that too? What? Friends? Only if they have to be in your house.

No, household. The word is household. The word is household.

It's always right to pray for people. It's always right to pray for people. And as you begin to practice prayer and pray for people, God will guide you.

I can't answer that arbitrarily, but I can tell you that it is absolutely necessary and proper to pray for your family and for your friends. You pray for them. That's the role of a priest.

... I ask in the name of Jesus that they will receive the gift of faith. Do it. Do it.

With God, all things are possible. Now, I have just a few minutes here, but I want to show you something else. On this third dimension, you see what it says in the last full paragraph? God desires that all mankind, beginning with his church, understand that man was designed to be the throne of God.

Now, that idea that there's a mankind out there and the church is a firstfruits proves to be very difficult for people. They can't conceive of people being saved who are not of the church because we have made a business out of it. In other words, if the people of the world didn't go through the four steps of salvation, if they didn't accept Christ in our terms, they're going to go to hell.

That's it. Period. So, I want to show you something.

If you'll turn to Matthew, we've been in deep water tonight. You may want to get the tape and listen to it about 17 times because we've covered a lot of deep stuff here. But I think you'll find everything that we've

held up has been totally scriptural and if not, you let me know about it.

The ground rules are the Bible and if you can show me where I'm wrong, I change my doctrine. That's the way it goes. I don't try to prove anything that's not in the Bible.

let's 25. In verse 31, when the Son of Man comes in His glory, how many see that? Do you see that in Matthew 25, verse 31? There's a real question there, and you'll have to be a fairly knowledgeable Christian to follow my reasoning here. How many know that when the Lord comes, there will be a thousand year period before the resurrection of the dead? There will be people raised to meet the Lord, but they're kind of first fruits.

But the worldwide resurrection, when all the dead come forth from the sea, and from hell, and all hell. Does everybody know what I'm talking about? Because if not, you'll lose the whole play here. So we've got the Lord coming, then we've got a thousand years.

What do we ordinarily call that thousand years? The It has to be Jesus Christ on that throne, because the Bible has given all judgment to the Son. I know some teach that's the Father, but that would be against the Scripture. That's Jesus Christ on that throne.

Now, when it says here that when the Son of Man comes in His glory, I think that most of us, for most of our life, had believed that that is taking place at the end. But that presents a problem, because the sheep and goat nations, the goat nations, are sent into, he calls it everlasting fire, the Greek nations, it says, are led away into life everlasting. Okay.

Now, I do not believe that during the thousand year period, any of the nations will have eternal life. I don't believe that. I believe when the Lord comes there will be a lot of nations left alive, and the sons of God will go through the judgment.

But I think life will go on much as it does now, because at the end of the thousand year period, Satan comes out, deceives the nations, and fire comes down and destroys them. So if at the beginning of the thousand years these sheep nations were ushered into the kingdom and eternal life, they couldn't be destroyed at the end of the thousand year period, be deceived by Satan, because they had already entered into eternal life. I'm not asking you to accept it, I'm just telling you that it presents a real problem if you place this at the beginning of the thousand year period, because you have the sheep nations going into everlasting life, but we know at the end of the thousand year period that Satan deceives the nations, they go up, fire comes down, and destroy them.

At the end of the kingdom age, the time of the general resurrection of the dead. Did you it's not a business, that it's not a circumscribed business, and also that there are people who are saved who are not of the church. Now, verse 32, all the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate them from one another as the nations that he separated the nations, but that presents a problem, because we have a righteous person like Ruth in the Bible, in the Moabite nation, and so we're going to send her into Gehenna, so that the nations will be separated from one another as the nations, but that presents a problem, because we have a into the nations will be separated one another but that presents a have a righteous person like send her into Gehenna, but that presents a problem, because we have a righteous person like Ruth in the Moabite nation, and so we're going to Gehenna, but that presents a problem, person like Ruth in nation, but that presents a problem, because we person like Ruth in and so we're going to send her Gehenna, but that presents a problem, because we have a righteous person like the Moabite

nation, and so we're going to send her Gehenna, but that Moabite because we have a person like Ruth in the Moabite going to Gehenna, but that presents a problem, have a righteous person like Ruth in the Moabite and so we're going to send her Gehenna, but that because we have a Moabite and so we're going to problem, because we righteous and so going to send her Gehenna, going to send her Gehenna, problem, because we have a person like Ruth in Moabite nation, going to Gehenna, but that problem, because we righteous going to send her Gehenna, but that because we righteous and so Gehenna, problem, Every time you're telling me one small phrase, I forget what it was, it doesn't seem like I applied to anything.

It's because of what the demons do. When you get the truth, keep it. Don't listen to reasons.

You'll lose your crown. You'll lose all this glory. It isn't inevitable.

It's inevitable. It's going to take everything within you and to keep up with God's people that are marching on and there'll be a lot of people on the sidelines that, yeah, but how about this and have you considered that and think of this and come over to my house and see this and see that and they'll take your crown. They can't wear it.

They'll throw it away because there's nothing they can do with it anymore than Absalom could wear David's crown. He could have killed David, but he couldn't rule over Israel because Israel belongs to God and Absalom was treacherous and so all he could do was mess up David, but he couldn't rule Israel. And all the people that will steal your crown and take the best from you, they can't wear your crown, but they can take it from you and that's why it says, let no man steal your crown.

Let no man deceive you. Matthew 24. Steal your crown is in Revelation chapter 2. It sounds like a simple thing, but since that time, that you may know me.

Okay, I'm still not there. Okay. In Matthew 25.

Okay. The king said to those of his right hand, verse 34, come you are blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then down in verse 46, the last verse of the chapter, it says the righteous will enter into eternal life.

Now how many see that? The last verse. The righteous, the sheep nations enter eternal life. Is that correct? Do they enter the kingdom? They enter the kingdom, right? On what basis? How they treated Christ's brothers.

When did you see me? Then the righteous will enter into eternal life. In verse 37. When did we see you hungry? When did we see you a stranger? When did we see you sick? And the king will answer and say to them, truly I say to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of mine.

Now those of the church, remember it says, in whom he did foreknow, he did predestinate that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. Remember again in Hebrews 2, it says that he is not ashamed to call us brothers because Okay, so that's not true of the nations. They're not Christ's brothers.

We are Christ's brothers. So on what basis do all these people enter the kingdom and enter eternal life? Huh? On how they treat the church. Now do you see that the plan of salvation is broader than just the four steps? Do you see how broad it is? These people are brought into eternal life on acts of kindness to our Christian people.

Is all through the scripture. And remember Jesus said, whoever gives a cup of cold water to a prophet, receives a prophet's reward. Okay? Now I see by taking and making a little evangelical thing, going out to make decisions for Christ, which as I say, in many times has caused people to be saved, and in eternal life.

I'm not knocking it, I'm not criticizing it. But what I'm saying is there's a much broader, the whole concept of the sower. You just sow the seed.

That person might not make a decision quote for ten years, until you didn't get them on your book. I'm serious. There's organizations that are run in terms of these books.

We get every month, we get a thing for the four square. How many people saved? What they mean is how many slipped out their hand. But you can't record that.

Some will come, a stranger will come in, listen for five minutes, the Holy Spirit makes something alive in their heart. Out they go, and they go back to Germany or something, you never hear of them, and they become a strong Christian. And by making a little thing, you've got to follow this thing, make a decision, count them in.

Hey, there's more than that. There's a better way. And that's to follow the Spirit of God.

And let Him show you what to do with each person. There may be a time to bring a person to a decision. Another time it's the worst thing you could do.

It's just like fishing. There's no one way to fish. Depends on what fish you're fishing for.

There's no one way to catch soul. And who's the master fisherman? He didn't say, go out and be fishers. He said, I will make you.

And he's got somebody for everybody. But the main thing is to follow the Lord. We got into this stuff by not looking to Jesus.

Trying to make a business out of it. Trying to get something the mind can use without seeking God continually. And that's how we got trapped into this.

But look at this. Isn't this marvelous? Where did the saved nations come from? Here. How did they get saved? Like Rahab.

They befriended the Lord. They helped the Lord's brothers. That's how they got saved.

Yes, Ruth? They don't need the blood of Jesus. Yes, they do. And I'm glad you brought that up.

See, the reason that that's in your mind And it's not because you're a naughty girl. It's because that model See, let me show you how God did with the Apostle Paul. The Apostle Paul was on his way to kill Christians.

He didn't have a change of heart and say, oh God, I would like to accept Jesus Christ. He didn't go into a church where he heard the gospel. None of these things were true.

How then did he get saved? How did Paul get saved? Just like these Kurds the Lord can come to any individual and on the basis of his blood he can say, your sins are forgiven. See, he has the right to do that.

He may bring one person into a circumstance where they're in church and they hear Billy Graham and they accept it.

Another person may be like Angelo. But in back of all salvation is the blood of Jesus. But he can administer that blood.

He can administer eternal life. He can administer the Holy Spirit any way he pleases. And as he's doing with the Kurds today there's no way that ministers can get in there.

So Jesus goes in himself and reveals himself to the Arabs and says, hey guys, I'm the way. Now, to bring them back to a formal steps of salvation it's kind of contrived. Like when the man came to me and said have you accepted Christ? I'd already been born again by God's Spirit.

I did it because you know how you are when you first get saved and the Christian tells you something you do it. But it was contrived. It was not necessary.

The Lord had already forgiven me. Touched me with the Spirit. I was born again.

I was filled with eternal life. And he can do that with anybody at any time. He can just look down you remember when he said to the paralyzed man that they let down to the roof he said, son, your sins are forgiven you.

How did he do that? That was before the cross. He can do that. Because in vision the sacrifice had already been made on Calvary.

I mean, God knew. He can only forgive us. God cannot forgive sin just say it's no more.

It's forgiven. God cannot do that because there are scales of divine justice that say the souls of sin shall die. The cross, the blood shed on the cross appease God concerning not only our sins but the sins of the whole world.

Did you know that? Yet the whole world is his sake. And in John the 17th chapter Jesus said, as you have given him authority over all flesh. See, Jesus has authority over all mankind.

He shed his blood for the sins of the whole world. He said that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him. So it's not a question of going out and seeing who will make a decision.

It's who God has given him. All that the Father gives me shall come to me. And a true ministry is not somebody when their mind goes out to do something by the numbers.

It's somebody who says to the Holy Spirit where do we go today? And the Holy Spirit leads that person in terms of how the Father is bringing people to Jesus. And those people that he brings to Jesus are God's elect. That's the meaning of elect.

You see your calling brother. Not many are called. The word elect and the word called are identically synonymous.

It's going to take us a while because the evangelical pattern of hell and heaven is so much apart and that heaven is the destiny. We may not get over it in our lifetime. That's why I'm so concerned about Sophia and Angelique and the other kids and this young fella with the blonde hair.

Because I think that's the generation that will be able to make the mental leap from the heaven hell thing into the breadth of the kingdom which is like seed that is sown. And it grows. You don't know how it grows.

And we let the Holy Spirit take charge of the church. Get it out of the hands of man. And let the Holy Spirit take charge of the church.

Because I tell you in the churches throughout the United States right now I don't know how many 40 million evangelicals or whatever it is. If every minister next Sunday were to get up and preach discipleship preach what it means to be a Christian I'll bet you that somewhere upward of 60 or 70% of the people would leave. They will not hear it.

They've never been oriented to the Christian salvation. And if you said to them you cannot that the word Christian means disciple that's an ax and you cannot be a disciple unless you hate your life forsake all take up your cross and follow Jesus that over half the Christians in this country would leave the church. Now I may be totally wrong but I know from my own preaching how warmly I am welcomed wherever I go.

People accuse me of preaching works and I'm not preaching works at all. I'm preaching the gospel. You can't be saved apart from righteousness.

You're not Righteousness doesn't save you. Righteousness is the sign that you're being saved. It's as simple as that.

It's simple down home a Christian ought to think like a Christian look like a Christian talk like a Christian and act like a Christian. If they don't guess what? They're not a Christian. Wow, Tony? The them I believe Tony, the commentators by and large agree that the them refers to individuals within the nation.

The antecedent appears to be nations but the them the pronoun them it doesn't agree in gender with the word nations. Yeah? The nations are in the female plural. And the them and just looking at it logically now it is true way off in esoteric Greek it is true that them is so common there is some evidence to believe conceivably could be used in either gender and I think Grimm-Thayer's lexicon brings that out.

But when you think about it logically if you take a nation let's say you take the German nation and I think my own feeling is the German nation will be a goat nation. They brought not only did they have the Jewish Holy Cross but the German nation was the source of higher Biblical criticism as well as two world wars and the problems in the Polish corridor and so on. Germany has been a source of trouble in fact Waleska of Poland said in a meeting in France that one more move out of Germany and the nation should converge that's what Waleska said Walesa said in Paris a couple years ago he said they had so much trouble has come out of Germany that the next time they make a move the nations ought to wipe it off the earth and I don't my personal opinion about Germany is that God has not begun has not begun to avenge himself of the Holocaust I don't believe he's even begun in Germany I believe when he gets through the nation stands in jeopardy of being extinguished as a nation I firmly believe that and I was in Germany and it came to me as a kind of a prophecy and I looked at the people and if I ever saw people plagued with demons it was the German people you could see it in their faces that was terrible and we were in the...

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