

# The Pursuit of Life #2

by Robert B. Thompson

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*The sermon emphasizes the active pursuit of righteousness and faith as essential to true salvation and spiritual growth.*

**Duration:** 1:00:43

**Scripture:** 1 Timothy 6:11-19

**Topics:** "Overcoming Sin", "Faith In Jesus"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of overcoming the corruption and sinful nature that hinders our service to God. He highlights the need for continuous belief in Jesus and the ongoing battle against death and its manifestations such as malice, unbelief, and love of money. The preacher warns against being deceived by the allure of worldly advancements and instead emphasizes that the true bridge to a glorious future lies in Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life. He encourages the congregation to put their hope in God and to live a life characterized by good deeds, generosity, and sharing, which will lead to a firm foundation and the true life that God offers. The preacher concludes by affirming his personal testimony of God's faithfulness and the assurance that God will continue to deliver us from our current and future challenges.

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## Transcript

I'll ask the Lord to help us then. Lord, as we come unto you this morning, we appreciate your presence here, Lord. It's so wonderful.

Lord, we know that when we assemble that you're here with us and we're thankful for it. Lord, we know without your presence we're just going through emotions. We pray for each family represented here, Lord, for your protection, for health for them, Lord, for your presence in their home.

There'll be peace and joy in their home, Lord. Pray for our little children as they're being taught, Lord. You bless them and their teachers.

And as we proceed, Lord, we pray the Holy Spirit will add Jesus to each person as he or she has need. Lord, you know the needs. I don't.

So, Lord, we trust you entirely. In Jesus' name, amen. You may be seated.

We're turning our Bibles to 1 Timothy 6. We're going to read together, if you have an NIV, verses 11-19. But you, man of God, flee from all this and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith.

Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses, in the sight of God who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus who, while testifying before Pontius Pilate, made the good confession. I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in us, and Lord of Lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see, to him be honor and might forever. Amen.

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God who richly provides. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

Boy, all you have to do is read that, think about it, and go home. I mean, that's so tremendous. When he says at verse 11, flee from all this, all this he's talking about all ungodliness, but in the immediate context he's talking about people who want to get rich.

He says back up in the ninth verse, people who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction, for the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people eager for money have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. One time Sundar Singh visited America, he was an Indian preacher, and he left America in a hurry because he said it's so materialistic, he couldn't stand it.

And we think about people in India, and think of India in particular this morning, and they are so poor, and we think, oh the poor people. But you know, if you watch the Indian way of life, they're not moping around because they're poor. In fact, they have different values from us.

And of course we know about the Buddhists and the Hindus in India, they're really not into material wealth. They esteem spiritual things, they're very much into, well, the police and everybody else, you know, they see something that's wrong, and they go to correct it, and the person thereafter says, oh I've had a vision of God, and he told me this or that, and not like we are here, say yeah I know, tell it to the judge. They sit down and listen.

They have a tremendous, I don't know if the word's respect, that's part of it, awareness, feeling toward things that are spiritual. I told you before that when Bob Marley and I went through customs in India, the man that had our suitcases open was a big tall fellow. He was in the army, in a uniform, and he looked at us, and Bob opened his suitcase, and I opened mine, and on top of each of them was a Bible right there.

And he said, oh you're a holy man of God, and he just waved us through. They have this sense of God that to them is more important than material riches. It's very hard for us to understand in America, because we are extremely money-oriented.

In fact, we worship money. We don't even realize it, but we do. And the big flap over Y2K is because we're afraid that somehow our comforts and our material way of life will be disturbed, and we're not troubled about God's opinion or anything else, just our material way of life.

Well, I'm not scolding anybody this morning, that's the way we are. But we need to realize that money is a substitute for God, and we need to heed what Paul is saying here. It's part of the Bible, like John 3.16. It's just like John 3.16. He said, people who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap.

A trap. So take it to heart. And none of us around here are rich, I know that, but I just was explaining what he meant when he said, you men of God, flee from all this.

Flee. He didn't say walk away gracefully. He said flee.

That's the gospel of the shoes. You know, run. Flee from all this and pursue it.

I talked Tuesday night about how much the idea of pursuit or pressing, pressing. Think of it. Have you ever pursued anything? Your child runs out in the street in front of cars, you pursue the child.

That is, you get busy and you move, chase it, pursue it. I saw a coyote once run off one of our chickens, but it was too late. But if I'd have been closer, I would have pursued him.

Get out and chase, is what the word means, chase. It doesn't mean you look at something and then muse about it and think, oh, isn't that strange on the horizon? You chase it. Get after it.

Something that you want. Now, in this word pursue, we have something very important in our thinking about salvation. And that is, we are heirs of the reformation slogan, the just shall live by faith.

And we don't distinguish between belief and faith. The Bible says both. It doesn't use them both, the terms belief and faith, in the same way.

It doesn't say, for example, fight the good fight of belief. That doesn't set right. We know there's something wrong with that.

We're not fighting a belief. And yet we know on the other hand, in Mark it says, he who believes and is baptized shall be saved. So we know that both are important.

The problem is that belief has two meanings. One meaning is mental assent. You agree with something mentally.

You say, yes, that's a fact. I believe there is a God. That's a fact.

But belief does not turn into faith unless you're pursuing something. If all that belief does is affect your structure in your mind of what you choose to believe and what you don't choose to believe, then you don't have faith and furthermore that will not save you. And James brings that out, doesn't he? What does he say about belief? Huh? The demons believe.

That is, they know that there's a God and that Christ is the Holy One. They know that. But see, that brings no salvation.

Belief does not bring salvation. It does, you can proselyte someone to your religion by saying, now you believe what we believe and you've made yourself a proselyte. But you haven't made a convert until that belief moves over into the realm of pursuit.

And when belief transfers over to pursuit, it becomes a saving force in your life and then becomes faith. Faith is always a movement. That's why James says, faith apart from works is dead.

Because works are the life of faith. Faith cannot exist apart from works. It's dead.

It goes back to mental ascent. There's a big to-do in our public schools about evolution. They want the young people to believe that God created the world.

Well, that's good and commendable, but whether or not you believe in evolution has no impact on your salvation. The demons themselves are not saved and have no eternal life. But they know who made the world.

They know that. So they have mental ascent. But faith is something different.

Faith is your conviction, not only that God exists, but that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. And of course, seeking and pursuit are very closely related. And they both have to do with action.

Seeking is action. It's not just belief. It's action.

Well, before I was a Christian, I did not seek God. I sought many things. But then I believed there's a God and I added that to my bag of tricks.

But that doesn't do anything. It's when you become convinced that God is a rewarder of those who seek Him, and there's profit in seeking God, it changes your behavior. And it's the change of behavior that itself is salvation.

It is the change of behavior, independently of where you are, that itself is salvation. It is oriented toward a change in what you are. And when we start off, we are in the image of Satan, speak the words of Satan, think the thoughts of Satan, do the actions of Satan.

But the program of salvation moves us from the image of Satan, from the thoughts of Satan, from the words of Satan, and from the actions of Satan. So you can view salvation as a horizontal line, as a continuum. And on the left extremity would be when you were bound by the God of this world.

And on the right extremity of this horizontal line would be when you were holy in God's image, and in untroubled rest in the Father. Now, we don't skip across that line in a day. It takes a lot of doing.

And that's why we have in the Bible the allegory, if you want to call it that, of the wilderness wandering. It's by the wilderness wandering we see that we don't leave Egypt, which is a type of the world, and salvation when we come out of it, and end up the next day in the land of promise, which is our conformity to the image of Christ, and equally important, untroubled rest in the center of God's will. In between salvation and our land of promise, our inheritance, there's a wilderness experience.

And that's what we're in today. We're not there yet. Mother, are we there yet? I wonder how many times those Jewish children in those 40 years through the wilderness said, Mother, are we there yet? Mother, are we there yet? In the blazing heat of the Sinai wilderness, or now they tell us it's the Arabian wilderness, the scholars and archeologists are coming to the conclusion now that the traditional Mount Sinai is not the real Sinai.

The real Sinai is south of there in Arabia. And there's pretty good proof on that now, and I read that in the archeological review that we get, and it fits what Paul said where he went into Arabia. So that convent at the foot of the traditional Mount Sinai, they can keep going, but it seems pretty certain now that that's not, it doesn't fit what happened, the fire and the assembling of Israel at the base and so on, that's another

Jebel something or other in Arabia, which at the present is guarded, you can't go near it, it's guarded by soldiers, Arab soldiers.

Well, in any case, the children, they wouldn't know, if they were in the heat of the Arabian desert, Mother, are we there yet? Are we there yet? They wouldn't know the difference, and we don't know the difference sometimes, I think. We must realize, and the burden that I had Tuesday night, and I still have, is that we're not there yet. Okay? And when I say that, when I say there, I am not talking about an open-ended kind of thing, in which, yeah, I ought to know better, but somehow it'll all come out in the wash.

Paul speaks of a mark. There is a mark. There'll be a time when you will have hit the omega.

There is an omega, as well as an alpha, and we're not there yet. There's a pressing forward, and in a materialistic culture, as we live in, we have many, many enticements and distractions that are designed to lead us away from this intense pursuit of Christ, and he must be pursued. Paul said, toward the end of his life in the third chapter of Philippians, I'm laying aside everything for the knowledge of Christ, that I may gain Christ, that I may live by the power of his resurrection, that I may share in his sufferings, that I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Now, if we're going to believe Philippians, the third chapter, then we have to believe that the resurrection unto life must be attained. The resurrection is divided into two parts, the resurrection unto life, and the resurrection unto judgment, not necessarily to destruction or the loss of salvation, just to judgment. Let's read the Bible, what it says, that's what it says.

Well, what Paul was talking about was not attaining the resurrection per se, because all shall be raised. Every person that has ever been born on the earth shall be raised in God's time and in God's program, but the resurrection unto life that we usually equate with Christian inheritance, the rewards of Revelation 2 and 3, being made like him in 1 John the third chapter, and in the last verse in the third chapter of Philippians, these that we normally associate with everybody that has made a profession of faith, is not something that accrues to us because we have taken the four steps of salvation, that's not scriptural. That's not scriptural, as we see in the passage we just read, and as we see in Paul's comments in Philippians 3, it must be attained.

The inheritance must be attained, and we're not there yet. The land of Canaan is our inheritance. The land of Canaan is the land of milk and honey.

It's for residents in Canaan that God called us out of Egypt. He did not call us out of Egypt to dwell forever in the Arabian desert. God called us out of Egypt to enter a specific land.

It was not open-ended. He did not say, well, guys leave here and then those of you that want to go to India can go to India. Those that want to go to China can go to China.

Those that want to go south into Africa and go down there and visit the Queen of Sheba, you can go there. You can go anywhere you want to. He said you're going toward a land, and he bound that land in Joshua, bordered on the north by Lebanon, on the south bordered down there toward Egypt, and on the east by the Euphrates, and by the west by the Mediterranean Sea.

God gave those boundaries. He said this is where you're going. He said every place the sole of your foot treads is yours, but the idea of providing, you're treading in where I want you to tread.

It's not a blank check. We need to understand this, and we need to understand that in Pentecost, we are only partway there. The feast of the Pentecost is one of the feasts of the Lord.

It was not the last one. It's in the middle. We're not there because we're in Pentecost.

Pentecost gives us the power to get there, and another important thing we must realize is that Canaan, Canaan itself, is not a type of heaven. It hasn't fit the type. Heaven isn't occupied by warring tribes that we have to overcome and enter in a step at a time.

Canaan does not fit the type. The type is, as I told you, the biblical type is twofold. One is conformity to the image of Christ, which is found in the 8th chapter of Romans and in other places, and the other half of this bipolar goal is untroubled rest in the center of God, which is found in John 17.

So these are our land of promise, to be in the fullness of God's image for which we were created in the first place, and to be in the center of God's will, that's the rest of God. Now, having said that, how many of you are there yet? Mother, are we there yet? Well, if you think honestly and seriously, you might think over this last week, was there anything that anybody said or did that troubled your rest? You say, well, that was their fault. No, no.

If they stuck a knife in you and you were troubled, yes, that was their fault. But when I was growing up, we had a saying, sticks and stones will break my bones, but names will never hurt me. Of course, you're all too young to have ever heard that, but that used to be a saying among the kids, and it's very true.

If somebody said or did something and you absolutely flew into a snit, then that was not their fault, that was your fault. Because when you're dwelling in the rest of God, and all things are working together for your good, then why are you troubled? And when you begin to think about why you were troubled, you will find out that there's something that you fear, or something that you want, or some other thing in your life that is not dwelling in untroubled rest in God. So, that person did you a favor, bless them.

Thank you so much, or you don't have to say that out loud, but say it in your heart, thank you. I didn't cook in on that, I didn't realize that someone could say that and throw me into such an uproar. Okay? So, that's symptomatic of the wilderness.

You couldn't trouble Jesus like that. They tried, didn't they? Boy, did they try. They never got anywhere.

He knew all the time that Judas was stealing out of the bag, do you know that? Early on he said, one of you is the devil. He never got after Judas, never drove him from the company, never did anything about it, just kept feeding him rope. That's all you have to do.

Differently, if somebody has really given you a bad time, think about Jesus and Judas. Just give them enough rope. Be gentle.

Sometimes it will amaze you what God will do with complete stinkers. Give them enough time and the first thing you know they're serving God, and you're so ashamed because of the things that you've said. You have to give people time to change.

God does. Well, so, we have a goal out there, and as I said, Romans 8.29 says, those whom God foreknew he did predestine to be conformed to the image of his Son. Now, how many truly believe that God does things halfway? I mean, he really had the good intention of conforming you to the image of

Christ, but really? I mean, everybody knows that that's not possible.

Well, if we wrote the Bible, I would have to agree with you, but because God wrote the Bible, and because God was the one who manufactured the blood atonement on the cross of Calvary, and because we say that, and that includes you, Abraham heard the promise of God, he says he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, says he considered his own body now dead, or he didn't consider, he didn't worry about it, he figured if God's gonna... Abraham believed, Abraham never heard of anybody being raised from the dead, he was a man of faith, he said if God said it all... You've got to press forward in God. You've got to have more than just belief that God is. You've got to have faith that what God said he will do, he will do.

And faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God, and that's why we read the Word of God, is to find out what God said, and then when we see what God said, we set our sails in that direction, and then we do with patience wait for it, and that's how all the prophets and patriarchs gave the promises of God, was by believing them, and then by patience wait, and that's the way you're going to reach your goal, is by believing that God is going to change you into the image of Christ, and by believing that God is going to bring you into his rest, so you can cease from your own strivings, and rest in the flowing of God, so that your prayers, instead of becoming a means of getting God to do what you want, you know, fasting to move God's hand, your prayer becomes that of finding out what

God wants you to do, and then praying in that direction, taking steps according to the land that God has shown you, not deciding what it is that you want, and then digging on God until he finally agrees with you to your destruction, because if you insist on your own way long enough, you'll get it, because the word cannot be broken, and it says he opens his hand and satisfies the desire of every living thing, so watch your desires, and how much better to get down before God, render praise unto him, and then let your request be made known unto God, always with thy will be done, overshadowing the whole, and if you do that, God will guide your prayers, so that your prayers correspond with his prayers, and he is seeking your best, and we have to believe that, because otherwise, we're going to

try to get God to do what, and that's a mess, we have to believe, have faith, that God is a rewarder of those who seek him, that he will satisfy the desires of your heart, that he will bring you to the fullness of joy, this is what the word says, and the very foundation of faith, the foundation of it, the thing from which all generates, is your positive assurance that God is good, and he's seeking your good, and until you believe that, you'll never enter the rest of God, and that was the issue raised in Eden, and that's the very issue that Satan raised, Eve, God is not seeking your good, if you do what I'm telling you to do, you'd be a happier girl, God isn't seeking your good, and that was the beginning of the end for the race of mankind, and so, it's not enough just to be in the moral

image of Christ, even Satan wants to be like Christ, I will be like the most highest, it's that getting into God's rest, into his will, where you cease trying to create your own heaven and earth, and when your prayers then, instead of trying to get God to do what you want, you render praise unto God, and then you let your requests be made known unto God, and in the humiliation, in the rejection, in the physical pain, in the constant hostility, and perversity that was brought against him each day, who wants to share in that, who would say, I want to share the sufferings of Christ, I'll tell you who, the person that wants the resurrection, because the resurrection comes only from one place, and that's from crucifixion, and so, none of us are masochists, we don't want pain for pain's sake,

neither are we trying to earn merit points, we are trying to be conformed to his death, so that we can attain his resurrection, hallelujah, and so when humiliation comes to you, when you are rejected by people, even by church people, because these are the ones who rejected Christ, the common people heard him gladly, when people are perverse, that, when people are, behave perversely towards you, which is, the thing they did was fundamentally and obviously unjust, that will trigger your Irish quicker than anything, I'll tell you that right now, it'll trigger your Irish, if you've got a bit of Irish in you, you'll raise up, and people act perversely, they're wrong, can't they see they're wrong, did you ever think that about the government, that's perversity, perversity, to one of the

sufferings of Christ, they came to kill Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead, because people were believing on Christ because of Lazarus, that's sublime perversity, you can't get more perverse than that, to kill the man that Christ raised from the dead, stuff him back in the tomb, people are believing, that's, that's a, that's a five star perversity, and to be able to be treated perversely and keep your sweet and godly disposition is a sign, mother, you're getting there, but it's a pursuit, and you found this last week because when people rattled your cage, you had a choice, didn't you, you come home and kick the dog, or you can pray until you, until God takes the flaming arrows out, don't ever try to take a flaming arrow out of yourself, you'll burn your fingers, pray until God takes

it out, he'll extinguish the flame and very nicely remove it, it won't even leave a scar, don't you go walk around with a burning, using the excuse to chew on a bone, now look what she's done, now look what he's done, that's not called the rest of God, but you man of God, flee from all this, now that's an action, that's an action, flee from it, faith is always an action, it's dynamic, pursue righteousness and godliness, except that godliness means God likeness, and righteousness is what you do, so maybe righteousness is referring to your personality, you know, dignity and honor and mercy and humility and dependability and faithfulness, the image of God, pursue, pursue, pursue, chase it down the street, don't sit there looking at it and expect it's going to change you by something other

than pursuit, pursue faith, your faith was tested this past week, did God really know that went on, did he, or did this person get at me outside of God's will, am I supposed to defend myself, it's all right, just says let, don't let the sun go down on your anger, so I'll be mad as hot until the sun goes down, there's a time when even God gets angry, but don't make it a practice, love, pursue love, the very nature of the unsaved world is malice, you see that more and more in the American workplace, I've heard about it from the trades, I've heard about it from the judiciary, it seems that I don't know whether it's due to the pursuit of money or fear or what, but there's such a competitiveness that people are perfectly willing to cut you down, I mean you go to work on a new job and the other

people think we'll take care of him, and they'll cut you down, that spirit is strong in San Diego, yes it is, and it's a malicious, there's malice in the workplace in San Diego, there's malice in the workplace, and so love has to be pursued, love is stronger than malice, and we have to overcome the malice with good, but it's not with the good of our damning nature, it's the good that comes as we turn from the malice, and instead of fighting back, we go to God, and let God give us enough love to overcome the malice, because you don't hurt anybody by responding with fire, and I'll tell you this, Satan is a master of fire, and so when you fight fire with fire of your own, you're going to lose, you're going to lose, because Satan is the master of fire, yeah, if you want to get heaven from

people, what should you give them?

Heaven, or love, but if you don't want the other, then don't give it out, okay, you say man, you're pressing my button brother, I know it, I know it, and your response is to pray, don't blame me, I'm only preaching the word, I don't know what happened to you last week, I'm just guessing, well, anyway, I prayed that God would bring Christ to you where you need it, let's hope it's happening, endurance, hanging in there, hanging in there, anybody feel like quitting?

Sometimes when you lift up the standard, as we're lifting it up this morning, people feel, what's the use, I might as well quit, I mean, here the guy's talking about winning a gold medal in the Olympics, and I don't even know how to swim yet, I'm that far behind, God isn't concerned because you're so far behind, but He is concerned about your faith that He can teach you to swim, and make a gold medalist out of you, God can do that, even at this time, all you can do is dog paddle, all right, God can do a miracle in your life, and if you get discouraged, it's because you're turning away from the word, you're turning away from what God said, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, look at what God said, set your seal to it, say, God, it is totally impossible, kind of like

Sarah and Abraham when they were past the age of childbearing, God waited so that Isaac would be born by a miracle, He wants to make a miracle in your life, but in order to do that, He has to work where you will realize it was not possible for me to lift myself up into this, I couldn't do it, and I had to call on the Lord God of heaven, and the Lord God of heaven, He's a God that answers by fire, but it's the right kind of fire, it's the right kind of fire, Elijah said, the God of fire, let God respond, and the God of fire responded, and the God of fire will respond in your life too, and He'll begin to move you along that continuum, He'll begin to move you away from Satan, away from the malice and the wickedness of the world, and toward God's person, and God's will, that's your land of

promise, now if anybody but God said it, I'd say go peddle your paper somewhere else, but because God our creator said it, then I know it's true, hallelujah, I put my hand to it 54 years ago, and I'm here to testify that Christ is alive, and God is there, and He's faithful, hallelujah, through many dangerous toils and snares, and God, you look back and you realize in no way did that happen randomly, there's a God up there that's confirming His word, I had a friend that used to say, well Lord, how are you going to get me out of this mess, and that's about it, we go from mess to mess, and from glory to glory, but if you look back, God always delivered you out of the previous mess, and He'll deliver you out of the mess you're in now, just look back, redemption is in remembering a rabbi said,

gentleness, and that's an important thing too, especially when we're doing personal work with people, or preaching the gospel, it's important that we don't come on, you know, I think we ought to be real gentle with the Muslims, and the Mohammedans, and Hindus, and the others, and not, you know, oh you, this or that, or someone in a cult, how many know that gets nowhere with people, that gets absolutely nowhere, but gentleness, you say, yeah, but I'm right, and you're wrong, yes, you are right, and they are wrong, agreed, but harshness is not the way of Jesus Christ, you're not, the only people he was harsh toward were the religious leaders, he was never harsh to people around him, or the Romans or something, said, oh you believe in Juno, and Mars, and you believe in, that wasn't his

thing, he was a gentle person, gentle person, and gentleness pays off, because people that really don't know the Lord, whether they're Christians, or Hindus, or whoever they are, there's a seeking in their heart, they want, they want to know God, I was reading about, I was reading some Rudyard Kipling, that is telling, Rudyard Kipling, I guess, was not a strong Christian, from what I understand, or from his books certainly, and he was telling about a Buddhist legend, about one of their divine people that were born, and

they gave him, this boy, was one of the heirs of the Buddhist tradition, said, give me a bow that no one can bend, so they gave him, this is Buddhist mythology, or tradition, or whatever, they gave him a bow, that no one else could bend, and he shot an arrow out of sight

with it, and where that arrow landed, a river broke forth, and the tradition was that, anyone that could find that river, and bathe in it, would wash away all his sins, and this story, Kim, that I'm reading, at the time, he says, he reads this stuff, yeah, I read everything, and it's, I'm not afraid, you know, Christ in me is great enough, and I can enjoy genius, and he certainly was a genius, and this story is about a llama, what do you call it, not an animal, what are they called, llamas, well anyway, this is a Buddhist priest from Tibet, yeah, I like the Dalai Lama, but he wasn't a Dalai, he was just a llama, in the story of Kim, if you've never read it, he was spending his life looking for that river, anybody stop, it was an older man, and he's benevolent, and kindly toward everybody,

as I guess Buddhists tend to be, and he said, find my river, and he stopped, and every, he's walking the Grand Trunk Road in India, and he must stop at every stream to go there to see if that was his river, and I thought there's so much like that in other religions, there's sparks, because there is a river, that if you wash in it, it will wash away your sins, isn't that true, and there'd be no use railing at that man, that Buddhist, telling him how wrong he was and everything, but to be gentle with him, and say, by the way, I know where there's a river, well you do, yeah, and this river will really wash away your sins, and well, yeah, you see what I'm saying, there are ways, and every person in his heart wants God, unless he's so sick he's past that place, and our job isn't to beat people

over the head, it's to be a friend, it says, pursue gentleness, it's something that we have to pursue, because when we get proud of our religion and our rightness, I'm right, how many know I'm right, and if you don't believe me, just leave, because I am right, I want you to know how right I am, well, we don't need that one, all right, take hold, that's an action, isn't it, of the eternal life, now if you'll think about that, just think about that, that tells us that eternal life is something different from what we picture, I don't know, maybe I was different from everyone else, but when the gospel was first preached to me, I saw eternal life as a kind of, first of all, and I saw that it was given to me legally for a bar when I accepted Christ, that's what I believe, I have eternal life,

and what it means is that God has given, does anybody else in here have that same perception, I guess it was just me, because no one raised his hand, so it must have been just me, well anyway, I get to reading the bible, and I found out that that's not what eternal life is at all, it's not longevity, it's not eternal existence, it's not a legal state, it's a life force, it's the life of God, that is revealed in Jesus Christ, and it's in contradistinction to our flesh and blood life, and there's only two kinds of life, there's the animal life that we live by as human beings, and then there is another life, there's another kind of life, and you and I don't have it all, because it says, lay hold on that because you were called to that, so it's something that's in the future, not in total, we

have a portion of it now, and Galatians 6, 7, and 8 says we are to sow, sow to it, if you do you will reap it, what I'm saying, it's not a belief that gives you eternal existence, it's not a legal state by which God says you can, because the demons have eternal existence, Satan has eternal existence, but they have no eternal life, eternal life is a force from you will be gloriously alive, so alive that we find in revelation there's no more need of the sun or the moon because we don't need to sleep anymore, that's how alive we are, now you have a portion of that now, of that substance that if you are a true Christian and have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, and now each day you have a choice, you can center your

life around your animal desires, the passions and

appetites of your flesh, soul, and mind, and they are many, and they are strong, or by prayer and reading the word, and you are fighting for it, you are running toward it, and this is why the Apostle Paul said, if by many means I may attain to the resurrection, it's not something that you have by virtue of a belief, it's a fight, it's well worth it, a large part of our land of promise is resurrection life, oh it's to be so desired, it's worth everything, to get past the corruption, as Paul said, the body of sin and death, in which we are trying to serve God, and the thing is dragging us down like a great chain, keeping us bound, and God gives us a little bit and says come on, this is the way, God so loved the world, that he gave his son, that whoso believes in him should have everlasting

life, and that doesn't mean to believe once, and to make a profession according to the four steps, it's continuing to believe, every day you're in a battle, as death is striving for the mastery, was that true last week?

Did death strive for the mastery over you? Malice, unbelief, the love of money, jealousy, anger, carnal lust that our nation is filled with, the love of the things of the world, that's death, did you succumb to death? Oh well I'm saved by grace, what I'm talking to you about is grace, this is what grace is, we're saved by the grace of God, the eternal life that came from heaven, that we may live and not die, Timothy, fight the good fight of faith, you have many that are resisting you, the world, sometimes the church itself, your own flesh, sometimes your family and your friends, everything is coming against you, Satan and his demons, fight man, fight until you win, until you attain the resurrection, and that word there, the Greek is the resurrection from the dead, the accent is on the from, the resurrection not of the dead, but from the dead, out from among the dead, and that's the resurrection that will occur when the Lord returns, calling up on himself, his conquerors, his overcomers, those who have overcome the death that's in the world, the corruption that's in the world through lust, and how did they do it?

By the divine nature, by the divine nature, second Peter, by the divine nature, that divine nature is life, Christ is life, I am the way, the truth, and the life, I am the resurrection, I am the life, and if you and I are true Christians, we have the resurrection within us, and when the Lord comes, if we have fought the good fight of faith, then that life is in us, and what will it do? It will cause us to ascend to the Lord, we will not ascend on the basis of our theology, as in the parable of the virgins, they had their lamp, but some of them had run out of the oil of the Holy Spirit, so what will determine whether you are raised when the Lord comes is not your belief, not your church's tenderness, not your profession of faith, that will not raise you, only one thing will raise you, and that is the life, and that's what Paul says in Romans 8.13, if you live after the flesh, you shall die, and in context, he means, he's referring to two verses preceding where he says that if the spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, Romans 8.11, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also make alive your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwells in you, and the next verse, Romans 8.12, says therefore brothers, we are debtors not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh, why are we not debtors?

Because the flesh is dead because of sin, but we have resurrection within us, and then in the next verse he says, for if you do choose to live after the flesh, you're going to die, and those five foolish, or murderers, or anything of the kind, but because they were foolish and careless, and they occupied their daily life with death, buying and selling, all the technological marvels of our country that so easily give us the impression that we're on a glorious bridge to the future, with a rainbow at the end, someday we may establish a colony on Mars, and put a telescope there, which would have great access to the further

galaxies, while the people who are going up to Mars in the spaceship, they would already be fussing and fuming because of flirtations that were going on between married people, before they got there, they would be bringing the hellish relationships of Earth to the colony, and what seemed like Disneyland in the sky, turned out to be just another earthly colony with all its problems, because the bridge that leads to the rainbow of the future is not technology, nor is it education, nor is it psychology, I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man comes to the father, but by me, shall we say, Lord, God, we come unto you this morning, Father, we are deeply challenged in America, because our culture is filled with enticements and distractions, Lord, how hardly shall they who have riches enter the kingdom, and so it is true of us, in the wealthiest, wealthy nation that we live in, so much to do, so much of interest, so many idols, Lord, your word is going forth today in many places, to your people that will allow you to enter and cleanse their hearts, because you have a great work yet to do in your church, to prepare us for the things that are ahead, the moral age of horrors on the horizon, we need more of God, and we want it, we're not there yet, we realize it, people can still shake us and rattle us, we still are tempted with lusts and things of the flesh, we're not there yet, Lord, but we do want to get there, and we do want to get there, oh, God, we do, maybe there's someone this morning that needs to come forward and tell the Lord, I'll ask them to give us some music, maybe somebody needs to come this morning and get a hold of him.

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