

Crisis-03 Crisis of Integrity

by Stephen Olford

The sermon emphasizes the importance of integrity in the Christian life, highlighting the prescription for integrity as obedience to the light of God's Word, continuance in the love of God, and experience in the life of God through the blood of Jesus Christ, and the provision for integrity as God's word of faithfulness, His righteousness, and His work of cleansing.

Duration: 52:58

Topics: "Christian Integrity", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the prescription, provision, and protection of a life of integrity. He emphasizes the importance of walking in the light, as God is light and there is no darkness in Him. The preacher uses an analogy of the sewerage system in London to illustrate how God cleanses our sins. He also addresses the crises of the Christian, including the crisis of identity and consistency. The ultimate goal is to be conformed to the image of God's Son.

Transcript

Turn with me to the first epistle of John, John's first epistle, and I want to read with you that entire first chapter and the first two verses of chapter two. 1 John, and chapter one. That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon in our hands of handles concerning the word of life.

The life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and declare to you that eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us. That which we have seen and heard, we declare to you that you also may have fellowship with us. And truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

And these things we write to you that your joy may be full. This is the message which we have heard from him and declare to you, that God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. And the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. My little children, these things I write to you, that you may not sin.

And if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And he himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world. May God add his blessing to the public reading of his precious word.

Amen. I don't know any time in my experience of the ministry where we've had such a crisis of integrity. My beloved brother spoke on that theme on the very first morning of his Bible studies in the first epistle to the Thessalonians.

And I want to just underscore what he had to say to us on that morning. For those of you who've just joined us, my theme is the crises of the Christian. And my first message was the crisis of identity.

Who are we? What is God making of us? Why did he create us in the first place, and why has he redeemed us? And our ultimate answer was that we might be conformed to the image of his Son. That answers the crisis of identity. Last night was the crisis of consistency.

How is it that having received new life in Christ, we can sin? And we find in us a battle going on. The flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. And these two being contrary, so that we have a polarization as well as a pulverization in our lives.

And we talked about the mystery of this indwelling sin, the misery of it. And thank God the mastery of it. But tonight, it's the crisis of what I'm calling integrity.

Integrity. John's addressing this very matter here. Paul does it in Romans 6 and other places.

He was living in a day when certain heretics known as the Gnostics argued that really, sin didn't really matter. There were two extremes. Some tried to ignore it completely.

And that's why John says, if any man says he has not sinned, he's a liar. He doesn't do the truth. And neither speaks the truth.

Then there was a group who indulged it. They were all called Gnostics. Indulged it.

And they just let rip to their sins. And that's the one particularly that Paul answers in Romans 6. Shall we sin that grace may abound? God forbid, perish the thought. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? This antinomianism, I'm afraid, is rampant in the Christian church today.

I've never lived in a time that I can remember, except that we might explain it by the publicity that's given to scandal, where I have known of great men, not only sin, but compromise and rationalize everything they've done. And still try to get away with it. And what's happening in highest natures, whether it's political, whether it's, as we were saying, the medical world of today, whether the psychological world of today, with the psychiatrists and psychologists who are, honestly, some of the meanest sinners in our country today.

Right down to pastors and people in the church. The idea of discipline in a local church is unheard of today. Indeed, if you were to proceed with such discipline, you'd be sued, as has happened already.

And we've lost the authority and integrity that God demands of us as a holy God. And that's why this wonderful little meandering epistle deals with the three great aspects of God's person as light and love and life. And you'll find those concepts all through this little epistle.

But here I want to concentrate on that tremendous opening statement of our study tonight. God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If you want a biblical definition for integrity, that's it.

God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. Therefore, if we say we have fellowship with Him, we have fellowship with Him as light and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth. Integrity.

Integrity. And beloved, I want to say it, with all you see on television, all you hear on radio, and all you see in the papers, and all you see reflected in the religious life of our day, it's so easy to lose our sense of integrity. And tonight I want to speak to that, but close, I trust, with a glorious note that you and I can know clean living.

Clean living. You know, when that awful scandal broke that I needn't recapitulate, a friend of Dr. Billy Graham, who was once a fellow evangelist, but is denied the faith. He lives in Toronto, and many of you would know his name if I were to spell it out tonight.

And although he's overthrown the doctrines he once held, and even though to many he's nothing more than an apostate today, and though he criticizes most, most Christian preachers and evangelists, I was so thrilled not only to read, but to hear somebody who heard him say, remark, there's one thing about my friend Billy Graham, he's still Mr. Clean. Now, zeroing in on your life and my life, are you Mr. Clean? Are you Mrs. Clean? Are you Ms. Clean? See, I'm with it. Because you know, God is light.

And you say you have fellowship with Him. God is light. And if you walk in darkness, when you say you have fellowship with Him, you lie.

You're living a phony life. And the truth is not in you. Well, you say, what do you mean by this integrity business? Well, we're going to talk about its prescription, its provision, and protection.

Right here in the text. The prescription for a life of integrity is really wrapped up in that beautiful verse seven. Look at that verse again with me.

Remember again, God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. We say we walk in the light and do not the truth. By walking in darkness, we lie.

But then comes this glorious statement introduced with that little if. Mark the if, by the way, in the whole chapter there. If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.

And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, goes on cleansing. Goes on cleansing us from all sin. In those words, we have what I call the prescription for a life of integrity.

And three tremendous things are involved here. And I want you to follow me as we deal with them. Number one, what I'm calling obedience to the light as revealed in Christ.

Obedience to the light as revealed in Christ. If we walk in the light. Now, the term walk is used so often in the New Testament, especially by Paul.

It suggests life and activity and direction and destiny. It's moving, it's moving. If we walk, if we find our environment, our activity in the light, in the light, in the light.

Let's stop there for a moment. What does it mean to walk in the light? To walk in the light is to walk in the light of the Word of God. The light of the Son of God.

Jesus said, I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. But for you and me tonight, let's make it very practical.

It really means up-to-date obedience to the Word of God. That incarnate Word is also the inscripted Word. This blessed book I hold in my hand tonight.

God's inerrant Word. And beloved, if you were to ask me what is the greatest sin of the evangelical church, I would quote Carl Henry tonight. And I would say the greatest sin of evangelical people today is unapplied orthodoxy.

Failure to take the Word of God and to apply it to our lives. We argue until we're blue in the face about inerrancy and I'm in that battle too because I believe we have a trustworthy, reliable, inerrant Word. Otherwise I'd quit being a preacher.

But what's the use of arguing for inerrancy when we don't obey? When we don't obey. I wonder how many of us in this room here tonight are up-to-date even in the light of the teachings on Thessalonians and the evening messages. Up-to-date.

Up-to-date. Every I dotted. Every T crossed.

Obedience to the Word of God. It's my own judgment that the lacking word in our vocabulary today is that one word, obedience. Even the word love, to which we'll come in just a moment, is secondary for a moment because if we say, I love Jesus, Jesus looks back and says, If you love me, if you love me, you will keep my commandments.

By the way, that's how the Greek reads there. It isn't, if you love me, keep my commandments. No, no, no.

If you love me, if you love me, it'll follow logically. It'll follow reasonably. It'll follow inevitably.

If you love me, you will keep my commandments. Keep my commandments. That's walking in the light.

That's walking in the light. One of my dearest friends from the African continent was Bishop Tester Cavengery. Before he became a bishop, he was over in this country many times and never came over without visiting us at Calvary Baptist Church.

He studied theology in Pittsburgh, got his degree, went back, and was made a bishop. But thank God that never affected that revival spirit, one of the greatest revivalists Africa has ever known. And to hear him talk about the Rwanda-Uganda revival, which happens to be the longest revival that has ever, ever been known since Pentecost, that is in terms of continuous wave after wave after wave of blessings, I asked him.

As a matter of fact, at Amsterdam too, I said to him, Tester, tell me, why has this revival lasted so long and what is the secret of it? What is the secret of it? He gave a two-fold answer and one relates to what I'm saying right now. He said, Well, Stephen, I would say that the secret of that revival has been one, the spirit

of brokenness amongst God's people. The spirit of brokenness.

The willingness to repent. The willingness to repent. The willingness for a husband to say sorry to the wife.

The wife to say sorry to her husband over a kiss. The willingness to even repent to your children. The willingness for a pastor to repent to members of his church or vice versa.

The spirit of brokenness. Spirit of brokenness. But he said the second answer would be this, walking in the light.

Walking in the light. He said, As we move around our communities as Christians and we look into each other's faces, if we see a man with a cloud across his face, a woman with a cloud across her face, we come right up and say, Brother, are you walking in the light or are you in the bushes? Sister, are you walking in the light or are you in the bushes? You say, that sounds a little bit strange here at Keswick where God speaks to hearts. Oh, no.

Not if you know your Bible. For you remember that in Genesis 3 when Adam and Eve ceased to walk in the light, where were they? And said Thesto, we interpret walking in the light as obedience to the newest word that God has spoken. You are assuming that you are carrying the obedience from all you have known before, but what has God said to me today in my quiet time? As I rose early to meet my God and I opened the pages of His word and I said, Lord, speak.

My ears are open. I am not going to be rebellious. Say a word to me.

Say a word to me this morning, Lord. Now, am I obedient to that word? That is walking in the light. That is walking in the light.

And brother, you are never going to have integrity in your life. Sister, you are never going to have integrity in your life unless you know what it is to walk in the light. Obedience to the light in Jesus Christ.

But that leads immediately to continuance in the love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Not only the life of God, but the love of God. And all exegetes and fundamental expositors believe that the fellowship here in this line is horizontal.

It stands to reason that if you are walking in the light, you have fellowship with God. So, when you walk in the light, that immediately expresses itself not just in obedience to the light now, but continuance in the love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Love to one another.

Love to one another. If you see a community of Christians, whether it's in your local church, whether it's in your family circle, or in that Bible study, and you see a love one toward another, a love one toward another, you know there's integrity. Nothing kills love like lack of integrity.

Integrity. Beloved across our land today, there's nothing but, division and faction and schism. Even in some of our megachurches, it may look terrific to see five thousand, nine thousand people back to back, three thousand each time in a big church.

But get your ear down to the ground and hear what's going on. We need a new baptism of love. Telsha, the real koinonia.

Love. Love. If I were to borrow Jacob's ladder and climb all the way up to the throne room of heaven tonight, I believe out here my intercessor who in session is praying right now.

And I feel out here an echo of that 17th of John. Father, make them one. Oh, Father, make them one.

Make them one that the world may believe that you have really sent me. Love one to another. Telsha.

Telsha. Telsha. The prescription for integrity is obedience to the light as revealed in Christ.

Continuance in the love as revealed in Christ. Jesus said this is the badge of integrity that you love one another. By this shall all men know that you are my disciple, that you have love one toward another.

May I ask that you love your wife very tenderly, but honestly and sincerely. I know you've been married for many years, but do you really love your wife right now? I'm asking that question in all seriousness because we've been doing some counseling here. Do you love your husband? Do you really love him? You're just getting on with him.

Do you love your children? And even more important, do your children love you? What about your church? Can you honestly say, I haven't a single thing against anyone in my church. For if I did, I know as a matter of integrity and as a matter of holy love, I cannot pray. I cannot have my quiet time.

I cannot go to the prayer meeting until I go and put something right with my brother. I will leave my gift at the altar and go and be reconciled to my brother because I happen to know he has something against me or she has something against me. Even if I don't have something against her or him, and I must leave that gift at the altar and go and be reconciled.

But notice, the text goes on. It's not only obedience to the light as revealed in Christ, continuance in the love as revealed in Christ, but experience in the life as revealed in Christ. For the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.

Now, here we could go very theological. This is not an aspect of justification. It's not the initial application of the blood that's referred to here because it's to go on continuously.

Continuously. When I came to Calvary, just as I was, weary, worn, and sad, I knelt there and I received reconciliation through the virtue and value and victory of that blood that was shed in that penal death for me, a sinner. That's never repeated.

I've never repeated. But here, the blood is to go on cleansing. So it's more than justification here.

It's sanctification. The blood that was shed at Calvary and caught up in life and resurrection is applied to me on a continuous basis by the Holy Spirit. And this is the deepest message of Keswick, right here in Pauling, in New Jersey.

Yes, it's Keswick that has taught this message throughout a century and more. No, it's always been in the New Testament that I must know the meaning of Romans, chapter 8 and verse 13. If I live after the flesh, I shall die.

But if, through the Spirit, I go on mortifying, notice the present tense, go on mortifying the deeds of the body, I shall live. That's the application of Calvary. That's the application of the cross.

That's the application of death to self on a cleansing, continuous basis that Christ might live through us. That's experiencing the life, the sanctifying life of the Lord Jesus Christ. The prescription for integrity.

Obedience to the light, continuance in the love, and experience of the life in Jesus Christ. Amen? Have you gone all that way yet? But quickly let's turn to the provision for integrity. A life of integrity.

Provision for the life of integrity. The apostle goes right on to say, if you say you haven't sinned, you're lying, you're a phony. If we say that we have fellowship and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth.

If we say that we have not sinned, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if here tonight God has touched something in your life, on the very first night of welcome, the next morning, or throughout the days we have met together, or in the seminars or institutes that you've been holding, and the prayer meetings, well then, my friend, there's a provision for integrity, a provision for cleansing. And it's wrapped up for us in that matchless verse, nine.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Now, may I point out that that's not an excuse to sin. That's antinomianism.

That's taking advantage of the grace of God. That's turning the grace of God into lasciviousness. Now, God has made provision, not so that we shall sin, but in case we do sin.

When an ocean liner goes out to sea, it carries lifeboats, right? Why does it carry lifeboats? In order that it might sink, in case it might sink. And this is God's provision for a cleansed life day by day. We've looked at the prescription.

Here is the provision. And I want you to notice three things again in this text. I'll take them in the order in which I feel will help us.

First of all, there is the provision of God's word of faithfulness. God's word of faithfulness. If we confess our sins, He is faithful.

Oh, I love that word. Dr. Fletcher brought us this morning on the Scriptures. How we can just depend upon the Scriptures as God's resources for cleansing.

God cannot lie. God is faithful. And I could spend all night tonight by just stopping here and saying, now then, quote some glorious truth on cleansing, provision for cleansing from the word of God.

Quote your special promise. And somebody would jump up and say, let the wicked forsake his way and the righteous man his thoughts and let him return unto our Lord and he will abundantly pardon. We return to our God and He will abundantly pardon.

And we could go on and on and on and on. God is faithful. Faithful to what? Faithful to His word.

His faithfulness is related to His word. You can trust Him. When God says you're going to be cleansed, you're going to be forgiven, He means it.

And you could rest upon that tonight. But not only is there the provision of the faithfulness of God's word, but the righteousness of God's work. God's work.

He is righteous. The word here is righteous. Righteous to what? Righteous to what He did when Ron stood before that microphone and sang my favorite song on this theme of the rent veil and the finished work.

I want to tell you, I want to shout hallelujah right in the middle of that solo. Right in the middle of that solo. Because God cannot look down upon that Calvary act that shed blood, that poured out life, and not be righteous to be just and the justifier of all who believe in Jesus.

And through that work, just only the word, but the work, not only the faithfulness of the word, but the righteousness of that work, you and I, you and I can know two things that are mentioned here. Deliverance from the guilt of sin. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

That word forgive means to remit our sins, to send them away. It's a word that has a beautiful Old Testament picture of the two goats that were brought to the altar on the day of atonement, that great day of atonement in the history, religious history of the Jewish people. And the one goat was slain and the blood was taken into the Holy of Holies to answer to God on behalf of the people.

And then the other goat was taken and the priest confessed the sins of all the people on the head of that goat known as the scapegoat. And that goat was taken by the hand of a fit man and carried into a land uninhabited. The sins, symbolically, were carried away.

Isn't that wonderful? Carried away. And when God remits our sins, when God forgives our sins, when God deals with our guilt. Do you know where He puts it? He puts it in the place of no remembrance.

Their sins will I remember no more against them. He puts our sins in the place of no return. As far as the East is from the West, so far does He remove our sins from us.

Have you ever thought of that? You can never, never, never catch up with the East and West because it's a circle. As far as the East is from the West, place of no return. But do you know where He puts our sins? In the place of no recovery, in the depth of the sea.

He has put our sins into the depth of the sea. I heard W.E. Sangster preach on that one text many, many years ago, that illustrious pulpiteer and expositor, Dr. W.E. Sangster, youngest president of the Methodist Conference since John Wesley and probably the greatest authority on John Wesley. And to illustrate it, he went into meticulous explanation of how the steward system of that great city of London worked, how it's reduced to a liquid.

All the filth and all the dirt and all the corruption of that city is reduced to a liquid. And every day of the week except Sunday, a ship goes down the Thames to several miles off the coast of England to a spot well known where with great engines pumping, the moment comes when a button is touched and that entire filth is plunged into the depth of the sea. And so deep is that spot in the English Channel, so deep that five minutes after the operation, you could take a glass, dip it in the water and drink it, and there would be absolutely no harm whatsoever.

Gone forever. That's what God does with your sin and mine. Isn't that wonderful? I remember Dr. Barnhouse coming to Keswick and on this particular night of the Keswick Convention, giving us, I think it was, twelve things that God does with our sin.

And apparently he had preached that message at 10th Presbyterian Church before he flew over to England. And he must have waxed very eloquent that morning. He said, I went to the door as my custom was, shake hands with members as they came out of the door and many people came into blessing, but he said, I saw a little fellow there, a bright little young chap with a red bow tie standing there almost at attention, and he didn't approach me until the last person had gone by.

And he came up and said, Doc, he said, after all God's done with our sin, we're sitting pretty, aren't we? And I could hear that great Ted shake with laughter. Don't have much, usually much humor there. But people were rejoicing, rejoicing in the amazing truth that God removed our guilt.

He delivers us not only from the guilt, but notice the grip of sin, cleanses us from all unrighteousness. And that word unrighteousness means all the little wrong acts that have defiled our lives, that grip upon our lives. He not only delivers us from the guilt, but from the grip of sin.

That's all tied up in the righteousness of His work through the cross of Jesus Christ. The cross of Jesus Christ. You say, but Stephen Alford, wonderful as all you've said is from the word of God, I want to get this matter settled.

I want to get this matter settled tonight. In this provision, in this provision for my cleansing, in this provision for a life of integrity, I can trust the faithfulness of God, I can trust the righteousness of God because of His word and His work. But how can that be applied to me right now? Did you notice the if we confess? If we confess, that has to do with the openness of God.

God is waiting for you to come. Openness. Do you know what that word confess means? To agree with God about everything He said.

To agree with God and to be open with Him about openness with God. Openness with God. That's right back to our key thought.

God is light. You can't walk in darkness and have fellowship. He's light.

You've got to be open. You've got to be open. You say, would you be practical for a moment and tell me how I can be open with God? Yes.

Let me use monosyllable words, three things, and never forget them. Notice what it says. If we confess our sins, plural.

We're not talking about the sin nature here. That's another subject. But the sins that come from the sin nature, when we commit those sins, what are we to do? Number one, tell God.

Tell God. Tell God. Name the sins.

Don't be gentle. Name the sins. Name the sins.

I don't know how many in a congregation like this would ever have heard of a wonderful lady who almost hit the one hundred mark and was to preach on her hundredth birthday to all the women of the Southern Baptist Convention who could attend a rally, Miss Bertha Smith. But you know, in her meetings, in her meetings, she used to bear down, especially on the Old Testament. She was an Old Testament scholar.

And when it came to this matter of sins and naming them, naming them, spelling them out, she would hand out sheets in a congregation, especially a bunch of pastors, and make them write them out right there in the congregation, and then ask them to pray over those sins, and sometimes publicly too. I wonder how many of us here are hiding sins. Hiding sins.

You're in darkness. God is light. You're in darkness.

Name them and nail them. Number two, tell God. Number two, trust God.

Remember, we've already talked about his faithfulness. Remember, we've already talked about his righteousness. Remember, we've already talked about his openness.

So trust him. Trust him with that sin. Trust him with those sins.

Trust him. Trust him to deal with them in the fashion he has declared he will deal with them. Trust him.

Trust him. You say, Amen. Amen.

That's fine. That word ends. No.

No. There's something more implied in that word confess. To confess is to tell him.

To confess is to trust him. But don't leave it there. There's one more.

To confess is to thank him. And if you don't thank him, you know why it is? You haven't trusted him. And why have you trusted him? Because you haven't told him.

Tell him. Trust him. Thank him.

Lord, thank you. My sins are forgotten. My sins are as far as the east is from the west.

My sins are in the depth of the sea of no recovery. Thank you, Lord. Thank you.

Thank you. Tonight, we're going to have the altar open as we have each night, and folk have come. Wouldn't it be wonderful if you just came to say thank you? Wouldn't it be wonderful to come forward and say thank you? Never mind anyone else.

Who are they but just small people? This is a holy God. You're coming into his presence to say thank you. Somebody says to me, that's very fine, but Keswick's only one week.

And I'm going down from Keswick, and I'm going to hit a home you can't believe. A situation that's so hostile, I haven't had the courage to even come and share it with you. I have a very serious problem at work.

School is full of corruption. Dope is being passed around the classrooms. I don't know how I can maintain this integrity.

I want to close very briefly by speaking on one of the most precious things that have come out of this text today, and this is brand new out of my heart. This message was born late last night, or should I say early this morning, as I lay on my bed. And heaven wondered why I was taking so long trying to prepare for tonight.

But I was just reveling in some new insight the Lord had given me from this passage. We've looked at the prescription for integrity and the provision. But look at the protection.

Oh, I love these words. And you know there is no real break in the Greek. In fact, there's no break at all.

Chapters are very convenient for finding our way around, but John goes right on to say, My little children, these things write I to you that you may not sin. Now, you wouldn't say that unless there was victory in Jesus, a life of glorious triumph. I'm writing to you that you can live victoriously, victoriously, victoriously.

And then he tells us how God has made provision. If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the whole world.

Three wonderful words are given here to describe our wonderful Savior. And all the music has related to His person and preciousness here tonight. Notice the three words.

One, Christ the righteous, Christ our advocate, and Christ our propitiation. Let me explain that. How can I know this protection? You see, folks, I'm not just talking theology.

I'm not just expounding or exegeting and applying truth from the Word of God. In the ultimate sense, our protection for integrity is a person, a person. Christ the righteous, Christ the advocate, Christ the propitiation, He's our wonderful Lord.

Now let me put it in the form that you can remember it. You can trust Him for protection because, listen carefully, because He accurately detects our failure. He is Christ the righteous.

Christ the righteous. When we fail, it isn't what other people say about us that matters, it's what He says. And He's always fair.

He's always fair. Do you know that's a wonderful protection? Because I'm going to tell you something. We have to battle not only with what people say about us, and most of that is unfair, but worse than that, we have to battle with the accuser of the brethren.

That's the devil. Satan. Satan.

And Satan has a way, Satan has a way of accusing us until he brings us absolutely to despair. You know something else? We can be introspective ourselves, and I believe the Bible teaches examination of ourselves, examination of ourselves, especially as we come to the Lord. We have been put underground, and we have no right to go to the cemetery and dig up the dead bones again.

It's a violation of the truth of Romans chapter 6. And very often we dig down into the depths of our being only to discover that the old nature is still there. Who said it wasn't there? There's nothing the devil can tell me I don't know already. There's nothing you can tell me I don't know already.

There's nothing I can tell myself that isn't true already. Why? Because that root of sin will remain until the rapture when it will be totally, totally removed. Hallelujah.

But in the meantime, I can know victory. But when this matter of failure comes along, He is the righteous one. He'll detect when we're wrong if we're walking in the right.

The accuracy with which He detects our failure. Secondly, the advocacy with which He defends our frailty. He's our advocate.

And that word advocate there means parakleto. It's the same word that's used of the helper, of the comforter who is the Holy Spirit. And you know how frail we are? How weak we are? Will I be able to stand? The Lord Jesus says, I'll come right alongside of you.

I'm your advocate. I'm your defender. I'm your enabler.

I'm your comfort. I'm going to keep you strong. Hallelujah.

What a Savior. Isn't that glorious? Isn't that glorious? Are you weak-kneed? Straighten up your legs. You have an advocate.

You have an advocate. I don't know when I've known such legal battles as in recent years. I mean, sewing is almost as popular as sewing.

And you see these guys, big pots of money and all the rest of it, going around the country to get the best lawyer, the best advocate. And you can see a smirk on their face because why? They know that this guy's never lost a case. He is.

He is the best. He is the best. Listen.

He is not the best. Christ is the best. And He's going to come right alongside.

Yes, He can detect failure, but He defends frailty, too. And He knows we're weak. He knows our frame.

He knows we're about just men. But best of all, best of all, my last thought here, the, listen, the accuracy with which He defends us, yes, that's when there's failure. The advocacy with which, I mean, the accuracy with which He detects failure, the advocacy with which He defends frailty, but, oh, the adequacy with which He declares freedom.

He's the propitiation. He's the reconciler. He's the forgiver.

He's the one who can say, You're free. You're free. And when He says, I'm free, I'm free.

I don't care what you say. And I don't care what the devil says. I'm free.

When the Son, therefore, shall make you free, you shall be what? Free indeed. Free indeed. There's victory in Jesus.

I wish I could think. I was thinking. Victory in Jesus.

The prescription for integrity. The provision for integrity. And blessed be His name, the protection for integrity.

Not a theology, not a philosophy, but a glorious risen Savior whose accuracy, whose advocacy, and whose adequacy can keep me clean. Now, until I see Him face to face. Otherwise, verses like, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings.

Then Paul goes on to talk about the wonderful, wonderful truth of a cleansing Savior in our lives. Or he says, Thanks be unto God who always causes us to triumph. Or again, Thanks be unto God who always gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Or again, We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. Is that hyperbole? No. It's true.

We can learn and live the victorious life. All right? You want to know that cleansing? You want to know that victory? You want to know that integrity? I've given you the prescription, the provision, and the protection. You've had dealings with God this week? Still some business unfinished? Tell Him.

Now. Trust Him. Now.

Thank Him. When? Now. Let's pray together.

The greatest thing as we normally do, our convention hymn of response. And I want people here tonight, you may have been on the Christian road 40 years, 50 years, 60 years. You may be just a young Christian.

But if God has set you free tonight, I want you to come forward and thank Him. Quietly stand here. And by standing here, you're saying, Thank you, Lord.

Thank you. Thank you. I know that I can trust your righteousness.

I know I can trust your faithfulness. I know I can trust your openness. And I am just trusting you for deliverance from the grit as well as the guilt of sin.

And, Lord Jesus, I just want to thank you. I just want to thank you. I just want to thank you.

The wonderful of every single soul. Move forward. I'm going to have just a moment's silence to give you an opportunity to tell Him that sin.

Sins, plural. It may be just one. Then in the light of that cross, with the music you heard on the rent veil, the finished work at Calvary, the blood shed applied, and then most important of all, like that cleansed leopard.

One out of nine. Cleansed leopard. One out of nine.

Nine came for cleansing. Eight went away, cleansed, and never said thank you. But one came forward, dropped on his knees, and with a loud voice for everybody to hear, he said, Thank you.

Thank you. Will you say thank you tonight? Precious Lord, have your way in all of our lives. May there be no distraction or disturbance in these sacred moments of commitment.

We've already preached tonight that unapplied orthodoxy can lead to death and sin. A message has been preached from your word. Give us grace to apply it to our hearts and allow the Holy Spirit to flesh it out in us.

Give us grace, Lord, tonight to tell you, to trust you, to thank you on this matter of sin or sins in our lives that we may know not only lives of integrity, but victory as we go down from this mountaintop of fellowship in the word this week. Have your own way, Lord. Have your own way in all of our lives tonight.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.

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