

The Crucified Life in Ministry for God

by Steve Gallagher

The crucified life is a process of destruction of the old self-life, and it leads to a lifestyle of doing good to others, blessing others, and praying for others.

Duration: 35:27

Scripture: Romans 5:1

Topics: "Crucified Life", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

This sermon focuses on the crucified life as seen in Romans, emphasizing the role of faith in our relationship with God and the transformation it brings. It delves into how tribulations lead to perseverance, character development, and ultimately hope, showcasing the process of God working within us. The sermon also explores the practical aspects of God's commandments, particularly in loving our enemies, doing good deeds, blessing others, and praying for those who mistreat us, highlighting the transformation that occurs when we allow God to diminish our self-life and fill us with His love.

Transcript

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you that you have made it possible for Nate and I to be here this week and for Ariane to be here and Glenn Meldrum on Friday. Dear Heavenly Father, I thank you that we can be here, Nate, Ariane and Glenn, at the end of this week. And Lord, I just pray that what these young people need to receive in these teachings, you would impart with your Holy Spirit.

We ask for your help in this session, in Jesus' name. Amen. Okay, so we continue on with the theme of the crucified life.

As we see it in the book of Romans. And now we are going to be in Romans chapter 5. Let's begin by reading these first two verses. I'll read it one verse at a time.

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through whom also we have peace with God. Through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

Through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand and we exult in hope of the glory of God. The apostle Paul brings us back to the subject of faith. It is our faith in the Lord Jesus that forms the foundation of our relationship with God.

And it is because of our faith in God that we can stand in His grace. And His grace justifies us from the sins of our past lives. Okay, so verse 3. And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance.

And perseverance brings about proven character. And proven character brings about hope. Okay, so what he's expressing here is really more of the crucified life.

As the Lord allows us to go through difficult times and painful situations, it's doing a work inside of us. It's destroying that old self-life. It's diminishing that inner self-life.

It's diminishing the strength of our flesh. And it's creating in us godly character. And the further we go in this process, the more hope that we have.

That's such an awesome thing. You would think, naturally speaking, that suffering would make us feel hopeless. But when God is involved in the process, it actually makes us be more hopeful.

And then look at verse 5. And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. The love of God poured out. Inside of us.

Not out there somewhere. Inside the core of our being. Through this process of the crucified life, the love of God is poured out within us.

The love of God is being poured out within us. The Greek word for poured out. That word can be found in Acts 2, and it's used there to describe the pouring out of the Holy Spirit.

Now, I want to talk a little bit about the love of God. And so I'm going to leave this passage for now. And I'd like you to open up to Luke chapter 6. God's commandments are very practical.

The ways of God are practical. And I want to show you what I mean here in a couple of verses in this passage. In verse 27, Jesus says, Love your enemies.

Love your enemies. Think for a second about someone who has really hurt you in the past. Is Jesus being real when he says that we are supposed to love that person? After what they've done to us? How do you do that? How do you love someone like that? Well, I can tell you this.

That it's not a feeling. It's behavior. Jesus is going to tell us how to do it.

But the bigger issue is this. That as you go through this process of crucifixion, God is gaining more ground in your heart. The less of self, the more of the Holy Spirit.

The less of self, the more of the Holy Spirit. It is God who pours out his love in our hearts. I want to tell a story.

Thank you. They say Gesundheit in America. Let's say that you work at a job.

And one of your coworkers just doesn't like you. You haven't done anything to make them dislike you. Or maybe it's because you're a Christian.

And so this person talks behind your back about you. And he lies about you, or she lies about you. Always trying to get people to turn against you.

How are you supposed to help this person? I mean, I didn't say that right. How are you supposed to love this person? If you have to wait for good feelings towards someone like that, nothing's going to change. Because we get hurt, and our natural reaction inside is to retaliate.

That's how the flesh responds for a person who gets hurt. But yet Jesus tells us we have to love that person. I will say this, that the Lord does not command us to do anything that we can't do.

And he tells us how to do it right here in this passage. Look at verses 27 and 28. But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, and here he's going to tell us how to do it.

Do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. In other words, we can't control our feelings. But we can control our behavior.

And so he gives us three things to do with this coworker. So the first one is, I'm going to say it this way, to describe what agape is like. Agape means doing good to others.

So how do you respond when someone hates you? And I've got some verses here I want to go over, just for a few minutes. Because this is describing a lifestyle. If you just wait until someone hates you to start doing this, it won't happen.

Matthew 5, verse 16 says, Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven. If you do good to others, God will be glorified.

And then Jesus said in John 14, verse 12, Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me, the works that I do, he will do also, and greater works than these he will do, because I go to the Father. And he will do greater works than these, because I go to the Father. If you think about the works that Jesus did, that is quite an amazing statement.

We will do greater works. I have never done anything greater than Jesus, I can tell you that. And yet, there has been ministry in America for 30 years.

And thousands of people, men in sexual sin, have found a place to go to. To find freedom. To find the Lord.

So in that sense, it has been a greater work. And I am only one of millions of believers down through the last 2000 years. And then Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15, verse 58, Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

Always abounding. In the work of the Lord. Doing good deeds.

And then in Ephesians 2, verse 10, Paul made this remarkable statement. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for this, for good works. Which God prepared beforehand, so that we would walk in them.

And when you think about your timeline on earth, the rest of your life, the journey of your life, God has a plan for you to do good works throughout that time. He created you for that. It's a pathway that is specifically been created for you.

It's a pathway that is specifically been created for you. I want to briefly pause at all those statements that Paul made in the pastoral letters about good works. A reputation for good works.

1 Timothy 6, verse 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works. 2 Timothy 2, verse 21 Be prepared for every good work. 2 Timothy 3, verse 17 Be equipped for every good work.

Titus 2, verse 7 Be an example of good deeds. 2 Timothy 3, verse 17 Be prepared for every good work. Titus 2, verse 14 Be zealous for good deeds.

Titus 3, verse 1 Be ready for every good deed. Titus 3, verse 8 Be careful to engage in good deeds. Titus 3, verse 8 Be careful to engage in good deeds.

Titus 3, verse 14 Be careful to engage in good deeds. Titus 3, verse 14 Be careful to engage in good deeds. Okay, so here's what I want to say about this.

When you are allowing the Lord to diminish and destroy your self-life, He will work through you to do good things to other people. And it will just become a way of life for you. Now, I'm a minister, and I run an organization that helps people.

But I'm also a believer. Now, this is a nothing little thing that I'm going to say to you, or describe to you. Just little.

It's so hard. It's hard for me. When I go to the grocery store, I always just kind of watch for older women.

And like if they have heavy items to put in their car or put in their shopping cart, I just watch for that. And many, many times, I've gone to people and I've just grabbed something and put it in their cart for them or in their car for them. I don't get any credit for that, okay? But it's a good practice for me.

I don't want to just like think that because I run an organization that I don't have to be considerate of other people. When you're in the habit of doing good deeds to other people, and then all of a sudden you're dealing with someone who hates you, you will find that you will not have it in you to hate that person in return. It will be natural to you to do good deeds to that person also.

Okay, so the second one here is that agape means blessing other people. Jesus says when that person curses you, you bless them. So cursing can mean lying about you.

Or saying bad words to you. And so on. You are supposed to bless them.

And Peter in 1 Peter 3, 9, he said this. Not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead. For you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

One thing I can tell you is that as you go through this process of crucifying your flesh, you will find that you are not going to want to retaliate to people. There's many stories I could tell about this. I'll just mention a very small thing that happened a couple of weeks ago in Austria.

Nate and I had been driving all day and got to Innsbruck late in the day. And we got to the hotel, but I couldn't understand how to get into the hotel. Part of it was I was just very tired.

And I saw a young girl there and I asked her where to go into the hotel, because it wasn't a normal front door. So Nate and I walked up to the front door. And her and her boyfriend were walking up also.

And I had the key to get in, but I had it upside down. And I just, for whatever reason, I just could not figure it out at that moment. And so I didn't know if I had the wrong key.

So I turned to this girl and I said, do I have the right key? Dus ik vroeg aan deze jonge vrouw, heb ik de juiste sleutel? En zij keek op dat moment, ze spakte die sleutel, ze stak hem in de deur, ze deed die deur open, maar ze keek mij aan als het ware met een bepaalde verachtelijke blik. Dus ze keek naar mij alsof ik de dwaaste persoon was die ze ooit had ontmoet. Misschien.

Maar ze had niet zo naar me hoeven kijken. Dertig jaar geleden. Als iemand zo naar me zou hebben gekeken.

It would have come out of me just ugly. I would have said something really nasty to her. But it's just not in me anymore.

You know, I don't know how to explain that to you, but when you go through this process of being broken. Ik weet niet precies hoe ik dit uit moet leggen, maar als je door dit proces heen gaat, van het gebroken worden. Deze vleeslijke trotse reacties, die komen dan niet meer uit je voort.

You may deal with the feelings later, but you won't retaliate in the same spirit. Ok, number three, we've got to wrap it up. Agape means praying for others.

Het derde is dat de agape liefde bidt voor anderen. Dus denk er opnieuw, sta er opnieuw bij stil, dat iemand jou lelijk behandelt. En de heer Jezus zegt tegen jou, bid voor die persoon.

The natural tendency in our flesh is to just focus on the way we've been treated. We want to go over it and over it and over it in our minds. And allow bitterness to rule in our hearts.

And Jesus says, instead of thinking that way, take that person to the Lord. Because when someone treats other people that way, it shows how greatly they need the Lord. Want te laat zien als iemand je zo behandelt, hoeveel behoefte die persoon aan de Heer heeft.

En als je op deze manier in het leven gaat staan, dan ga je zien hoe grote behoeften van andere mensen zijn. En de meest verschrikkelijke mensen zijn de mensen die het meest gisters nodig hebben. En ik zeg niet dat het niet pijn doet als iemand je zo behandelt.

Maar als je door dit proces heen gaat, dan zal je hart steeds meer vol raken van de liefde van God naar andere mensen toe. De Heer Jezus gaf ons die dingen te doen. Heb je vijanden lief.

Maar hij zal niet zeggen dat je hele wonderlijke gevoelens voor zo'n iemand krijgt. Hij zegt, deze dingen wil ik dat jij doet. Ik wil dat je vriendelijke daden bewijst aan zo'n persoon.

Ik wil dat je die persoon zegent. En ik wil dat je bidt voor die persoon. Maar heb je vijanden lief en doe goed en leen zonder te hopen iets terug te krijgen.

Dan zal uw loon groot zijn en zullen de kinderen van de Allerhoogste zijn. Want hij is goede tieren over de ondankbare en slechte. En als we het samenvatten, kijk dan naar vers 38.

We look at verse 38 and there are some charismatic people who think with this vest, who twist this vest to gain an advantage, that they become rich. But this has nothing to do with money. This has to do with giving of yourself.

And giving out the love of God. He says, give and it will be given to you. They will pour it into your lap.

A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over. For by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you in return. It's just another way of saying what Paul said.

You will reap what you sow. If you sow the love of God into other people's lives, if you sow the love of God into other people's lives, in general you will receive a lot of love, both from God and from others.

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