

The Discipline of the Crucified Life

by Todd Atkinson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus and its significance in Christian faith, highlighting the need to deny oneself and take up the cross in order to follow Christ.

Duration: 51:18

Scripture: Luke 9:23

Topics: "Spiritual Disciplines", "Discipleship", "Sacrifice"

Description

Todd Atkinson emphasizes the significance of the crucified life in the journey of discipleship, urging believers to deny themselves and take up their cross daily to follow Jesus. He explains that true discipleship involves a willingness to sacrifice personal desires for the sake of serving Christ and others, highlighting that our old sinful nature has been crucified with Christ, allowing us to live a new life empowered by the Holy Spirit. Atkinson stresses that the message of the cross is central to Christian faith, representing both suffering and the transformative power of God's love. He encourages the congregation to embrace their identity as saints, living out their faith with love and purpose, and to recognize the importance of feeding their new nature through prayer and scripture.

Transcript

What a great service to be in. Just a beautiful, beautiful baby, movingly dedicated to the Lord. Good group of people joining in membership.

I was just thinking, you know, we got covering both ends. We've got the little baby that we dedicated and now you have me preaching. So 40 years later, that's.

We've been pursuing great topic, a great subject for teaching and preaching the spiritual disciplines or what it means to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus. And this morning, I want to look at something that that's basic and that's fundamental to all the spiritual disciplines. And I'm sure that the pastor, Todd Ryan, and whoever else addressed this series has already mentioned what I want to speak about this morning, but I want to just stop and look at it and look at it as a basic item that all the other spiritual disciplines are built upon.

And I'm referring to the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus and what that means to us in our everyday life. Every disciple of the Lord Jesus knows that he died for our sins. He died on Calvary's cross for us.

And we know that our salvation rests on that sacrificial act of all sacrificial acts. But do you know that we also shared in that crucifixion and that we have each of us a crucifixion with our name on it. Let's look at the scriptures.

This is Luke chapter nine, verse 23. That he said to them all, Jesus speaking, if anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it.

But whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world and yet lose or forfeit his very self? What does it mean? What does it mean then to deny yourself? What does it mean to take up daily? Pastor Todd mentioned to me that the other gospels mentioned this incident, this statement, but Luke is the only one who adds daily to it. That we take up our cross daily and follow Jesus.

That it is of crucial importance that we know that is declared in the last verse. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world yet lose or forfeit his very self? So what Jesus is saying is wrapping up that statement by saying that if you had everything, if you own real estate and you owned the whole world, what would you be? What would you gain if you lost your life at the end of it? That for eternity you were lost. And so that's the thrust of that statement.

Jesus is saying what he meant by denial, denial of self is that anyone who wants to become his disciple and his servant will every day be willing, be willing to put his own interests, own wishes into the background and to accept voluntarily, accept wholeheartedly the sacrifice, the suffering that may be needed to be endured in his service. It's to be the opposite of self-centered. It's to be Christ-centered.

And so the Lord Jesus is saying to be his disciple, a person must realize that he has given life, life not to keep for himself, but to spend it for others, not to nourish its flame selfishly, but to burn himself, herself out for Christ and for others. It's the opposite of this little poem that I came across. We had a little tea party this afternoon at three.

It was very small, just three in all, I, myself and me. I ate all the sandwiches, myself drank all the tea. It was also I that cut the cake and passed the cake to me.

Well, what we're talking about in that word of Jesus is the opposite of that. It's to give our lives and to spend it, not for ourselves, but for others. And so taking up the cross, the cross is not the ordinary human sorrows and troubles that we all experience, not those disappointments, the experience of sickness and death and poverty and the like.

What it's talking about is the things which we have to suffer, things to be suffered, endured, and perhaps lost in order to serve Jesus. That's what it's talking about. One author, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, points out that the law of Christ is the law of the cross.

And to deny ourselves is to be aware only of Christ and no more of self. To see only him who goes before us, and only when we have been completely oblivious of self, are we ready to bear the cross for his sake. He goes on to say that that denying ourselves, that by denying ourselves, we prepare to take up the cross because it is not just any suffering, not just suffering per se, but it is always suffering and rejection for Christ.

Suffering and being rejected because of our service to Christ. Look at Luke chapter 14, verses 26 to 27. If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother his wife and children, his brothers and

sisters, yes, even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. And then at that point, Jesus tells two parables, tells a parable about a man who was gonna build a tower. And the whole point of it is he's very foolish if he doesn't count the cost of building the tower, otherwise he'll look ridiculous if it's only half finished.

And then he tells the parable about a king who is faced with an invasion by another king. And he knows the other king has an army of 20,000 soldiers and he has only got 5,000. And so he said that that king would be foolish if he didn't try to negotiate peace.

If he didn't count the cost and realize he hadn't a chance, then he would be foolish. And so then he goes on, after that he goes on to wrap up his statement with verse 33. And the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

Now those are the words of Jesus. And that last phrase is what it's all about. To be a disciple of Jesus is to be willing to give up everything.

To be willing, sometimes we're called to do that, sometimes we're not, but that's not the point. The point is to be a disciple of Jesus is to be willing to suffer what needs to be suffered in order to follow him. Now it talks about being his disciple, you have to hate your family.

Well, he obviously doesn't mean that in the way we perceive it to mean, because he tells us that we should love our enemies. So his whole teaching is based on love, including loving enemies. So he certainly didn't mean that we have to hate our families.

He was speaking in a particular way that was acceptable in the culture in which he lived in order to make a point. And the point that he was making was that we can't be a disciple of Jesus and love anybody or anything, love him less than anybody or anything else. He must have the priority.

Our love for him first. Now there's reason behind that. And I'm sure you've heard it before is when we give our lives to Jesus and make him first in our lives, then all the other relationships we have, we can reach our potential in them.

So make him the Lord of your life. And then you'll be a far better father and a far better husband, a far better friend, a far better brother and sister. That's the principle here.

We make Jesus to be the first and then the rest will be sorted out in a much, much better way. Now he says pick up your cross. What's that mean? The crowds knew exactly what he meant by that.

You see, when Jesus was about 11 years old, Judas the Galilean led a rebellion against the Romans. He armed his rebellion by stealing armaments from the armory at a place called Sepphoris, only four miles from Nazareth, only four miles from where Jesus lived. And probably only four miles from the crowd of people Jesus was addressing here.

Well, the Romans acted with swift, cruel action, vengeance upon the rebels. Sepphoris was burned to the ground. Its inhabitants were all sold into slavery.

And 2000 of the rebels were crucified on crosses, which were set lines along the roadsides. As a terrible warning to anybody else who thought of rebelling against Rome. Now everybody in that crowd, it was only

20 years before that Jesus said this, but 20 years before was the whole happening at Sepphoris.

You know, you can almost count on it that a good part of that audience was there and had witnessed what had happened. So they knew what it meant when Jesus said to pick up your cross and follow me. The Romans were expert crucifiers and they let all their conquered peoples know about it.

Those who followed the Lord Jesus and became his disciples knew that there might indeed be a cross one day with their name on it. That's why he said to them, count the cost, count the cost before becoming my disciple. And as I was preparing this, the thought suddenly occurred to me, wonder what I would have done had I been part of that crowd that heard Jesus say that.

They had just witnessed 2000 people being crucified. They knew what it was. And so Jesus says, just as the rebels who followed Judas of Galilee probably knew that if the Romans caught them, they had it and they'd be crucified.

Jesus said, just as those rebels followed Judas, anybody who's gonna be my disciple needs to be willing to pick up their cross and to follow me. Again, what he was saying, to be my disciple requires the surrender of all, to be willing to give anything, everything if need be for the cause of Christ. But you know, there's other aspects to the cross.

The cross of the Lord Jesus is central to Christian faith and to Christian experience. I was eating lunch in a restaurant and the young waitress said to me, that's a beautiful cross that you're wearing. And so I began to explain to her what this one particularly represents because it is a different cross.

It doesn't have Jesus hanging on it. It's not a crucifix. It's a sort of an empty cross, but it has the dove, the dove, the symbol of the Holy Spirit.

The dove is on the cross. And to me, what it's speaking about is that it's the Holy Spirit that takes the message of the cross of Jesus and takes it across oceans and across countries and across the world. The message of the cross of Christ transcends times and culture.

This cross symbolizes not only Easter, but it symbolizes Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit. Have you ever wondered then why the cross of Jesus has figured so prominently in Western history, Western society, and continues to do so? Why is it worn for jewelry by so many people who haven't got the foggiest of what it stands for? Cross was an instrument of torture, an instrument of shame and degradation and cruelty. Why is it worn as jewelry? We get our word excruciating from that method of capital punishment, crucifixion.

You know, when we say I banged my hand, I hit my finger with a hammer and the pain was excruciating. Well, we get that word from this act of barbarity, this capital punishment. It was the hangman's noose of the day.

It was the firing squad, the electric chair, the guillotine, the lethal injection, the gas chamber of the day. So why are we still writing about it? Why would anybody ever sing about it? Why would it ever be celebrated? I believe that what happened at Calvary was something of unimaginable immensity that our minds and spirits, this side of heaven, will never fully grasp it, never fully comprehend it. The power unleashed at the cross when a man who was the embodiment of pure love physically perished at the hands of men who in carrying out crucifixion were the embodiment of evil, was of such a nature that it transcends time.

It transcends culture. It's way above human history. I believe that the cross as symbol endures because of the power there is in the reality of the cross of Jesus.

The cross has the power to change human lives and people in every generation since our Lord Jesus died have witnessed to its transforming power. I know that. I'm trained as a historian.

And so you could get stacks and stacks of evidence and history of the people whose lives have been completely changed for the better by believing in the cross of Jesus. Millions of poems have been written, millions of hymns, millions of books written by people saying, my life changed immensely for the better when I gave my heart to Christ and believed He died for me. Look at this message in 1 Corinthians 1.18. Paul writes, and he reminds the Corinthian believers that the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God.

Jews demand miraculous signs, Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews, foolishness to the Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks or Gentiles, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God, for the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom and the weakness of God stronger than man's strength. But notice what this is saying. That is, it is saying that to people who are perishing, people who are lost, the cross doesn't make any sense, but it's people who by the Holy Spirit have come to know Christ and to accept His death for theirs.

They are the ones who know that it's the power of God. It's the one thing that will change our lives. It's the crucial part of the gospel that Jesus died, was crucified for you, crucified for me.

The main message isn't that Jesus was a healer, and He was. The main message isn't that Jesus was a teacher, and He was. The main message is Christ crucified, Jesus hanging on a cross.

Well, you know, every Christian church or every Christian denomination believes in the death of Christ, believes that it was unique, that it was extraordinary, believes that it brings forgiveness and puts us into right relationship with God, gives us a fresh start in life. All Christian denominations believe that, or they wouldn't have the name Christian. Now they may disagree as to how it works, but they have no doubt that it works.

And that includes millions upon millions of people. Christ's death on the cross works in changing our lives for the better. I read this little article in a newspaper.

President George Bush Sr. was at the funeral of the Soviet leader Brezhnev, and he writes this. He says, an amazing thing happened at the funeral. Things were run to military precision.

A coldness, hollowness pervaded the ceremony. Marching soldiers, steel helmets, Marxist rhetoric, but no prayers, no comforting hymns, no mention of God. I happened to be just at the right spot to see Mrs. Brezhnev.

She walked up, took one last look at her husband, and there in the cold gray center of that totalitarian state, she traced the sign of the cross over the chest of her husband. Bush says, I was stunned in that simple act. God had broken through the core of the communist system.

Do you know that in four or five years, there was no Soviet Union? In four or five years, the Soviet Union collapsed, and it is no more. But do you know in those five years right up to the present, that the message of the cross of Jesus has reached more and more and more people? So that to the extent today, and I

love, it's mind-boggling to me, so I keep repeating it, that the statistics that all the countries take and that are analyzed, one out of three people in our world write Christian under their religion. That's over two billion people write Christian.

Jesus has continued to build his church, even if we in Lethbridge or Alberta or in Canada think that he hasn't. It may not seem like it in our experience, but the statistics prove it. His word has gone out.

He is building his church. He invites us to be part of doing that building. But let's be absolutely clear about this, and because we need to be clear about it.

There was nothing accidental about the Lord Jesus dying on the cross. Nothing at all accidental. Galatians 4 and 4 says, when the right time, the appointed time, the proper time finally came, God sent his own son.

He came as the son of a human mother, lived under the Jewish law to redeem those who were under the Jewish law so that we might become God's sons. But notice that. That could be interpreted at exactly God's time he sent his son.

God is a God of precision. He invented it. He made it.

He does things exactly when they need to happen. He's always on time. And likewise with the death and cross of the Lord Jesus, it was written before.

Jesus didn't suddenly discover that the mission he was sent to fulfill was gonna end up on a cross. Joseph, Mary's husband, the devout Jew that he was, knew forgiveness of sins always meant the shedding of blood. Remember the angel appearing to him and telling him to marry Mary and calling the baby Jesus because he will save his people from their sins.

Joseph knew that meant somebody's blood and knew that it meant the Lord Jesus. Jesus knew his destiny from an early age. Notice these scriptures.

They're all from the Old Testament and I'll read them for you without comment. Hebrews 10, four to 10. The plain fact is that bull and goat blood can't get rid of sin.

This is what is meant by this prophecy put in the mouth of the Messiah, the mouth of Christ. You, speaking to God, you, God, don't want sacrifices and offerings year after year like we had in the Old Testament. You've prepared for me or you've prepared me a sacrifice.

It's not fragrance and smoke from the altar that whet your appetite. So I, the Messiah, said, I'm here to do it your way, God, the way it is described in your book. God's way was the way of the cross.

Jesus understood that because notice these scriptures in Isaiah 50. The sovereign Lord has opened my ears and I've not been rebellious. I've not drawn back.

I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard. I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting because the sovereign Lord helps me. I will not be disgraced.

Isaiah 52, see my servant will act wisely. He will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted just as there were many who were appalled at him. His appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness.

Jesus knew that was speaking about him. Isaiah 53, He knew this too. He was despised and rejected by man, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering like one from whom men hide their faces.

He was despised and we esteemed Him not. Surely He took up our infirmities, carried our sorrows, yet we considered Him stricken by God, smitten by Him and afflicted, but He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities.

The punishment that brought us peace was upon Him and by His wounds we are healed. You know how I know Jesus knew those words? Because He gave them to Isaiah 700 years before. He as God the Son inspired the scripture so He knew what was there and what was written about His mission.

And over and over again, even in the life of Jesus and His life among His disciples, He warned them that He was going to suffer and that He was going to die in Jerusalem. And the Bible tells us He still faced Jerusalem with His face like flint, determined to go to Jerusalem. And so long before His arrest and trial, Mark 8, 31 says, Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, be rejected by the elders, chief priests, teachers of the law, and that He must be killed.

And after three days, rise again. Jesus' words. Again, later on, Mark 32, they were on their way up to Jerusalem with Jesus leading the way.

Again, He took the 12 aside, told them what was going to happen. We're going up to Jerusalem, He said. And the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law.

They will condemn Him to death and hand Him over to the Gentiles who will mock Him and spit on Him and flog Him and kill Him. Three days later, He will rise. The Lord Jesus knew He was born to die upon the cross.

John 3, 14, He said, as Moses lifted up the serpent, He would be lifted up. Hebrews 12 and 2 gives us an idea of one of the reasons why He was determined and one of the things that kept Him hanging on the cross. Hebrews 12 and 2, keep your eyes on Jesus, our leader and instructor.

He was willing to die a shameful death on the cross because of the joy He knew would be His afterwards and now sits in the place of honor by the throne of God. Wow, what joy came afterwards? Well, John 17 tells us we were His joy. The joy that His death would rescue millions upon millions of people from the enemy's snare.

He was determined. The joy of what it would accomplish. There was nothing accidental about the crucifixion of Jesus.

But what about you? What about me? Do you know that God planned for us to be crucified? Do you know that if you are a disciple of the Lord Jesus, that your old nature, your old self, your old life before Jesus found you was crucified with Him on the cross? That our old Christless identity died with the Lord Jesus on the cross. It's important to know that. That you are no longer a sinner.

You are no longer a sinner. But a sinner made a saint by God's grace. A sinner who's been made a saint.

Remember, Paul addressed almost all his letters to the saints at Philippi, to the saints at Rome, to the saints at Ephesus. And the word saint just, the Greek word for just means, it means a holy one, means somebody purified and set aside for Jesus. Because the set apart, the set aside is always part of the

meaning of that word holy.

And so by Jesus' death, by His crucifixion, we're no longer a sinner, but a saint. We say a sinner saved by grace. Well, long as we know we're a saint, that's fine to say that.

That's the reality. But we're no longer a sinner. We are a saint, holy, set aside for Christ.

No longer, quote, in Adam, but are now right this very minute, as you sit here, we're in Christ. Now what did it mean to be an Adam? Just meant to be born a human being inheriting from Adam His rebellious nature. To be a saint, to be in Christ, is to inherit His nature.

To be in Christ is to be as safe and secure as Noah was when he stepped into the ark and was saved from God's judgment. Jesus is our ark. We step into Him and He saves our life now as well as in the future.

In Christ. Now we often read the word that Christ is in us and we're in Christ. Well, if you put a bowl of water, put a bowl into a sink full of water, what happens? The water's in the bowl and the bowl's in the water, right? It's just surrounded.

We're humans. We have to have air. So we live in the air and the air is in us.

That's what this term is talking about. We are absolutely surrounded in Christ. But don't take my word for it.

Look at these scriptures. Romans six. Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

If we have been united with Him in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless, that we should no longer be sinners, slaves to sin, because that's what the Bible means by a sinner, because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. So crucified with Christ, united with Him.

Notice Galatians 2.20. Paul said, I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. He goes on to use it again.

Galatians 5.24. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Again, 6 and 14. May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ through whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.

Now, those are plain scriptures. I don't know how many we quoted, five, six. What do they mean to you? What do those scriptures mean to you, to me, when it talks about crucifixion? That my old nature, my old self, my old Christless identity, that died, that died on the cross.

What's that mean? Well, let me tell you what it means to me and I'll quickly give you these. One that means that the old sinful nature I inherited from Adam is dead. It no longer controls me.

And that's the key word. We're talking about what controls. Bible tells us that if we sin before we came to know Jesus, then we are controlled by sin.

It may not have seemed that way before we came to Jesus, but the Bible says that's the way it was. That before a person gives their life to Jesus, they're controlled by sin. That's why they don't care about coming to church or reading the Bible and never think about praying in Jesus' name because they're controlled by sin.

So that old nature's gone now. It's dead. Then second point, I have a new righteous, right-living nature that I inherited from the Lord Jesus and it's alive.

And it now controls me. That's why when I lie, I now feel badly about it. That's why when I do something that I hurt somebody, that I feel badly about it because the new nature now controls me.

Under the old nature, we probably could do that without even thinking about it. But under the new nature, we don't get away with anything. Our conscience then kicks into play as the new nature reminds us that we have just sinned.

Second Corinthians 5.17, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old is gone, the new has come. What old has gone? We're still standing here, sitting here.

The old nature, the old thing that controlled us is gone. It's dead. And the new, what's the new that has come? The new that has come is the new nature.

Now let me thirdly say that my greatest challenge, our greatest challenge now is by God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit to put to death, to put to death or to crucify those sins of the old nature that tempt me and for me to choose the Christ life of the new nature. And I know the question has probably popped into your head. If we've got a new nature, how come we still sin? Well, Adam was perfect.

Adam was made perfectly and he sinned because God gave him a perfectly free will. And we still have a perfectly free will even after we get a new nature. And so when we sin, we choose to sin.

We use the will that God gave us and we choose to sin. But we know what to do, don't we? When we do sin, because first John one and nine says, if we confess our sins, he's faithful and just and will forgive us our sins, purify us from all unrighteousness. So it shouldn't be a surprise to us when we sin because we use our free will, we're not perfect yet.

We may have a new nature, but we are not perfect. And so often we choose the wrong thing. But the Bible tells us what to do about that.

We confess it, we receive forgiveness in Christ so that we haven't got on the overhead. But Colossians three, five just states it clearly. Put to death, that's what it says.

Put to death whatever belongs to your earthly nature, sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. And then it goes on to give another list. But notice where, put those things to death.

He's Paul writing to Christians. So that applies to us as well. We got to put to death those temptations that come.

Put to death the old nature and resist the temptation. That caught my eye there, Paul lists greed. And then he adds, which is idolatry.

Did you know that the financial crisis we're all in and that the whole world is in? Secular writers write and they analyze it. And they said it was caused by greed, caused by idolatry. Greed, which is idolatry, caused by having other gods and not the one God.

Let me lastly say, the crucified life then, after we put down this and put down that and just get rid of the habits that we know we shouldn't have. When we do that, the crucified life then morphs, morphs into the resurrected life of Jesus in me. When we say no to the things we shouldn't do, then the spirit of God says yes to being like Jesus.

And he transforms us into the image of Christ. If we've been united with him in his death, we'll be united with him in his resurrected life. Now I believe, right now, we'll be united with him in the risen life of the risen Lord.

And so the life of the risen Lord comes to us in the person of the Holy Spirit who transforms us. And so Galatians 5 says, live by the spirit and you will not gratify the sinful nature. For the fruit of the spirit, it creates the new, the practice of the new nature, love, peace, joy, kindness, goodness, et cetera.

The crucified mind becomes the mind of Christ, we're told. The crucified tongue becomes a tongue that is like a spring of fresh water. Praising God and blessing people.

The crucified life in word and deed makes way for the Christ-centered life of unconditional love. Put to death, put to death so that you can be put to life. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, German pastor, theologian, who gave his life against Hitler, said in a book, marvelous book, *The Cost of Discipleship*, when Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.

When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die. Do you know, that was prophetic for Bonhoeffer because he was executed by the Nazis. He gave his life for Jesus.

Maybe a death like leaving home and family to work for the Lord Jesus in another country. Maybe leaving friends or leaving a special friend in order to be faithful to Jesus. Or maybe a death like that.

Maybe a death like Martin Luther when the truth of the gospel came, he had to leave the monastery. Death like that. But it's the same death every time.

Death in Jesus. Death of the old nature, the old self at his call. And out of that same death comes new life, comes new love, comes new experiences, comes new adventures with our risen Lord.

Someone has said, to nature's struggle in my breast, the one is foul, the other blessed. The new I love, the old I hate. The one I feed will dominate.

Just as a simple word of caution, we need to feed the new nature in our life. To feed it with prayer, to feed it with scripture, to feed it with fellowship with others who love Jesus. Feed it with the scripture.

And then that will truly more and more dominate our lives. Let's pray together. Father, we thank you.

Thank you for all those scriptures we've read together. You've made it so clear. Lord, we know that when you repeat something over and over, it's because it's extremely important for us to get the message.

And so, Lord, I pray, pray Holy Spirit, come Holy Spirit, touch our minds that we might grasp what the scripture says. What the scriptures has been saying to us. To say to us about the crucifixion of the old

nature that wanted nothing to do with Jesus.

The how that you crucified that, Lord Jesus, in your crucifixion. And then, Lord, help us to walk in newness of life, wanting as much as we can get of the spirit of God, wanting as much as we can get of worshiping and praising you as we've praised and worshiped you this morning. Wanting as much as we can get of your word, knowing the Bible, and wanting to just shine to the people around us.

To be loving, a loving shining, Lord, that in our families, we'll be seen as people who are loving people because we love Jesus. That we'll be known in our jobs, at school, at university, as loving people because we love Jesus. Reveal to us, Holy Spirit.

How that can happen in our lives. Begin even now to transform us into your likeness, Lord Jesus. Invite you just to make your own prayer of commitment.

But you know, I felt prompted this morning that in talking about the cross of Jesus, that if there's anybody here who has never given their lives to Jesus, and they want to do it today, it would be no great hardship to get up and walk to the front. We've often had that appealed to the gospel and just asked you to do it in your seat, and that's just fine. But you know, there's a great strengthening that right off the bat, when you've given your life to Jesus, to just be bold enough to get up and walk and say, I'm gonna give my life to Jesus no matter who sees me.

Is there anybody here who feels that, that they've never given their life to Jesus, but they would like to do it this morning, and there's a feeling of urgency? Would you just like to just get up and walk to the front? And I'm just gonna ask us to stand, just to stand for the benediction. I'll ask the prayer stations, if you're in the prayer stations, if you would come and just be at the front. Would you come right now, just those who are in the prayer stations? Because if the Lord has talked to you and spoken to you, you'll find it very helpful to come to one of these stations and just say, would you pray for me? These folks love to pray with people, they no bother at all.

And so if you'd like to do that, you feel free to come and you maybe just say, I prayed a prayer of commitment, would you agree with me and pray with me that it'll work out in my job or whatever? So you feel free to do that. So pray and have the benediction. Father, thank you for once again, we sense your presence.

You said that when we would gather together in your name, that you would be there, Lord Jesus. And we know you're here. We sense your presence, we feel your presence.

So thank you, thank you, thank you for being with us. And thank you for once again, speaking to us through your word. You love us so much that you speak to us over and over and over again.

So thank you for once again, speaking to us and reminding us of your love. We pray this in your holy name. And so going to all the world in the power of the Holy Spirit to fulfill your high calling as servants and as soldiers of Jesus Christ.

And the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you his peace.

Amen. God bless you.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/28/SID28735.mp3>
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