

The "Secret" of the Christian Life

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[0:00] Lord, we anticipate to hear something from you this morning. We have open hearts. We ask that you'll feed us and fill your preacher. And may the word of God bear fruit and have effect, whether it's reproof or rebuke or exhortation this morning, whatever you see fit.

Lord, may we all submit ourselves to you in this hour and use this man to proclaim the truth and proclaim your words. And we pray that by your spirit that you might instill something in us, that you might prick our hearts or quicken our minds or comfort our souls and spirits.

We pray that you'll work a work in this moment. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Would you please keep a quick testimony of your salvation? Sure. By all means.

I believe I'm on. I did what I was told to do, so I think I'm on. By the way, turn to, we're going to be there in a little bit at some point.

Luke 7. Luke 7, towards the second half. We'll be there. I do want to say this before. He just asked me to make mention of the word of my testimony a little bit.

[1:15] There is no greater truth. There's no greater joy than to own a BMW, right? Isn't that what the Bible says?

There is no greater joy than to have a sunny day. There is no greater joy than to be able to wake up to a cup of coffee. No. There's no greater joy than hearing my children walk in truth.

You know, whatever you do, whatever success you have in this world as a mom or dad, if the Lord's blessed you in that light, you know, I wish the greatest blessings upon you.

May you have a house that's worth \$10 million or whatever the case is. Even in L.A., that may be a little shack beside the road. I don't know nowadays. But bottom line, monetarily, whatever you end up with or don't end up with, whatever your health is or isn't, when you know your children are trying to do right, you know, that's where you can just sit back and say, well, Lord, whatever else you let me do, I'm just so grateful that something moved on, something was passed on.

And so we're delighted. At this stage in our lives, all three of our kids are in the ministry. Our oldest is her and her husband, missionaries in Nepal. Paul, our son here, and then our youngest daughter is up in Idaho, where we are.

[2:52] I think you know, I think you heard of a guy named Gip with his middle son, stole our youngest daughter. And they're married and kids, and he's in the ministry pastoring there.

And so we're just delighted in all that. I got saved. Whoa. Back, let's see, 72, it'd be 52, going on this January, 53 years ago, I guess it is, out of Catholicism.

At least that was my background. I was not a practicing Catholic when I got saved, anything but. I was a long-haired hippie wannabe when I got saved. All that goes with it, and I won't go into details. But God is gracious. And I found out in my life that even though those are things I wanted, and I enjoyed, because there is a pleasure in sin for a season, and I was rounding out that season in my life, and I was looking for something else, and I was wanting something else, and I didn't want that for all of my life.

And I thank God that I was introduced to a book when I was searching years ago. Hal Lindsey wrote a book, Lake Great Planet Earth. It was very popular at the time.

[4:10] I read it. First time I ever heard things in the Bible about the second coming of Christ, the Antichrist, tribulation, the rapture. Struck fear in my heart, but I was like, whoa, that's in the Bible?

And, of course, he had a salvation message at the end of many of the chapters, and I was ripe and ready. Fruit for the plucking.

And nobody led me to Christ but that book. Hal Lindsey is responsible for my getting saved, and trusting in Christ as my Savior. And from then on, just got involved in a church in our area, and then God called us to Bible school.

And, of course, prior to that, I had met my wife before I got saved, and then we got married and went down to Bible school and finished up there with two children, Toby being the second at the time.

And then third came along when we got up to Pennsylvania, southeast Pennsylvania, where I served the Lord for about 20 years there, and then God called us to the mission field. And then we went to Poland as missionaries for another about 20 years, and since retired from there.

[5:19] But, you know, gifts and calling of God are without repentance. God doesn't change his mind. You might try to get out, but God doesn't change his mind about things.

And so though we retired from the ministry as far as the mission field, didn't retire from the ministry. We're not full-time, but I do have an opportunity to teach in our Bible Institute several classes, and an adult Sunday school class on Sunday morning.

And so we're still trying to serve the Lord as best as we can, and we're just grateful for anything God lets us do. Aren't you? Amen. All right. So let's have a word of prayer.

By the way, you know, we are here, of course, to see our family. We are here, first off, to see our great grandbaby.

Sorry, Tobe, Carla. Sorry, Samuel, Ashley. We're bypassing all of you guys, and we're going straight for the little one. So we've thoroughly enjoyed that.

[6:20] Our first, and of many to come, I'm assuming, if the Lord tarries. But we're just grateful and thankful for that privilege and grateful to be here.

We always like to come by here. We were here for the wedding, and then we've been here several years in the past. If this is the first time I'm meeting somebody here, well, glad to meet you. And we'll have plenty of time in heaven to talk over our Christian lives and how God worked in our lives and worked in your life.

Let's bow our heads, please, for an opening word of prayer as well, and then let's see what God would have for us today. Our Father, I want to thank you for your mercy, your goodness to us. I thank you for your grace that saves sinners such as I, such as all of us.

I'm grateful for the redeeming love of the Lord Jesus Christ to come to Calvary to die for our sins. Lord, we don't take that for granted at all. I pray, Father, you'll bless this message.

You may use it for your honor and glory. I don't know who it would be for particularly or maybe just collectively for the whole church. I pray, Father, that you'll just speak to all of our hearts in Jesus' name.

[7:26] Amen. All right. So we're not going to look at Luke yet. I've got an introduction, and then we're going to get into Luke for a little bit and then move off of that. This is just I'm drawing a text out of here and a thought out of the book of Luke chapter 7.

But I want to, you know, if you were to get online or look up a Christian bookstore or look, you know, Christian books or go to a Christian bookstore, you're going to find if you choose to, if you're looking for like the secret of the Christian life.

There are books out there, aren't there? Maybe you have something on your shelf. The secret of the Christian life. And, you know, that's, in my opinion, that's just me talking. I think that's a bit of an overstatement, kind of a misnomer or maybe an oversimplification of the idea.

The secret of the Christian life. There isn't a secret of the Christian life. It's not a secret. It's right here. Open revelation. The so-called secret.

Everybody's secret, whether it's, you know, seven points here or if it's three points or whatever the case is, or somebody wants to pull out one verse here or one verse there for a particular sin, a particular day.

[8:36] Well, it's not a secret. All you have to do is read and you'll find it. It's just right there. It's not a matter of something's hidden away and you don't know if it's there or not.

You know, the idea of gold, I think that's prevalent in this state anyway. El Dorado and people seeking out for gold and still every now and then searching for the little flakes of gold. But it's still gold, right? It's still gold. It's still the real deal. You just got to get a lot of those little flakes to make anything worthwhile. We went, we had an opportunity. We were in Alaska just for a little bit this summer and went up to Skag Way, which was the gateway into the Klondike Gold Rush in Canada.

And we were at another, Ketchikan, another city there, and they said gold nuggets. And we asked, looked around, didn't see anything, asked about it. And sure enough, they showed us and they had a, I forget, what was the one?

Maybe two grams? I think the biggest one was maybe two grams or whatever else. But it was the real deal. And it obviously has some value to it. And I'm sure my son would love to find, you know, any kind of a piece that was not just a flake, but just something that had some substance to it, just for the fun of it, not to make a fortune.

[9:53] But, you know, there is no secret. You know, when you do that type of thing, you don't know if there's something there or not. You know, you could dig and dig and dig and not know. There's no real secret. There's no secret to the Christian life as far as I'm concerned.

But I'm not wanting to talk about that. I'm not wanting to talk about so-called secret or getting an answer to a particular problem one day. What I want to talk about is longevity. What I want to talk about is the sustained Christian life.

What I want to talk about is something that lasts for a lifetime. You know, if I were to talk to you, and again, I don't know your testimonies. If I could ask each individual or if we had the time and everybody just gave a quick testimony, how many years or you've been saved or months or weeks or whatever, depending upon, you know, how long that's been.

And for everybody, it's going to be a little different. But I don't want to talk about like the Christian life in terms of weeks or months if you're a young Christian. What I want to talk about is decades. You know, where are you going to be in 10 years from now? Where are you going to be in 20 years? Or where are you going to be in 30 years from now? And what I want to talk about is going to be a key to the sustained Christian life.

[11:14] Paul said this in Timothy, 2 Timothy 4, 7, I have fought a good fight. Right? I have finished my course. I've kept the faith.

So the course that God laid out for Paul, Paul got saved, I think, around 35 AD. So Christ, if we use the idea of 33 AD, he was crucified. About maybe within two years time, Paul gets saved.

His last book he wrote is around 68 AD. So you're looking at around 33 years later. And that was his last book, 2 Timothy.

And possibly shortly or within a small period of time afterwards that he was killed, martyred. So 33 years. But that was the end of his life. That was that he finished his course.

Makes no difference if it was five years or whatever. He stayed with it for the long haul as far as he was concerned. He also wrote this in Acts chapter 20. So that I might finish my course with joy.

[12:17] That was Paul's desire. And I wonder if that's the same desire on your heart. To finish the course that God lays out for you. To stay by the stuff until God decides to change that.

Or until God takes you home. There's a key is what I say to the sustained Christian life. It's not a secret. I believe there's a principle that will help you finish your course like the Apostle Paul.

And finish it with joy. A principle that will govern your outlook. Determine your actions. Establish your priorities. And I think the key is simply this. Can we have a drum roll for it please?

All that. There you go. Thank you very much. The key is simply this. It's your attitude towards salvation. Your attitude towards salvation.

In other words. The gratitude and the appreciation you have for your personal salvation. In short. How you value.

[13:23] Salvation. I believe is going to determine whether you're going to be faithful to God. Throughout your life. Or not. How you value salvation. Now let's look at Luke chapter 7 please.

Now I won't read the whole account. Because it goes from verse 36. All the way to verse 48. Starting in 36 is the story. And briefly to the beginning of it.

Jesus is with Simon a Pharisee. And he goes to his house to eat. And while he's there. A woman comes into the house. And you can kind of glance at the verses.

And she's weeping. And as she gets in there. She grabs a hold of his feet. And she's washing his feet with her tears. Drying them with her hair.

And anointing his feet. And then Jesus asks Simon. He presents Simon with a question.

[14:21] He said Simon. If somebody were owed five. What's the term that's used? 500 pence. In verse 41.

Somebody's owed 500 pence. And the other 50. So then. He asked Simon a question. Look at verse 42. And when they had nothing to pay.

He frankly forgave them both. So the man. The creditor. He has two debtors. He forgives the one 500. He forgives the other one 50.

In this case. Pence. We'll just call them dollars. Dollars. So the question is simply this. At the end of verse 42. Tell me therefore. Which of them will love the most?

Which of them will love the most? That's the simple question. Well. Simon thinks about it. And Simon answers in verse 43. He answered and said.

[15:18] I suppose. You know my opinion. It seems to me. Makes sense. That to whom he forgave the most. He said unto him.

Thou hast rightly judged. And then he makes. I believe a comparison. Between Simon's. Response. To Jesus. That when he came into the house. You didn't kiss me.

Give me a kiss. On the cheek. And you didn't anoint me. But this woman. Has kissed my feet. And she's anointing me.

And then he says this. In verse 47. Wherefore I say unto thee. Her sins. Which are many. Are forgiven. For she loved much. But to whom little. Is forgiven. The same loveth little.

And I think. I think he's making a comparison. With Simon. And this woman. Right then and there. He said. Listen Simon. This woman. Because.

[16:15] Yes. You right. You rightly. Said that she was a sinner. Maybe she's a prostitute. And. But whatever the case was. She was a sinner. It said it's twice. Nice in the context.

And. But because she was. Forgiven much. She's loving much. And she's showing that. And. He didn't say to Simon.

But you. But I think that's inferred. But Simon. Look at you. You don't really think. You need to be forgiven much. Do you? You're a religious man. You think you're righteous.

And you haven't done anything. You haven't showed forth. Any. Love or affection. Toward me. Compared. To what this woman had. Now. If I were to. You know. If. Let's just say.

I. We're. My son and I are out someplace. I don't have any money. I want a cup of coffee. I said. Hey Toe. Would you buy me a. A cup of coffee. And I'll pay you back later on. And by today's standards. You know. He's. He's forking out.

[17:11] Say five bucks. All right. So. So he gives me five bucks. I'm in debt to him for five bucks. Right. But. So let's say. Let's say also at some point. You know.

Let's. I mean. He's got a nice car now. But let's say he wants to. Get another car. And he says. Hey dad. I. I could use. If you don't. You know. I could use. Maybe. I want to get another car.

And down payment. I need about five thousand dollars. Think you can loan me five thousand dollars. I said. Okay. Sure. So I loan him five thousand dollars. Now. If he says.

To me. Dad. Hey. Don't worry about that. Coffee. Five bucks. No big deal. Okay. But if I say to him. Hey. Don't worry about that. Five thousand dollars. Forget about it.

Which one. Do you think. Is going to be more appreciative. Think. I'm going to sit there. And say. Whoa. Glory to God. I got five bucks. I'm off the hook. Or is he going to say. Five thousand bucks.

[18:06] I'm off the hook. You think. He's going to appreciate it. That much more. Than I'm going to appreciate it. That's the idea here. You know. I think. There's a bit of a. Of a glitch.

I think. In the story. Because some people. Look at the story. And they think. Well. You know. You have to be a great sinner. And if you're a great sinner. Then you can love the most.

Because you've been. Forgiven. So many great sins. So you've got this. You know. You've just got this. Depraved. Wicked individual. And you know. You've heard this.

You know. You're different people. In their stories. And whatever. You're going to have. Brother. Spurgeon's going to be here. In a couple of weeks. And you. If you've read his book. Or if you do read his book. And you realize. Hey. He was a biker. And everything else. And all kinds of stuff. With that. And boy. He ought to be appreciative. But then there's me.

[19:00] Well. I was a religious person. I went to church. And you know. Yeah. God saved me. But. I don't have much of a testimony. I didn't get. You know. I didn't get saved from much. There's a problem. Because of this.

Because of the way. This is written. And all that. The way some people take it. I think they can. They can sense a problem. If you're. Saved from a wicked life. Of sin. Then you have a lot. To be. Be thankful for. But if you're saved. You know. You weren't all that bad. And whatever else. So. The problem is this. Our perception. Our perception. Listen. Isn't every sinner. Forgiven much. Didn't make any difference. Whether you were. So-called wicked sinner. Or a self-righteous sinner. You've been forgiven. We're going to talk about it. Again. In a little bit. It's going to come up. But listen. I think. I think the problem we have. When we look at a verse like this.

[19:56] And we think. Oh well. I didn't have this. So I'm not much. No. That's not the case at all. It's the perception of our sin. I realize that my single sin. Sent Jesus Christ to the cross.

It didn't have to be a. I didn't have to be a. A pedophile. A rapist. An adulterer. Or whatever else. I didn't have to extort. All kinds of money. I didn't have to pilfer money. You know. Thousands. Or billions. Or whatever. You know. From the government. Or that type of thing. To be a. Sinner. I could just. Covet. Something inside. Or have pride. Something on the inside. And be just as wicked. Of a sinner. As far as God's concerned. And so. Do I perceive. That I've been forgiven. And washed. And cleansed. And if I do. Then of course. Because of that. I can understand. That my sins are forgiven. I want you to take your Bible. We have three points. Three things I want to look at. Hopefully quickly. And. [20:54] Isaiah chapter 64. I give you a verse. That we're going to use. To kick off. Each one of these points. But I think. Christians. That have been. That are faithful to God.

Throughout their lives. For decades. If God gives them that. Opportunity. If they've been faithful to God. For decades. I believe there's one. Great truth. That rings true. For all of them. There's something. There's a. There's a. Just a thread. That goes through. Every one of them. No matter who they are. No matter what their backgrounds are. No matter what they've done. For the Lord. But if they've been faithful to God. And served in the Lord. From their salvation. Up to the time. You know. The particular time in their life. And it goes for decades. I think there's one. Common thread. And that's simply this. They never got over their salvation. They never got over it. They still appreciate it. We're going to talk about.

[21:50] Three things in a moment here. Look at Isaiah chapter 64. With me please. Verse 6. Isaiah 64. And verse 6. But we are all. As an unclean thing.

A. L. L. All. Guess what? The wicked sinner. The self-righteous. Religious sinner. All. Doesn't make any difference. But we are all. As an unclean thing. And all our righteousnesses. Are as filthy rags. And we all do. Fade. As a leaf. Just like in the fall. The leaves. Dry up. They fall off the tree. And then they dry up. And what happens. As it says. And our iniquities. Like the wind. Have taken us away. They just. The wind just blows. And the leaves just. Blow all over the place. My wife knows. How irritated I get at the fall. When I rake up all the leaves. In our yard. And then there's leaves. In the common area. Around us. Or neighbors. Leaves. And then all of a sudden. [22:43] Their trees. Disperse the leaves. And then they blow all over. Our yard. I just can't say. It just needles me off. Anyway. I'm just. That's a side note. We don't want to get on rabbit trails.

At all. Listen. Our salvation. Will remain real to us. When we remember. And understand. The sinfulness. Of our sin. And what God saved us from.

When you remember this. Listen. God saved me. I was a sinner. Deserving hell. Right? I still am a sinner.

Deserving hell. I'm a saved sinner. I was a lost sinner. On my way to hell. And well deserving of hell. But now I'm a saved sinner. And guess what? I'm not going to hell.

But I'm still deserving of hell. That's where I belong. That's where all of us belong. And we have to keep that in mind. Listen. I may be forgiven.

[23:39] But like I said. I was. I'm still a sinner. And I may look a lot different now. Than what I did when I first got saved. Hair down to my shoulders. Goatee. Scrungy looking. And whatever thing else.

And the kind of stuff that I wore. To fit that hippie looking. Type of ear. And the habits that I had. And we get saved. And then we get cleaned up. By the grace of God. Now when I got married. My hair was shorter. Than it was when I got saved. It's not. Well I still had a lot more of it. Than I have now. But it was a lot longer. Than it is now. Regardless. It would take me about 10 years. To grow my hair. Where it was when I. When we got married. It just doesn't grow. Like it used to grow. And it doesn't. It's not. It doesn't fill up the top of the head. Like it used to fill up the top of the head.

Or whatever. But I'm not talking about that kind. But when we get saved. And then God cleans us up. And we start doing right. And you know what happens. You know I didn't go to.

[24:33] I didn't walk around in a. In a suit and a tie. And whatever else. I just walked around in jeans. And holy jeans. Not your kind. Not the kind of holy jeans nowadays. You know you buy them that way.

Mine were the holy jeans. And then you put patches in them. And whatever. All that kind of a stuff. To look cool. Fit in. It's just stupid stuff. Grungy looking.

But you know you get cleaned up. And all of a sudden. And you get your hair cut. And you try to put on some cologne. To smell nice. And you try to wear some nice clothes. To dress. To church. And then you don't start.

You don't keep cussing. And whatever else. You clean up your language. And then all of a sudden. We forget who we were. We think a little bit more highly. Of ourselves. Than we should. But we can never forget.

And we must never forget. Who we were. And what God saved us from. In God's eyes. Listen it says here. Even all the goodness. That you could ever do. All the righteousness. That you could ever do.

[25:32] God's eyes. Looks at him like what? Filthy. Rags. And we're not just talking about. Just an old. Just a dirty rag.

Or just an old. A greasy rag. Or whatever. I mean we're talking about all. Anything you can imagine. Inside that thing. You get a rag. In a hospital room. Where you're talking about.

Patients with all kinds. Of different things. We don't want to go in. To gross you out. But you get a. You get a rag. That you could find. In a hospital. Room. Some operations. Or whatever else.

And you get that. And you wrap it up. In a little box. And you think you're going to. Show God something. You're going to. You're going to impress him. With all your good works. And God opens that up. And he says. You got to be kidding me.

You're trying to impress me. With this. It's a filthy rag. And you go. I thought it looked. Pretty good to me. Going in there. God calls him a filthy rag.

[26:31] Psalm 40 verse 2 said. He brought me up. Also out of an horrible pit. Out of the miry clay. And set my feet upon a rock. And established my goings. You were in a horrible pit.

That's what God saved you from. You're in the miry clay. And the apostle Paul. After he was saved. Looked back. He said. For I know that in me. That is in my flesh.

Dwelleth no good thing. Paul said. I know. David said. That's what God brought me out of. But Paul said. Listen. Here I am saved. But I still know. That in my flesh.

There's no good thing. I'm still a sinner. Jonathan Edwards. You. Centuries ago. When he preached his famous sermon. Sinners in the hands of an angry God. And he would depict.

The idea in his congregation. About people just hanging over hell. By a thread. And instead. That. The idea that. Those people in his congregation.

[27:28] Would be crying out. For God's mercy. And for God's grace. Because they saw themselves. Standing before. A just. Holy. Righteous. God.

God. And they would be condemned. To hell. For all eternity. They saw all their good works. As righteous rags. I remember. Just prior to my getting saved.

I remember I was in a. As my memory serves me. And you know how memories are. They kind of get skewered with time. So my memory is such. And there's nobody here to.

To counter it. So I'm going to hang with it. So I was in a lunchroom. At a place that I was working at. And I was talking to a man. I was a professed Christian. I have no idea. What we were talking about.

I assume it had to do. About the Lord and the Bible. Because of the thought that I had. And as we're talking. I remember. That just. At that moment.

[28:23] Something went through my mind. I'm not saying it was a vision. Don't get me wrong. I wasn't. You know. I wasn't. I didn't fall down. Epileptic fit. Having visions. Or any kind of goofy thing like that.

But as I'm standing. Sitting there. Talking to him. I just. God gave me. A thought. And that thought was simply this. I visualized myself on an escalator. And at the top of the escalator.

For whatever reason. But I knew in this. Thought that I had. At the top of that escalator. Was God almighty. And intuitively.

I knew. I had one. I had a. Clear moment. A moment of clarity. And honesty in my heart. And I said. I have nothing. To offer. Him. From my life. I have no good thing. To offer him. To. And I realized. That escalator.

[29:18] Was moving. And guess what direction. It was not moving. It wasn't getting closer. That escalator. In my mind. Was moving. Down. Away.

From God. And I knew. Though I didn't see any flames. I knew that meant. It was going to hell. That's something that God gave to me. You say. A vision brother.

You believe in. No. I'm not saying it was a vision. A dream. Or anything like that. But it was a thought. That occurred to me. At that time. And it just struck. Through to my heart. And I said.

God. I've got nothing. To offer you. I am on my way. To hell. And that's. About that time. Is when I was reading. That book. And I got saved. I reached out. To trust Jesus Christ.

As my savior. You know what? A sinner. Never gets over. His salvation. Sees the sinfulness. Of his sin. And he doesn't minimize.

[30:11] His sin. He doesn't overlook it. Doesn't gloss over it. Doesn't try to justify it. He confesses it. He admits it. He knows. That he sinned against God. He knows. That God hates sin.

He knows. That he deserves. To be judged. For his sin. And cast into hell. I can't get over that. I can't get over. That God plucked me. Out of the fire.

That God brought me up. Out of that horrible pit. That God would love me. While I was a sinner. And ungodly. And unrighteous. That God reached down. And washed away.

All my sins. That God. Made me a new creature. In Christ. And he gave me hope. Hope to the hopeless. I can't get over that. Can you? Can you get over that?

Can you take that for granted? Oh well. Yeah. Of course God saved me. Because I'm Mr. Wonderful. Well. Sorry. I don't mean Mr. Wonderful. But I am wonderful. This is where second generation Christians have a problem.

[31:13] Can have a problem. Not necessarily do. But this is where. I'm a first generation Christian in the sense that. You know. Nobody in my family. I didn't grow up in a Christian home. Nobody in my family was saved.

Nobody that I knew was saved. And I got saved. Now my kids are what I would call second generation Christians. Because they were raised in a Christian home. They were raised from the very earliest part.

You know. Sunday school. And Bible stories. And everything else. And now their children are third generation Christians. You say again. They are raised in a Christian home.

Etc. So the problem sometimes that occurs with second or third or whatever generation Christians. Because if they get saved. They get saved often.

Not always. But often at an early age. And if you have. If you've raised children in your home. If you were saved. And you raised them in your home. And your kids got saved. Or child got saved at an early age.

[32:11] It's like. Well. They didn't really notice a drastic change. Did they? I mean. How much wickedness did that five-year-old get involved in? If they got saved at five or six or seven.

How much wickedness did they get involved in? How much of a change? And whatever change they did see. Or you noticed at the beginning. You know. That's kind of. They forgot about it. It's hard to remember.

The tendency again. Is for them to do what I said before. To think about the testimonies of those. Somebody that got saved out of the world. That's a testimony. And they look at themselves.

And they don't think they have much of a testimony. But like I. How many. Okay. We've got ten commandments. Right? Murder and adultery are in there. Correct?

But is covetousness one of the commandments? Is lying one of the commandments? Pride's not even in there as such. But you know. I just read. If you read your Proverbs a day.

[33:10] You read in chapter six of Proverbs. That the Lord hates things. And the first thing that's mentioned. Is not. A drug. A druggie. It's not an alcoholic. It's not a wife abuser.

It's not a rapist. It's pride. And the thing. I remember dealing with. One of our kids. It was a young lady. We were at camp.

We take our teens down to a. A Christian camp in the summertime. And Toby went there numerous years. And this girl came to me in the middle of the camp sometime. And said well listen. I'm really concerned.

I'm getting beat up with the messages. And I don't know if I'm saved or not saved. And we went over things. And I believe she had been saved. Because she even made the comment. To me. Well you know. I got. Made a profession that when I was five years old. And I'm thinking. You know. What kind of a wicked sinner was I at five. She couldn't identify with the change.

[34:04] And I tried to impress upon her. I said listen. Lying is as great a sin. As any wicked thing you could think of. Whatever peak wicked sins are out there.

Lying is even above them. I said pride. That can go into your heart. Think you're better than somebody else. Whatever. That's a wicked sin. He said. What you have to understand.

And what every young person has to understand. Is your pride. Or covetousness. Or lying. And things like that. That people can't necessarily see. In your lifestyle.

And you can be clean. And everything else. They're wicked sins. And they nailed Jesus to the cross. We have to see the sinfulness of our sin. And when we do that. That's going to keep us. In line. For the Lord. I want you. You're in Isaiah. I want you to turn back to Isaiah 53 for a second. A second thought. Isaiah chapter 53. The whole theme here is wanting your salvation to remain real to you.

[35:10] Isaiah 53. Look. Start with me in verse 3. He is despised and rejected of men.

A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. We hid as it were our faces from him. He was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

Yet we did esteem him stricken. Smitten of God and afflicted. He was wounded for our transgression. He was bruised for our iniquities.

The chastisement of our peace was upon him. With his stripes we are healed. Listen. When we will recognize and empathize with the suffering and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

What he endured to save our souls. Our salvation will remain real to us. It'll remain real to us.

[36:10] You won't be able to get over getting saved when you keep in front of your face all the time. What Jesus did for you. We know. Listen. We know the only way that Jesus Christ could forgive our sins.

Only way that God could forgive our sins. Is that God the Son would come and die for our sins. And when he was on the cross of Calvary. For those three hours.

From noon till three in the afternoon. For those three hours. On that cross. When he hung there and it was silence. And afterwards. My God.

My God. Why hast thou forsaken me? He exclaimed. For those three hours. He suffered the agony. Of hell.

Like a man suffers in hell. But he suffered the wrath of God. Because he took our sin upon himself. Right? He. God. Hath made him Jesus to be sin for us.

[37:05] Who knew no sin. You're pure. And innocent. So you're innocent of something. And then the whole world accuses you of committing that thing.

And you know what? I didn't do it. I'm innocent. But everybody thinks you did it. Everybody believes and are convinced you did it. And you feel. You feel. Dirty.

From the thought of having done the deed that they think you committed. And you didn't do it. Jesus who was the innocent Lamb of God. Never sinned.

We heard in Sunday school. Which of you convinces me of sin? Well you know somebody close enough. You'll be able to raise your hand and say. Well I know you did this.

I know you said this. So. I want to get into it. But listen. You're not perfect. But nobody could. Point the finger at Jesus. And identify a particular offense. Or sin that he committed.

[38:06] He was sinless. And yet he took all of my sin on himself. Every thought. Every action. Every deed.

Every word. That was offensive to God in my life. Was poured on Jesus Christ. And he multiplied it. By each one of us. All of our sins.

And he multiplied it. By each that are in the city of Silmar. Each in the greater area of. Los Angeles. Each in the state of California. Each in the United States.

And each around the world. And every individual. That's ever lived. On the face of this earth. And took all of their sin. And all of their filth. And all of their ugliness.

And all of their wickedness. And he took it upon himself. He let himself be identified. With all of that. As if he.

[39:03] Had committed them himself. And God judged him. For that. He suffered the pains of hell.

On the cross of Calvary. It was never just his physical suffering. But that obviously was. Plenty. Was it not? What can wash away my sin?

Nothing. But the blood of Jesus. That's why the Bible says. You're bought with a price. You're bought with a price. The blood of Jesus Christ. The person that values salvation.

Can never get over. What Jesus did to save him. Can never get over. The fact. That Jesus died. On Calvary's cross. For his sin. He sees.

He sees how Jesus was rejected. By his own brethren. According to the flesh. He sees how he was falsely accused. And we saw that also. In John chapter 8.

[40:00] Thou hast the devil. Thou art a Samaritan. False accusations. We see how they wanted to stone him in death. When he claimed to be deity. And they considered that was blasphemy.

That he being a man. Makeeth himself God. The person that never gets over salvation.

Can see that whip. On the back of Jesus Christ. And he can see those nails. Going into his hands. And his. Feet. He can see. See that spear.

Piercing his side. He can see the sneers. And the rejection. The mockery. Of the crowd. That was around them. And he sees the fact. That even in spite of all. Of the physical suffering.

He went through. He still had to endure. And drink of the wrath. Of the cup of the wrath. Of almighty God. And not only what he did for us.

[40:56] But the fact of who it was. That did what he did. The son of God. God manifests in the flesh. It's one thing if somebody. Does something.

And is wrongly accused. But if that person. That's wrongly accused. Is somebody who should instead. Be highly acclaimed. And yet they're wrongly accused.

It's a sad thing. It's just a sad testimony. The innocent lamb of God. The righteous. Sinless son of God. Was the one. That hung on the cross of Calvary. Lastly.

Let me look at this. Go to 1st Corinthians chapter 6. Please. If you will. The New Testament. 1st Corinthians chapter 6. There's a third item. Says here.

In 1st Corinthians chapter 6. 1st Corinthians. Yes. Chapter 6. I'm sorry. I'm saying. Yes. That's right. [41:56] 1st Corinthians. Look. Look with me in verse 9. Know ye not. That the unrighteous. Shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Ye are. Be not deceived. Neither fornicators. Or idolaters.

Adulterers. Nor effeminate. Nor abusers of themselves. With mankind. Nor thieves. Nor covetous. Nor drunkards. Nor revilers. Nor extortioners. Shall inherit the kingdom of God. Okay. But. Verse 11. But. Such were some of you. Some of you. Were these things. But look what he says now. But ye are washed. But ye are sanctified.

But ye are justified. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And by the spirit of our God. So again. Let me say this. Our salvation will remain real to us.

If we can rejoice. And continually reflect. On all. That God has done. In us. To us. For us. And through us.

[42:52] And what awaits us in heaven. When we keep that in front of us. Listen. Salvation is going to remain real. When you're still amazed. At what happened to you.

When you got saved. When you're still in awe. That when you got saved. You were born again. Born anew. A child of God.

That you became. A new creature. In Christ. That you were. Redeemed. That you were. Reconciled. That you were.

Justified. That you were. Forgiven all your sins. That you were. Given and granted. Eternal life. That you were. Baptized. Into the Lord Jesus Christ.

And God now. Sees you. Not in yourself. Not in your flesh. Not in your sin. But he sees you. In Christ. Having the righteousness. Of Christ. And you got saved.

[43:49] And. And all of a sudden. You know. Things changed. In your life. I remember in my life. When I got saved. And it was. For reading that book. And I was working at night. For the company.

I was working for. For about a month or so. I was working. A night shift. I was around eight o'clock. To four in the morning. And. During that time. Of course. It pulled me away.

From my old friends. It pulled me away. From the party life. It pulled me away. From all the vices. And different things. Because I didn't have the contact. With them. You know. Because men love darkness. So I was.

I was. You know. Got up. And I had the daytime. So if I see him. In the daytime. It wasn't the time. That we partied. So. I dispensed with all that. It was at nighttime.

Where you party. Where you get away. And nobody. Sort of. Speaking. See you. And identify. Who you were. Or what you were doing. I remember.

[44:50] That time. From that. When I got saved. About a month later. God turned my world. Upside down. What I wanted to do. Back then.

I didn't want to do anymore. Something. Things that I never thought. I would want to do. Back then. All of a sudden. I. Wanted to do. Do you think.

I wanted to pick up. That. That one. Family Bible. Not the big old thing. But a single Bible. That was in our. Family house. Off the bookshelf. And start to read it. Before. Of course not.

But I did now. And guess where I started. What were you do. Normally doing all books. Right at the beginning. So a newborn. Child of God. And I'm starting to read. Genesis. And wondering.

Who we. There's some problems in here. I don't get all this stuff. And I even came to the place. In Leviticus. And whatever. About holy days. And all that. And I'm thinking to myself.

[45:46] Man I got to get a calendar. And mark these things down. What I'm supposed to do. I. And then I talked to somebody. And he said. Well you know. You need to start reading. In the New Testament. So I flipped over to Matthew.

Started. Then I was like. Whoa. These were. A breath of fresh air. When I was reading. The words of Jesus Christ. And then. Pauline doctrine. And everything else. But.

I have. I. All of a sudden. I wanted to read the Bible. All of a sudden. I wanted to find a place. That I could get to. Where there were other people. That believed like I did. And I found the church. Right

in our area.

Actually right between. Where my wife's folks lived. And she lived. And my family lived. There was a church. There that was preaching the gospel. And we started.

I started going there. And then. She started coming with me. To go there. I wanted to go to church. I wanted to actually. I didn't have any. Decent clothes. But my brother had been.

[46:39] Had gone to school. And had a business degree. And now of course. He fell off the wagon. Later on. After that. But there was still. A sport coat. And a tie. And a couple shirts. In the back. And we're similar size.

So I wore those. So with my long hair. Down here. And everything else. Back in 1972. Long before. Any of that kind of stuff. Came out. People started wearing long hairs.

In these. Evangelical churches. And whatever. I'm. Coming to Sunday school. With a smile on my face. And look like. Who knows what. To them. But I was happy in the Lord.

I never got over. What God did for me. I felt cleansed. I felt clean. I felt forgiven. And my conscience. Had a spring back to it.

Salvation remains real. When we keep. Seeking those things. That are above. And setting our affection. On things above. Not only what God. Did.

[47:36] Done for me. But where I'm going. Guess where. Each one of us. Have an address. In heaven. Don't we. You have an address here. You have an email address. You have a telephone.

That you can get texts. And phone calls. You have a physical address. But we all have an address. In heaven. I don't know what it is. Maybe it's an apartment. A mansion. In New Jerusalem.

And there's a number on it. Maybe it's a date. Of my salvation. I have no idea. What that would be. The kind of address it is. But we all have a home. In heaven. Don't we. Heaven is our home.

We all have a place. Of waiting for us. Not only a place. Of waiting for us. And we have the Savior. Waiting for us. Oh to see him. And I shall. We're saying it. I shall know him. I shall know him.

By the print of the nails. In his hand. I mean. You're going to get to heaven. You're going to. Well how will I know. Who. Which one he is. How will I. You won't have to worry about that. You will know him.

[48:31] You're going to be known. As you are known. You're going to know. As you are known now. All God knows about you. He knows everything about you. How much are you going to know.

How much expansion are you going to get. When you get to glory. And you're going to get a new glorified body. This. This old body is starting to decay. It's getting older. I know.

I look 39 like Jack Benny. I know. I never age. I don't think that's the case. There was a time I didn't seem to age. People said that. But that's long ago. That's way in the rearview mirror.

That's long ago. But we're going to get a new glorified body. It's waiting for us. Seek those things that are above. Set your affection on things above.

When you know this. And you delight in this. And you're continually amazed at this. Salvation remains real to you. You're never going to.

[49:25] You're not going to look at your life. Your Christian life. Just on days. Or weeks. Or months. You're going to look at your Christian life. In the terms of decades. You'll stay with the stuff.

Until the Lord Jesus Christ. Comes back for you. Three thoughts. If they're embedded in your heart. You'll value your salvation. When you keep that. Sinfulness of sin. And what God saved you from.

If you'll. At the same time. If you'll. Be able to. Marvel. At what God did for you. In Jesus Christ. Dying for you. And you'll.

Just rejoice. In all that God has done. To you. And through you. And in you. And for you. In your salvation. And what awaits for us. George Beverly Shea said. In a.

Hymn. I didn't find it in your hymnal. The wonder of it all. But the wonder of wonders. That thrills my soul. Is the wonder. That God loves me. Oh. The wonder of it all.

[50:23] The wonder of it all. Just to think. That God loves me. Paul never got over salvation. He knew who he was. He knew what God saved him from.

He knew what it cost Jesus Christ. To pay for his sin. And he knew where he was going. And what was going to happen. This last year. We had a. We had several. Fellas graduate from our. From our. Bible Institute. And I challenged them. At the end of the year. I said. It's great. I'm glad to see you guys. Finishing up. Put in three years of study. You stayed by the stuff.

You started. You didn't stop. You stayed through. You finished it off. Three years. I'm glad for you. I said. But I don't want you. I don't want you to leave here. And thinking that it's over. And you've put in your three years.

And now it's over. I want you to look at this. As a. Just that. That run. That God's given you to race. And you're going to race through this course.

[51:19] And I want you to count your Christian life. If the Lord carries. In decades. I served with a couple of fellows. I went to Bible school with. We finished back in.

We finished in 1978. I guess it was. 1978. 22. 46. Years ago. That we finished.

They've evolved in. The pastor of the church. A good friend of ours. That's there. Myself. Brother Gip. Goes there. And he got saved. A year or two.

Before. I did. All that. Men that have put in. Decades. Some of you here. The same type of a thing. Do you remember the sinfulness of sin?

What God saved you from? Do you recognize the suffering. And sacrifice. Christ endured to save you. Do you rejoice. And reflect. In all that God has done to you. If the Lord carries.

[52:22] Is he going to also find you. In that select group. A group that will. Stay by the stuff. That you're in it. For the long haul. Do you ever see your Christian life. And you think to yourself.

Well it's kind of getting old. It's like running on fumes. It's kind of lifeless. I don't seem to have any life. In my Christian. In my Christian walk with the Lord. Consider those three areas.

Ponder over them. Meditate over them. Rekindle. Renew that love. That you should have. Or maybe hopefully God. By the grace of God. You had.

For the Lord. When you first got saved. That appreciation. For your salvation. And don't ever get to the place. Where you take your salvation for granted. But let's pray.

Our Father. We love you. Lord. We know that we are nothing. And we're nothing in our own eyes. We just. Want to be servants. We want to live for you.

[53:16] We want to serve you. We want to do something for you. I ask and pray Father. That you'll just. In this message. And we think about it. And ponder it. And consider it. Analyze our own lives.

Your sin still real to me. Do I realize. What Jesus had to do. To pay for my sin. What it cost him. Do I realize. What God did for me.

And has done for me. Do I. Do I judge things about. Well I don't know. I have what this person has. And I'm not going to be able to do. What this person does. Or. I'm trapped in this type of a life. But Lord.

If I realize. All that God's done for me. All that awaits me in heaven. Does it rejoice my heart? Does it. Does it stir me? Lord. It all. All we should.

If it does. And if you carry. Then those things Lord. Will just be. The proofs. And the reasons why. We continue to go on for you. Father.

[54:11] I don't know. Who needs to hear this. I don't know where everybody is. In their own Christian life. I don't know if anybody here. Is struggling with some of these matters. Taking things for granted. Not letting some of these truths.

Sink into their hearts. Let it change their life. And rekindle that joy. But I pray Father. You'll speak to hearts. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.