

# Losing Your First Love

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 29 December 2002

Preacher: Bro. Van Ashton

[ 0 : 0 0 ] I wrote down, remember that love is the power from God that separates the real from the false, from the real Christian, from the pseudo-Christian. You read about the pseudo-Christians in 2 Timothy, the third chapter, when it says, Imperial, this time shall come.

Men shall be lovers of their own selves, heady, high-minded, loved to pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, down in verse 5, but denying the power of their all from such turn away. Hallelujah.

Having a form, people who say there are, but don't live it, and their lives don't bear it out, are going to be destroyed, just the way God destroyed Israel.

Time and time again, he took them down into, I can't even enumerate the times that God took Israel back down into bondage, and every time it was because of a word called apostasy.

Anybody know what the word apostasy means? It means rejecting and turning from the things that you once believed to be true and right and holy. You say amen?

[ 1 : 0 8 ] Hallelujah. Hallelujah. But that was yesterday. I got some more scripture going down through that. I even had a test over here. Test yourself. What is a Christian? One who gives complete surrender.

That was will to Jesus Christ. If we don't give Jesus our complete surrender, then we're not a real Christian. Because what was the greatest commandment? Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, all thy soul, all thy mind, and all thy strength.

And believe it or not, anything less than that isn't going to satisfy. Can you say amen this morning? Hallelujah. Second question was, what separates the real from the false? Hallelujah. The answer was, the love for God versus the love for the things of the world.

Amen. And we all fall in these categories. I'm not picking on any one particular person. I'm preaching to the church in general. And honey, the church in general needs to come back.

Come back to where? Come back to your first love? Hallelujah. And several, I had nine questions down through there, but let's go to today. Today I want to talk about losing your first love, believe it or not.

[ 2 : 1 5 ] That's why I didn't request that song, but the ending verse there, it's time to go back to things above. Time to go back to our first love. Let's all just bow our head and go to the Lord in prayer this morning.

Lord Jesus, I pray today, Lord God, that you let me say, Lord, the words that you would want me to say, that you'd want these people here to hear. Lord, if you don't want me to say it, then just shut my mouth.

I don't mind at all, Lord, because I want your will done. Lord God, that this church might be an on fire church. Lord God, that we might be ready, Lord, when the trumpet sounds and you call your people home, Lord God, that we might be ready, Lord, to join hands and sing when we all get to heaven.

What a day of rejoicing that will be. Ask you, Lord God, to anoint me this morning. Your words already anointed, but Lord God, anoint me to preach and anoint our ears to hear and our hearts to receive. Lord God, that we might be fruit-bearing Christians.

We ask it all in Jesus' precious name. And everybody said amen. Amen. John 14 and 6. You ever wonder why the Christians were having such a hard time in the early days?

[ 3 : 22 ] And it's pretty simple, really. Jesus started a bunch of trouble when he said in John 14, 6, that I am the way, I am the truth, and I am the life.

Now, we don't, not knowing what that meant and being Christians, it doesn't bother us to hear those words because we believe that Jesus is the way, Jesus is the truth and Jesus is the life.

Amen. But if you were a Jew raised up in Judaism and somebody comes along and saying Judaism's not the way, I am the way, then honey, you'd get a little bit ticked off at somebody that's going against your religion.

What if somebody walked in here this morning and said, hey, Pentecostals, y'all ain't got the right way. I've got the way. Come on out here in the parking lot. Let me preach to you the way. Well, we'd want to take up clubs, go out there and run them out of church and beat them half to death, get them off the parking lot, you know.

And it's the same thing happened to the early church in the days of Jesus. Matter of fact, most people don't know this, but the early church had another name other than Christians.

[ 4 : 37 ] They were called the way. It was called the way. Jesus started it when he said, I am the way. Just to give you an example of that, well, Jack Hayford, you remember Jack Hayford?

Jack Hayford, he wrote over 400 songs and one song he wrote was Majesty, Worship His Majesty unto Jesus, be all power, glory, honor, and praise. The name of his church is the church on the way.

You might ask yourself, where's the church on the way to? We got company? Hallelujah. We're the church on the way to heaven. Can you say, man, I'm on my way to heaven and my journey gets sweeter every day?

So during this three and a half years of Jesus' ministry, he established a new religion that was in direct opposition to every other religion in the whole world. That's why the Muslims hated him.

That's why every, every, every, every culture hated Christianity. Matter of fact, if you get out of the United States of America, it's dangerous to go in any other parts of the world today if you say you're a Christian.

[ 5 : 40 ] Over in, over in, where was it? I was reading about just here the other day. Bangladesh and, and, Pakistan and, and, all those Eastern Asian countries over there, they're all, not all, but their, their majority is Muslim.

And, and the few Christians that they have, well, they're burning their churches and killing them all. Can you say amen? So, but, but this was all started. Now, in Acts the ninth chapter, turn there and let's read what Paul has to say about this little thing right here.

Acts nine, one and two. Paul said, and Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter.

Now, we know that Saul's name was changed to the apostle Paul later on after he got converted and God gave him a new name. Aren't you glad? Amen? How many knows that when we got converted, God gave us a new name and our name isn't whatever our old given name was, but he said, if my people called by my name will humble themselves and pray.

So, God gave us his name. Amen? So, God gave Paul the new name. He said, and that's what he said here. Now, you got to remember he wrote two-thirds of the New Testament and Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues that if he found any of, is that underlined in your Bible?

[ 7 : 11 ] Is that underlined in your Bible? Isn't that odd that we read this all these years and then suddenly something stands out? If we find any of this way, what way? The Christian way, the Jesus way.

Amen? Hallelujah. The way of this new sect that came in, that this man came along and he began to make all these claims and start this new doctrine and not only that, but he's healing the sick, he's raising the dead, he's casting out devils, he's doing all these things and he's calling it this is the way.

The Jews weren't casting out devils. Judaism or any of the other doctrines or religions of that day had no power. Amen. Hallelujah.

Go on down to Acts the 19th chapter and let's see let's read about the way down there. Amen. One one was Paul before he got saved. What was he doing? He was breathing out threatenings and slaughters.

Man, you really can't imagine how mean the apostle Paul was before he got saved. That's why he could say I was the chief of sinners. I am the chief of sinners. Amen. Because he knew where God had brought him from.

[ 8 : 14 ] Down in Acts 19 and 1, let me begin reading here. It says, And it came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coast came to Ephesus and finding certain disciples he said unto them Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believe?

And they said unto him We have not heard so much as there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them What were you baptized? And they said unto him John's baptism. And then Paul said Verily, verily, I say unto you or verily, verily, John baptized you with the baptism of repentance saying unto you unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him that is on Christ Jesus.

When they heard this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them and the Holy Ghost came upon them and they spake with tongues and prophesied and all the men were about twelve men and he went into the synagogues and spake boldly of a space for about three months disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

But when divers were hard, hardened were hardened and believed not but spake evil of what's that next two words? That way is that underlined in your Bible?

Is that underlined in your Bible? In my Bible it's underlined. That spake evil of that way before the multitude he departed from them and separated disciples disputed daily in the school of Tyrannus and he continued by the space of two years that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus both Jews and Greeks.

[ 9 : 41 ] Can you say amen? Hallelujah. Something happened. Something happened. Nobody at any time had ever said I am the way I am the truth. Hey listen this man spoke like no man spoke the disciples said that that even the waves and the wind obey him.

He said John 14 he said you believe in God believe also in me. What kind of man could say those kind of words except Jesus Christ? He said in my father's house with many mansions if it wasn't so I would have told you I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there you may be also and whither I go you know and the way you know and then Thomas said Lord how do we know the way and Jesus said I am the way I am the truth I am the life and then he brought all this other division on with this next part of this next verse this same verse no man cometh to the father but by me that excluded every other religion every other denomination every other religious sect that excluded all Judaism you can't get to God except you come through me at one time the Bible said the law and the prophets were unto John and since that day the kingdom of God is preached and every man presses into it there was a time when they could get to God by the law and the prophets but when Jesus Christ came amen he fulfilled the law and the prophets and he said

I am the door to the sheepfold if any man seeks to come in any other way he's the same as a thief and a robber can somebody shout amen this morning amen no man can come through the father but by me because I am the way and they were offended also because Jesus not only claimed to be the way but he claimed to be the son of God and not only the son of God but then he claimed to be God himself you think brother that's that's kind of far fetched maybe it is maybe it is let's read on down here John 14 7 through 9 you got it there I took my marker out there John 14 7 through 9 listen to what he says here you got to understand how how much huh is that what happened no I'll just turn around and look now it's gone is that last night you got to realize how much division that Jesus Christ was calling he said don't think that I've come to bring peace because I didn't come to bring peace

I came to bring division amen because what they were going they were headed the wrong way if you're going down the wrong way and you're headed the hill don't you want somebody to stand out there in the middle of the road and holler hey stop stop you're going the wrong way you're not on the right way I am the way I'm the truth I'm the life amen this is what he says down to John 14 7 through 9 and and and but if he had known me listen to what he said I am the way the truth and the life no man cometh through the father but by me if you had known me you should have known my father also and from henceforth from now on you know him and you have seen him Philip said unto them Lord show us the father and and that'll make it that'll make us happy we'll be satisfied Jesus said unto them have I been so long with you yet with you and yet thou has not known me Philip he that hath seen me has seen the father and how sayest thou then showest us the father believe not that I am in the father and the father in me believe the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself but the father that dwelleth in me he doeth the works believe that I am in the father and the father in me or else believe me for the very works sake do you think that wasn't a resurrectionist rebellious statement from you know if you're viewing it if you were not Christian if you were a Jew or if you were some of the religious sector denomination my Lord you're saying my man says he's God manifested in the flesh can you imagine anybody saying that because he was he was bringing in a new way and he called it the way

I am the way and they picked up Peter picked up on it Paul picked up on it they kept on preaching about the way the way I am the way amen on down here in Acts the 10th chapter listen to Peter of the spokesman for the way John I mean Acts 4th chapter beginning in the 10th verse Acts 4 and 10 be it known to all and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom ye have crucified whom God has raised from the lid even by him that this man stand before you whole this is the stone that was set at naught of you builders which has become the head of the corner neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby men must be saved is that not strong doctrine Judaism can't save you Catholicism can't save you believe it or not

[ 14 : 45 ] Pentecostalism can't save you baptism can't save you amen only thing that can save you is Jesus Christ amen he said he that cometh unto me I would in no wise cast out whoo glory to God he said if we say we have no sin we make God a liar and the truth is not in us can you say amen for all have sin that comes short of the glory of God listen to what he says now we're Christians so it doesn't bother us if we hear these words because we preach them all the time we talk about them but honey if we were of somebody else and heard Peter say neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved then honey those are fighting words drop on over to 1126 Acts 11 and 26 I think I just read that there read it to you one more time here and when he had found him he brought unto him he brought them unto Antioch and he came to them and a whole year they assembled themselves in the church now you got to remember some things began to happen

I don't know if I wrote this down here or not I sure did I'm sure I did somewhere things began to happen Jesus Christ has already been crucified he's already been resurrected he's already seated on the right hand of the father and time begins to pass we're going to read it down here in just a few minutes let me just read this verse right here then I'll get on down there then departed Barnabas to Tarsus for to seek Saul and when he had found him he brought him unto Antioch and it came to pass a whole year as they assembled themselves with the church and taught much people and the disciples were called Christians at Antioch and I throw that little description it's kind of out of the way place but they were first called Christians at Antioch actually they didn't call them Christians they called them Christians you may know what the word Christ means word Christ means anointed but it also means Messiah are you still with me am I talking too fast people have been telling me

I'm talking too fast brother Ben you're talking so fast I can't get what you're trying to say down I'm trying to slow down so they were first called Christians at Antioch now it's hard to slur something that's that don't have a don't have a something that you can point your anger at and your and your you know your hard words at so the way is in the way that you can do that but if you call them Christians you know later on you know in the first church there wasn't sex now in in Judaism it was there was Sadducees and the Pharisees but in the church of Jesus Christ while they did Pentecost there wasn't Baptists and Methodists and Catholics and Episcopalian and Foursquare and all these different things they were all Christians they were all Christians amen or actually Christians and they called them that because that was a slang term hey you little Christians you think Jesus is your Christ that's a term that's a derogatory term that was slung at them like someone would call you hey you bunch of holy rollers and you know to some holy roller is a derisive term a derogatory term but unto me it's hey somebody knows who I am amen thank you Jesus oh back to the book of Matthew the 23rd chapter and the 37th verse this is what Jesus begins to say here

Matthew 23 and 37 he said oh Jerusalem Jerusalem thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathered her chickens under her wings and you would not and behold your house is left unto you desolate for I say unto you you shall not see me henceforth until you say blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord Jerusalem won't accept Jesus Christ how to do amen until the tribulation period gets so bad and then at the end of the tribulation period Jesus Christ comes back and every eye is going to see him and all the Jews over there are going to say blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord amen then they'll be accepting Jesus and not rejecting him can you say amen now listen in chapter 24 and Jesus went out and departed from the temple where was he at when he told those things where was he at he was in the temple amen hallelujah now he says

Jesus departed from the temple and his disciples came to him to show him the buildings of the temple and Jesus said unto them see you not all these things verily I say unto you there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down not one stone left upon another I just got some notes here let me read these Josephus says that some of these stones were 94 foot long and 10 and a half foot high and 13 foot wide they were made out of marble or they had 162 marble columns held up the porches and they were 52 foot high every stone was removed and a plow was run over the place where it stood fulfilling Micah 3 and 12 can you say amen they began to show Jesus the buildings of the temple and Jesus said hey I say unto you that every stone will be torn down and not one stone will be left upon another hallelujah you know what happened in 40 years after Jesus passed away after he died after he ascended and went to heaven on high the bible says that because the

[ 20 : 30 ] Romans hated the Jews and the Jews hated the Christians God sent the Roman general Titus to destroy Jerusalem in 70 AD and to tear down the temple which was Harrod's temple one of the great wonders of the ancient world like a tourist attraction and now the dome of the rock sits on the very place where the tabernacle where the temple once stood and now the Jews can't build back the Old Testament tabernacle or resurrect another temple because the dome of the rock or the mosque of Omar is there anybody know what the word mosque means it means a place of worship it also means to prostrate yourself you ever notice the Jews not the Jews the Muslims when they pray five times a day about five minutes a time somebody say well I can't pray for 30 minutes at one time I pray five times a day six times a day five minutes at a time and that gets you 30 minutes wouldn't it and then brother Jesse says then he'll get down on his floor and get down on the knees and just almost kiss the ground and he's always pointed toward Jerusalem toward the east amen and Jerusalem is one of their holy cities but toward Mecca and all those other things that they have over there now Titus destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD and he tore it down and here his temple was torn down now why did

God allow Jerusalem to be destroyed because Jerusalem you know the two words when you separate them the word Salem also means peace and this was also called the house of David and the city of the great king but God allowed Jerusalem to be destroyed for four reasons number one was to spread the gospel of salvation throughout the world you know what happened immediately after the day of Pentecost they all had everything in common the rich and the poor came together and all the money was put in the central treasury and then every man was given out and they set stewards over the widows and the orphans to make sure that they were taken care of but the gospel was basically staying right there in Jerusalem they were growing God gave them 40 years to get grown and strong and and everything but the message wasn't being spread so God sent Titus down there to destroy Jerusalem and when he did you know there was great persecution they took Christians they put them in the arenas to fight lions and to fight gladiators and these were you know they put women and children which weren't fighters at all and put them in there and just allowed them to be destroyed but what that did was that also caused that dispersion that they went to all the four corners of the earth amen second reason what God allowed it was to establish

Christianity as a separate and distinct religion from Judaism see the Romans when they brought Paul to to the king he said I can't find anything that's wrong with him he said you know sound like to me it's just a matter of your law and this is just a different sect you got the Essenes and the Sadducees and the Pharisees and now you got the Christians you know just another distinct sect from the from the from the rest of the Judaism so God separated that and dispersed them over the world to to establish Christianity as a separate and distinct religion number three was to have the love of Jesus Christ cover the earth and go out to all nations and number four was he wanted to decentralize the authority you know in the early church the only ones that had any authority was the apostles amen but now the word apostle means one sent with a message and every one of us here can be an apostle if we get the word of

Jesus Christ and then go out and tell somebody about it you're sent with a message and you become a messenger and an apostle and an angel and different things that this word means can you say amen how many would like to give a message of salvation to somebody that don't know it but you know why we don't because we we're afraid that they're going to reject it and we're we don't like to be rejected it just goes against our grain now in revelation one and nine turn over there with me real quick if you would please revelation the first chapter in the ninth verse can someone say amen now if I run across anything here you don't understand just a brother van wait a minute what you talking about here 25 years after Jerusalem was destroyed we're over here in the book of revelation the first chapter you're going to start the ninth verse the apostle

John was exiled to the isle of Patmos which was a penal colony of murderers etc this is what he says here now I John who also am your brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ was in the isle that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ I was in the spirit on the Lord's day and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet now why was Paul on the isle of Patmos and he tells you right here he said I was on the isle of Patmos for the word of God and for my testimony of Jesus Christ for the word of God and for my testimony of Jesus Christ hallelujah now God's getting ready to give him a message here listen to what verse 10 and 11 says I was in the spirit on the Lord's day and I heard behind me a voice of a great trumpet and saying I am Alpha and Omega and the first and the last what thou seest write in a book and send it into the seven churches which are in Asia and to

[ 26 : 12 ] Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea there were seven churches and these seven churches there were more than seven churches but in these seven churches there was the compass of what every church from then until Jesus Christ comes back will have he tells every church you know he tells them what they did good what they have good and then he says but if but if turn on over here the very first church he said to and to the angel of the church of Ephesus right turn over here to the second chapter and look at what he says to the angel of the church of Ephesus let's read the first three verses here said unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write these things said he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand he who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks I know thy works and thy labor and thy patience and how thus cannot bear them which are evil and how thus has tried them which say they are apostles and are not and has found them liars and has borne and has patience and for my namesake has labored and has not fainted he told them all these good things that they had done he just bragged on them and bragged on them listen

I know your patience your work your labor how you can't stand them which are evil and you tried them which say they're apostles and are not and has found them out to be liars and has borne you carried the weight and has patience and for my namesake has labored and has not fainting why were they laboring and not fainting for his namesake can you say amen hallelujah so the angel to the church and the pastors here of Ephesus he said I got a message and I want you to give this message to the church the angel in Hebrews 1 14 said are my angels not all ministering spirits sent to the saints who will inherit salvation so angels are ministering spirits amen now revelation 2 and 4 he says nevertheless I have someone against you because you've left your first love nevertheless he wrote this to Riverside he just put Ephesus on it because he didn't want to offend anyone at Riverside he said

Riverside I I know your works I know your labor I know your patience how you can't bear them that are evil how you tried them and say they're apostles and are not you're born you've had patience and for my namesake have labored and have not fainted nevertheless Riverside I have somewhat against you because you've left your first love remember therefore from whence thou works or else you wouldn't think God gave you an ultimatum would you he said repent and do your first works or else I will come unto thee and remove thy candlestick out of his place except thou repent except thou repent can you say amen you know what happened to the church of Ephesus it became stagnant I had to look up what the word stagnant means because I know what the word stagnant means but stagnant and it means had no motion nobody was moving you go to church nobody moved and then it means emotion had no emotion no one was crying no one was singing no one was happy they were a good church they were a dead church it also means not flowing they were foul and there was bickering going on that's how

I know they talking about riverside of course there's bickering going on in every church all through the land so we're not we don't have a corner on the market but the joy and enthusiasm had become ritualistic because they had lost their joy and had left their first love they had become pseudo Christians left your first love now here's the sad thing you say brother Van you're preaching!

I'm preaching to 99% of the church world today 99% of the church world today needs this message and I'm trying to give you this morning the main difference between a real Christian and a pseudo Christian is that a real Christian's love goes outward and flows to everybody around them they want everybody when they get first come to the Lord they want everybody to get saved they tell everybody about it they're not ashamed to hollar in the supermarket or Walmart it doesn't matter but then after they have been saved for a while and they get their eyes off of Jesus and they get their eyes on different ones well you didn't do this you're not doing this you're talking about me and pretty soon their love instead of being focused outward turns around and be focused inward and then all they can see is I and me and my and mine and everything becomes an inward thing not worrying about what God thinks about them not worried about what anybody thinks just having their own way can you say amen so the first sign of losing your first love I feel sorry if y'all sitting on the back row but

[ 31 : 24 ] God give me this morning you should move from the front row to the back row in church if you think I I made this up I didn't go you can come out here and read it I should have numbered these lines so you know what line it's on go from the front row to the church to the back row of the church you arrive late and you leave early your love for Jesus is growing cold and your attention turns from pleasing God to pleasing yourself and pleasing others and God last place on church that I sat there and lived more and I always sit on the front row and I used to work a lot of hours I get up in the morning at 2 o'clock and run the paper route to get back in time to catch my ride at 530 to go to TVA which was a 37 mile trip one way to work 8 or 10 hours up there and come back in the afternoon and to go to



I want to be right there and I know it's going to happen and I know it can happen and I know it will happen and it will happen to me if I wanted to that's why he said repent and do your first works what happens when we repent and we do our first works again then the joy that we had of our salvation because it's being saved is a happy thing you know what turns the world off is after after people have been saved for a while they still claim to be saved but they're pseudo-Christians because everything about you know about Christianity is going the wrong way and you know they walk around with a little long face well no I don't want to go down there ain't nothing but a bunch of hypocrites down there and well one more won't hurt come on down well I don't want to go to church with a bunch of hypocrites well I'd rather go to church with them than I had to go to hell with them hadn't you so the admonition is remember from which thou art fallen and repent and then verse 7 Jesus closes his message with these words right here he that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit is trying to tell you to him that overcometh what do we have to overcome of course we know we have to overcome the world the flesh and the devil and those things encompass you know the world the Bible says love not the world neither the things that are in the world for all that is in the world and you start out with the lust of the flesh lust of the flesh lust of the flesh not just for sexual gratification but for things new house new car new TV new living you know always want what you got is never good enough you're always trying to get something better amen and then then people don't know they see you getting all this better stuff and they think well how are they doing that and I'm not getting blessed reminds me of the story of of the missionary he'd been on the other side of there in darkest Africa serving the Lord for for about 25 or 30 years and and he was coming back home he was old and and his time was just about over and the ship was sailing into the harbor and on the banks of the of the harbor there where the ship was sailing into there was all kind of people and he thought well man these people are coming out to see me because I've been a missionary and I gave my life for the Lord and and I sold out for him and you know and now they're coming to see me about that time the captain announced that we have a dignitary on board we've got a big movie star here and and all these people on the banks have came out to see this great big dignitary and you know boy when the big dignitary got up there and he walked down the gangplank and all the band playing and everything and then he walked on up the street and all the crowd left him and left the old missionary standing there on the boat and he said

God said I served you all my life I mean I gave my life I left my home and everything and I've been over there and lived with those black people over there in darkest Africa tried to preach from your way and I come home and there's not one person here to meet me you know what God said oh you're not home yet you're not home yet this is just a stop along the way honey when you close your eyes to be absent from the bodies to be present with the Lord and then it's when we're going to be home and then it's when the band is going to be playing amen then it's when the angels are going to be rejoicing then it's when our family is going to see there they're going to say oh praise God you made it you made it you made it in can you say amen hallelujah thank you Jesus I want to hear him say enter in thy good and faithful servant into the joys of the Lord prepared for you from the foundation of the world listen to what he says now at the end of this verse to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life why in the world would we want to eat of the tree of life if you go back to Genesis the third chapter it begins to talk about that in the midst of the garden there was the tree of life and then God drove them out of the garden and he said because lest that they should now after they have partook of the tree of knowledge of good and evil should also partake of the tree of life and live forever why does that tell you that the tree of life has life in it and whosoever eats of the tree of life will live forever can you say amen look over here in Revelation 22 and let me tell you what he says here and he says and he showed me a pure river of water of life clear as crystal proceeding out of the throne of God and the lamb and in the midst of the street and on either side of the river was there the tree of life which bare twelve manner of fruits and yielded her fruit every month and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nation listen and he showed me a pure river of life a pure river of life where did all the water come from when the children of Israel were trying to go through the desert the Bible said that they drank of that rock which followed them and that rock was Christ and that water was pure living water what does it take to make a dead desert bloom again takes water amen what's it take to make a dead

Christian begin to bloom again it takes the waters amen Lord open the floodgates of heaven Lord I need a rain I'm down spiritually I'm wilting my roots are drying up I need some help amen and God opens up the floodgates of heaven amen when he sees a sincere and repentant heart and he begins to pour it out upon us and then we begin to cry out to God oh God I'm sorry for all these things have mercy upon me help me Lord to live for you Jesus Lord take me back Lord renew my first love God let me let me go back and Lord get that joy of my salvation with a heart full of love full of repentance we can cry out to God he said he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out if we confess our sins he said there's one media between God and man the man Christ Jesus and if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness

I say brother Ben well how am I going to overcome because I got so many carnal things which we all do nobody is exemption from carnality hallelujah how are we going to overcome overcoming our carnal part of us is only possible if we pray to God for God to give us the Holy Ghost power and through the power of the Holy Ghost we can walk like we ought to walk we can bring every desire that's not Christ like under Christ in Romans the 8th chapter I love this chapter I love just the way it starts out it says there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk after the spirit and not after the flesh for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death for what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh

[ 39 : 58 ] God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit for they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh but they that are after the spirit mind the things of the spirit for to be carnally minded is death but to be spiritually minded is life and peace wise to be carnally minded is death because the carnal mind is enmity against God it is not subject to the laws of God neither indeed can it be so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God but you're not in the flesh but in the spirit if so be that the spirit of God dwells in you anybody here have the Holy Ghost this morning amen anybody here don't have the Holy Ghost this morning alright and it encompasses all now if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his and if Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin but the spirit is life because of righteousness but if the spirit of him that raised up

Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal body by his spirit that dwelleth in you therefore brother we're not debtors to the flesh to live after the flesh for if we live after the flesh we shall die but if we through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh we shall live can you say amen for as many as are led by the spirit of God are the sons of God and of sons and heirs and of heirs and join heirs with Jesus Christ sir mortify means to die to die out amen mortify you know what they call a funeral home person they call him a mortician because he works with dead people to mortify a lot of us are there and we're getting mortified some spiritually and some physically amen we're dying out some of us are letting our fire go down our spiritual zeal is leaving and others are you know

God puts a fire in us when we're born and that fire doesn't go out until the day we die on the day we die then the fire goes out and the light goes out amen the same works the same way spiritually when we're born again God puts a fire inside of us and that fire is the Holy Spirit amen and if we'll feed the fire if we'll put another log on the fire if we will crucify our flesh if we will mortify the deeds of the flesh then the fire keep on burning bright because our love is going out but if we begin to look inward and begin to love ourself more and what happens is just like Peter Peter realized with a cock crow that he loved himself more than he loved God and he had denied him who would ever have thought it honey but you know why he couldn't take it he didn't have the Holy Ghost at that time not in not in the fullness the Pentecost hadn't fully come and he wasn't filled with the Holy Ghost and what happened after Pentecost amen then if you ever study the history of the apostles and how they all met their met their death and then the the little song says and Simon

Peter in home found crucified there upside down do you know why they crucified him Fox's book of martyrs says because Peter said I'm not worthy to die like my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ did so they crucified him in his own house in front of his own family upside down and he died there like that why could he do it then that he couldn't do before didn't have the Holy Ghost why can we today crucify our flesh from the things that that our flesh would like to do and the reason why we can is because we're letting the spirit of God rule and reign in us we're putting other logs on the fire we're keeping the fire burning and we're looking outward and not inward when we look inward we say you know woe is me everything is going wrong and I don't know a family anywhere that everything is not going wrong with but remember we're not home yet we're not home yet amen we're just strangers and pilgrims passing through Jesus said I am gone to prepare a place for you all I has not seen neither ear heard nor had entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for those that love him can you say amen but he has revealed it to us through his spirit but if you just take what do you think heaven is going to be like is it going to be like you know people with angels wings floating around on air on clouds you know what's it going to be like

I don't care the most wetted list you know what they tell those those Muslims over there to get them to commit suicide if you commit suicide and give your life to kill these infidels these Christians and Jews then you go to heaven and you have 70 virgins can you imagine 70 virgins I can't imagine I can't imagine what's the appeal of 70 virgins but anyway the joy the love just being a Christian I know I like Mike Lowry and he tells the story of when he first got the call he was young man just fresh out of college and he went to this church and he did his little thing and when he got through the preacher came over and shook his hand and said thank you for coming no offering he gets in his car and he thought he was going to get an offering so he didn't have any money and he's crying out to God and he's murmuring grumbling and griping and complaining

[ 45 : 46 ] God I'm your man you sent me there I gave them what you told me to give them God they're not taking care of me what am I going to do what am I going to do and he said God tell me said well sure beats hell and that's what you deserve so shut up whining because anything you get as long as it's not hell you know and if we all got what we deserved we'd all have to split hell wide open but aren't you glad that Jesus done paid the price for my sin and now we have imputed righteousness that when we stand before God he don't see me in all my sins all he sees is sinless pure holy just like Jesus Christ isn't that wonderful to know that hey we can make it not only that we're going to make it but brother man you just don't know how much flesh I got I don't even want to know and you don't want to know how much flesh I got either but God puts something inside of every one of God losing your first love and quit walking in the Spirit.

If we walk in the Spirit, we'll not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Can you say amen? Hallelujah.

You know, sometimes the devil will tell you this is a hard way. The preaching's hard.

The singing's hard. Music's definitely hard. This is a hard way. But you know, it's really not. You know what the Bible says?

The way of a transgressor. It's hard. It's only hard if the whole crowd is going this way. You and Walmart on the day after Thanksgiving.

[ 48 : 36 ] And everybody's going this way. And all of a sudden, you up here, you want to go back? And then all of a sudden, you're trying to go that way, but they're carrying you on. You know why? Because you're trying to go back, but everybody else is going that way. In other words, you're trying to transgress the crowd.

When we try to go back, we're trying to transgress the law of God. And the way of a transgressor, going back is hard. It's hard going back. Hallelujah. I want it to be hard. I don't want it to be easy for me to backslide.

I want it to be so hard that I can't. Can you say amen? Whatever happened to death do us part, though the heart reflect the heart.

Parents' faces tell us we read minds. While children search can't seem to find. whatever happened to death do us part, does the home reflect the heart?

Parents' faces tell us worried minds. While children search but can't seem to find.

[ 50 : 11 ] It's time we took a closer got back to living by the holy book. No compromise without gaining supply.

You see, we go forward if we just go back. And we pray through the ■ You'll know the tree by the fruit we see.

Serving God has no in between. We're either cold or we're hot.

He said, look warm, I'll have no part. It's coming now to in or out.

There's just no time for all this playing around. We're going back to truth or false.

[ 51 : 10 ] We got to go back to Calvary's cross. We got to go back to living truth.

We're going back to the absolute. Back to where the church stands strong. Back to where there's a right.

There is a wrong. Back to where it's black or white. You'll see the difference. Same like day. We're going back to the things above.

We're going back to our first love. Then we'll rise like a sleeping giant.

Standing tall in God's strength and might. You see the power we've claimed for so long.

[ 52 : 17 ] He said it's returning. We're being made strong. We're not looking to the right or the left. You see it's time our eyes were spirit led.

We're going back to the things above. We got to go back to our first love. We're going back to the things above.

We're going back to the thing above. Praise the Lord, time to go back.

Hallelujah. Take me back, take me back dear Lord, to the place I first received you.

Take me back, oh, take me back dear Lord, where are you? First, please. And I feel so far from you Lord, but still I hear you calling me.

[ 54 : 28 ] Those simple things that I once knew, those memories they keep calling me. But I must confess, Lord I've been blessed, but still my soul is not satisfied.

I renew my faith and restore my joy. I wipe every tear from these feet, move me down.

Take me back, oh, take me back dear Lord, to the place where I first received you.

Take me back, oh, take me back dear Lord, where I first believed.

I'm going to go back, oh, take me back dear Lord, to the place where I first believed. Take me back, oh, take me back dear Lord, to the place where I first received you.

[ 55 : 41 ] Take me back, oh, take me back dear Lord, to the place where I first believed.

Take me back, oh, take me back dear Lord, to the place where I first believed.

Take me back, oh, take me back dear Lord, to the place where I first believed.

Take me back, oh, take me back dear Lord, to the place where I first believed.

I must confess, Lord, I've been blessed. But still my soul is not satisfied.

[ 56 : 45 ] Renew my faith and restore my joy. Wipe every tear from this weeping eye.

Take me back. Oh, take me back, dear Lord. To the place where I first received you.

Take me back. Oh, take me back, dear Lord, where I first believed. Oh, take me back, dear Lord.

Oh, take me back, dear Lord. Praise the Lord.

Amen. All right, all of our class is in this morning. Who had the little bitty class today? And it was made through the■. Thank you.