

Christ Died to Bring Us to God

by Mike Morrow

Let me We do have a great God, don't we? I did not come this year to preach; I came to soak up. I appreciate everything I've heard. I was a little bit confused about Brother Charles' message last night; I was wondering why we all weren't on our faces, including me, when he preached on the majesty of our God. The Lord has been awful good to me, and I praise Him this morning for His goodness. I have been blessed by the Lord. Let's pray.

Father, I want to thank You this morning. Lord, I want to thank You for who You are; and, Father, I want to thank You for what You've done. And I want to bless Your name, dear God, for redeeming me. Lord, I thank You for the awful price that You paid, that we might be saved. And Lord, if there has ever been anyone who wanted to doubt the love of God, all they needed to do was look at Calvary. I pray this morning, Lord, that You'd help us to look at Calvary; and help us, Lord, to look at the Calvary way. Help us, I pray this morning, that we might understand the love of God that has been bestowed upon us, freely given to us, Lord, because of Your grace and Your great love wherewith You loved us. Thank You for Your mercy. I present myself to You this morning, Lord, in utter weakness. Lord, I pray that You'd help me not to say anything of myself. And I pray this morning, Lord, that You would speak through me whatever You want to say, I pray. Lord, I believe in the Holy Ghost, and I pray for Your help right now, in Jesus' name. Amen.

I ask you to turn with me this morning to the book of 1 Peter chapter 3. Verse 18 says, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." I heard the leaves of the Bible still rustling, so we'll read it again, it's very short. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins (that word is 'concerning sins'), the just for the unjust (different Greek word there, it's 'in the place of' – so Christ suffered concerning sins, He the just One in the place of we the unjust ones), so that He might bring us to God."

Ephesians 2:13 tells us that "we are made nigh by the blood of Jesus Christ." I'm grateful that God has shown us His love. I'm grateful for the theme of the conference today. Now what I'm going to do, if the Lord will let me, is kind of start with that theme, and go somewhere else. But I'm grateful for the theme of the conference. God's eternal love shown through the cross of Jesus Christ. There is no better place to find the love of God. Ephesians 2:13 says, "We are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Ephesians 1:7 says, "We are redeemed by the blood of Christ." Colossians 1:21-22 tell us that "we are reconciled to God by the blood of His Son."

Again, in Ephesians 1:7, the Bible tells us that "we have forgiveness of sins through His blood." These are great blessings, aren't they? These are evidences of God's love toward us, are they not?

II Corinthians chapter 5 and verse... excuse me just a minute. This is a camp meeting, isn't it? Is this a camp meeting? Did I read the brochure wrong? A what? What did you say?

[Audience] A Missouri camp meeting.

[Mike] A Missouri camp meeting [Laughter]. In a camp meeting, you say, "Amen."

[Audience] Amen.

[Mike] Thank you. Every once in a while in a camp meeting, folks get excited about the things of God. Sometimes they are writing notes, and when they get through writing notes, they throw them up in the air and say, "Hallelujah to God." Would you raise your hands like this, please? This is not pentecostalism. Baptists were doing this before pentecostals knew there was a God. [Laughter]. So loosen up a little bit, folks. I'm talking to you about the love of God this morning.

II Corinthians 5:21 teaches that as Christ shed His blood on Calvary's cross, He enabled us to receive the righteousness of God. Amen. Amen. John 3:16 tells us that we have eternal life, because Jesus Christ came - God gave His only begotten Son. Revelation 12:1 tells us that we are overcomers by the blood of Christ. We're adopted into His family, we're born into His family, because Jesus Christ shed His blood on the cross. What? What? Hallelujah.

I wish I could preach on every one of those texts this morning. I thought, when I heard from Brother Scott the theme of the conference, I thought there's not enough preachers in America to preach on that theme. There's too many texts, there's too many words from God about His love. But I centered in on this one verse, I feel like the Lord led me to this verse. All of these other things are precious to me. I am grateful this morning that I've been reconciled to God. God has cleared out, through Christ, has cleared out every thing that would be a hindrance of me coming to God, isn't that wonderful? And I'm glad that I've been redeemed and bought out of slavery. I'm grateful this morning that I have all of my sins forgiven. All of my past sins are gone. All of my present failures and sins are under the blood of Christ. I want to say to you, that all that I will ever do before God Almighty is under the blood of Jesus Christ. You say, "O that gives me a licence to sin." It does not! If you have that attitude, it's proof that you're probably not saved. It doesn't give a licence for sin. I'll tell you what it does though, it makes you grateful that God forgives us of our sins.

I am thankful this morning that I have the righteousness of God. Oh I'd love to preach on that. I saw Dr. Ryle's little booklet entitled "Just As If I Had Never

Sinned", and I used to think that's really a good thought of justification – just as if I'd never sinned. But then I realized that's nothing more... I mean the thought (it's a good little book), but the thought is nothing more than Old Testament sacrifice. You see, Abel could offer a lamb, and God had respect unto Abel's offering. And all of those Old Testament offerings, God had respect for those offerings, but there was no positive righteousness that came. But when the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, died on Calvary's cross, did you know that not only did He wipe away our sins, but the Bible teaches that God attributed to us the righteousness of Christ Himself. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us – He who knew no sin – that we might be made, can you believe this, the righteousness of God in Him. What a text that would be to preach on.

Henry Moorhouse preached for weeks and weeks and weeks on John 3:16, talking about the love of Christ. But I believe the greatest blessing that I have ever experienced from the love of Christ, is found in 1 Peter 3:18. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, – now listen – that He might bring us to God." "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."

I believe we've been in revival for the past few years. I believe we've been in revival for the past 40 or 50 years. For the past 40 or 50 years, we've had a great revival of emotionalism in America. It began with the Charismatic movement. Have you seen those advertisements for the Praise Music CDs? Every one of them have the picture of young people. And I don't know where they are, I don't know what's going on with them. But they're young people, and they're all jumping, and they're all singing. You know, I like that. I like that pretty good. But I want to tell you, if all you have had is an emotional experience, it will burn out. If all you have had is an emotional experience, there will come a time when it won't feel too good anymore. We've had that kind of revival. I had a professor in seminary one time, who said the Pentecostal movement was the backdoor to the world. And I know what he meant now. What he meant was that people get all worked up, and get into a great teasy of just emotion. And when they do that, and they're finished with that, there's nothing left for them. They're burned out. You can come back years later and talk to them, and they say, "Oh, I tried all of that. I felt this, and I felt that, but it didn't last."

We've been in that kind of revival for many, many years in this country. That's one reason why everybody is saved. Well, if you don't believe it, go ask them. It doesn't matter who you ask, it doesn't matter what they look like, it doesn't matter where they live, it doesn't matter what kind of lifestyle they have, it just doesn't matter. As a matter of fact, how they live is none of our business. Just ask them if they're saved, and they'll tell you, "Oh yeah, I'm saved. Yes sir. I've

prayed the prayer, I've been baptized, joined the church...," whatever their little formula is. Almost everybody in America professes some kind of salvation.

So we've been in a revival of emotionalism. We have been recently in a revival of intellectualism. We have a new surge of interest in doctrine and in truth. We really want to know the truth, and we really want to know doctrine. And we're interested in making sure that all of our "I"s are dotted and our "T"s are crossed, and making sure that everything that we believe is exactly in line with what somebody else, who is supposed to know, believes. We got it all figured out. Boy, I tell you, I almost got to the place one time where I despised the word "Calvinism". I think I saw people moving to get up and walk out. I'll tell you something, hell is going to be full of Calvinists.

There are a lot of people who have gotten all excited about doctrine. And, somehow, they feel like they've seen something, and they know something that other people don't know. And it gives them this puffed up feeling, this exalted feeling, this sense of "I know something about God, and I have this insight into the truths of God". I wanna tell you something, the Word of God teaches that Christ did not die to give you great insights and truths into the nature of God, or just to give you doctrine. Jesus Christ died to bring us to God Himself.

I was with Brother Paul, I went to hear Brother Washer preach on one occasion, over in Bowling Green, Kentucky. And of course, as it always happens, I was talking to Brother Paul, and as it always happens, he was crowded, crowded around with young men, young preachers. And they crowded up around him. And one of them asked him a question. And Brother Paul kind of smiled and deferred to me. He said, "This is an older pastor." I don't know why Paul thinks I'm an older pastor, but anyway. He said, "Ask this man." And so, the boy asked me the question, I don't remember exactly what it was. But I just felt the need, when I finished saying what little bit I said, to ask him; I said, "Tell me, tell me when you were saved. Tell me about your salvation." This is what he said: "Well, I was raised in so and so church of Christ, and I was baptized at such a place. Now, let's get back to..." And I said, "Wait, wait, wait, wait a minute. Tell me when you were saved." Well, he kind of stepped back and looked offended. He said, "I just told you, I was raised in this certain church of Christ, and I was baptized at a certain, certain age. Now Brother Paul, about this doctrinal problem..."

And I'm going to tell you something, there are multitudes of young men and women today, who are being taught, and who think somehow in their mind, that if they have an intellectual grasp of the gospel, if they have an intellectual grasp of the five-points of Calvinism: (and by the way, I consider myself a five-pointer, so if what I said a while ago upset you, just don't get too excited about it): but I'm here to tell you, that just because you have an intellectual understanding of the gospel

don't mean you've gotten to the place where God wants you to be yet. Jesus Christ suffered, Jesus Christ died, Jesus Christ experienced the spittle and the scorn and the laughter of men, Jesus Christ was shamed and treated horribly, to bring us to God. That's the reason: TO BRING US TO GOD. All of these things – forgiveness of sin, redemption, reconciliation – all of these things have to do with bringing us to God. Now let me ask you a question this morning: Have you ever been brought to God? That's the question.

Now here's where I'm going to wander off a little bit. I like your signs, Brother. By grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, what does that next one say? by Scripture alone, and the last one, I can't see the last one. Are those unique with you all? [Laughter]. You know, in the church I pastor, I have really been big on this one. I spent nine years teaching our people that salvation is by grace alone. It is by grace alone. There is absolutely nothing you can do to save yourself. In the last while, God has begun to center me in on that second one – by faith alone. You see, the Bible says we are saved by grace through faith. You're not just saved by grace, you're saved through faith. God actually brings us to Himself, and there is a relationship that is started. It is a faith relationship.

Listen, God is not interested in you having a relationship with a Book. I believe every word in this Bible. You notice I read from the King James: somebody asked me if I was "King James only", I said, "No, I'm King James mostly, but I'm not King James only." That's what I cut my teeth on. All that other stuff sounds, sounds wrong to me. [Laughter]. But I want to tell you, God is not interested in you just having a relationship with a Book.

The Lord Jesus, listen to me, the Lord Jesus said, "Search the scriptures: for in them you think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of Me. And you won't come to Me that you might have life," Jesus said. You see, God is interested in you coming to Him, not coming just to a Book, not just having it memorized, not just able to systematize the doctrines that are in the Word of God, but that you might know God. God is interested in us knowing God. I want to ask you this morning: Do you know God? Have you been brought to the Lord?

The Bible says something interesting over in Hebrews 10:38. I can't find the book, is Hebrews in the New Testament still? Hebrews 10:38, listen to this, "Now the just shall live by faith." Of course, the apostle Paul is quoting Habakkuk there. And he says, "The just shall live by faith." I hope you see the three doctrines that are in that verse: Justification – the just; regeneration – shall live; and then sanctification – they live by faith. And he says, "But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. Now faith is the substance of things hoped for."

By faith alone – what does it mean? If we're going to live by faith it would be good to understand what faith is, don't you think? "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for." Let's translate that word "substance" – confidence. "Now faith is the confidence of things hoped for." Hope, in the New Testament, has to do with expectation, confident assurance. "Faith is the confidence of things that you have been assured of. It is the evidence (the proof) of things not seen." And then he talks about "through faith we understand the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." By the way, that's true even scientifically. When is the last time you saw an atom? "The things which are seen are not made of things which do appear." And even the atoms, God spoke into existence. We believe that. How do we believe that? By faith.

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain," verse 4. Now this is going to get a little bit technical, so listen to me closely. I believe that Abel had received from God how he was supposed to worship God. Probably passed down from Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve had had their shame covered by God Himself taking animals, most likely a lamb, sacrificing that lamb, and covering them with the skins of those animals. You do understand, don't you, that God is the One who shed the first blood in this world? – A picture of Christ: "It pleased the LORD to bruise Him." And God covered their shame. Abel saw this. Abel had received this word. And when he comes to God he comes with a blood sacrifice, full of faith, believing what God had said, and sacrificing as God had said.

Now listen to what happened. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness..." He obtained witness. He got a witness from God that he was righteous. I want to stop right there just for a minute. Abel got a witness. You know, I am really conscious that we have to be careful on this business of assurance. I'm really conscious of that. I spent a week, or from Sunday through Wednesday, with a young preacher last week. And this dear brother has absolutely no peace about his salvation. He has no peace about his salvation. And there have been a lot of people who have tried to deal with him. And I tried to help him, but ultimately I couldn't help him. Only God can give you peace. I could not help him. And I kept pointing him to Christ; I said you need to get off with your Bible and get in the woods somewhere, get off somewhere and seek the Lord till God speaks to your heart, till God gives you peace. I'll tell you, if God gives you peace, you've got peace. Amen.

This young man just struggled and struggled and struggled. And some of our Reformed brethren had dealt with him. Here's what I'm hearing: I'm hearing from among Reformed people – "It does not matter if there has ever been a time when you were converted. That really doesn't matter. What really matters is, are you living for Christ now?" And usually, right after that is said, we run over to the

Gospels or the little book of 1 John, and we say, "Now here are the tests," this man had this done for him, "Here are the tests: you love your brethren, he that loves the world the love of the Father is not in him, you believe Jesus Christ came in the flesh, you believe the Son of God came in the flesh, you believe all of these different things." Do you realize that Wesley and Whitefield could have said they believed those things before they were converted? Do you understand that any good, moral baptist sitting in a pew, who doesn't cuss out loud, who comes to church faithfully, who has been baptized, who has made his profession of faith, who doesn't have anything against anybody in the church, who doesn't sneak around out into the world, could pass those tests in his own mind. But there's one test in 1 John most people don't mention very much. John said, "We have the witness within ourselves!"

I want to say to you this afternoon, this morning... I don't know what time it is, have I preached after lunch? No. I want to say to you this morning, that the Word of God teaches that those who belong to Jesus Christ, God's Spirit witnesses along with our spirit that we are children of God. And I talked to the young man about his experience. He had one when he was 10 years old. He had another one when he was at college. He had another one here and another one there. And he's hoping some of them will work. Listen, it's not experiences that saves you, it's Christ that saves you! Now I'll tell you, coming to Christ is an experience. There is a lot of folks who have had experiences that wasn't a Christian experience. He died to bring us to God. How do you come to God? Through faith alone.

He talks about Enoch. How does faith work in a Christian's life? How does it work in a Christian's life? "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen yet..." Faith is the evidence, the conviction, of things not seen yet. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen yet, moved with fear..." He moved before he saw it. Hello? You all still with me? God said, "Noah, I'm going to bring a flood upon the earth. Build an ark." The word of God came to Noah's heart; he heard it, he believed it, he acted on it. And when he acted on it, he saved his family, and he condemned the world. I think there's a pattern here.

Verse 8, "By faith Abraham, when he was called"—there's the word of God. "Abraham, get up from Ur of the Chaldees, and go to the place that I will show you." "When he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance," – what did he do? Did he sit around and say, "O God, You move me"? The Bible says he obeyed. He just got up. He met with God, God told him what to do; he came home and started packing the van.

Sarah said, "What are you doing?"

He said, "Sorry honey, we're leaving this place."

Sarah: "Why? Daddy, Momma is here. Sister, Brother is here. Cousin is here. Why?"

Abraham: "God said so."

Sarah: "I didn't hear Him."

Abraham: "He wasn't talking to you. He told me."

By faith Abraham heard the word of God, got his family together, and left – verse 9 – "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise." Listen, he stayed there. He got a word from God: God, one day, said, "Look north, look south, look east, look west." He said, "Every place you put your foot, it's yours!" Abraham heard the word of God, received it, what did he do: with one exception—when he went down into Egypt and got in trouble— with one exception, he sojourned in the land of Canaan. He stayed where God told him to stay.

"Though faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed." The Lord came to Abraham one day and said, "Abraham, Sarah's gonna have a baby." Abraham laughed. He said, "O that Ishmael live before You. I'm too old, she's too old." Next day, the Lord and two angels showed up in Abraham's tent, and reiterated the promise. I don't know if it's the next day or not, but pretty soon after that. And Sarah is in the tent, and she hears it, and guess what? It tickles her too. She laughs too!

And God says, "Sarah, come here!"

Sarah (in a trembling voice): "Yes sir."

God: "Why did you laugh?"

Sarah: "I didn't laugh."

God: "You're lying. I know you laughed. But this time next year you're gonna have a son."

She believed the word of God! and received strength within herself – an old, 90 year old woman – to bear a baby! That's how she did it. Somebody said, "How on earth did she do it?" By faith, is how she did it. She received the word of God; she believed the word of God; she trusted the word of God; and God did it in her heart and her life. It seems like there's a pattern here, doesn't there?

"These all died in faith." Boy, verse 13 is one of the greatest passages on faith in the whole Bible. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises," that is, not having received the culmination, the finish of all the promises, "but having – here it is – they saw them afar off." How did they see them? They saw them with their ear, they saw them with their heart. God gave them the promises. And then "they were persuaded of them". They said, "If God said it, that settles it." And then "they embraced them." And after that, they confessed it. "They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country."

Verse 17, "By faith Abraham, when he was tried," – hey, Abraham got a word from God. You know what God said? God said, "Take Isaac, your beloved, your only son Isaac." That's the word of God, it came to Abraham. "Take him to the mountain, and offer him as a sacrifice." Abraham stepped out on the word of God: the sheer word of God to his heart. He went to offer Isaac. Of course, you know the story, God intervened, gave a ram in the place of Isaac, and God's promises were preserved. But Abraham said, "Even if I do offer him, even if when I'm through there's just ashes, God will take those ashes and raise Isaac up again, because God has said, 'Through Isaac thy seed shall be called.' "

O "By faith Joseph." Go read how God spoke to Joseph the dreamer, and how it came to pass.

By faith Moses' parents, verse 24, "By faith Moses, when he was come to years." Verse 27, "By faith he forsook Egypt." Why did he forsake Egypt? My wife tickles me every Easter if she can. She watches this Ten Commandments, you know, it's always on. [In a strong baritone voice]: "Moooooseeeeee, take of thy shoes..." Boy, they had a warped idea of God, didn't they? But I'll tell you what he did do: he met with God over there on the side of that mountain. And he heard what God said for him to do – he even argued with God a little bit about it. But then he stepped out by faith, and did what God – listen, he did what he couldn't see yet – he led the children of Israel out of the land of bondage.

Okay, now they're out, they're in the wilderness; they're facing a sea in front of them; they're facing an army that's coming fast upon them. There they are. Moses said, "Stand still and see the salvation of the LORD." And then all of a sudden he starts crying out to God, "O God, help us now. O God, O God!" And God says, "Moses, quit crying out to Me. Hold out your rod. Tell the people to go forward!" I believe they started walking toward that thing before it opened up. They had a word from God, and they obeyed what God said; and God followed with miracles. The just shall live by faith! Are you and I living that kind of life? Listen, He died to bring us to God – a relationship, not just an old doctrine in a book.

"Through faith he kept the passover," verse 28. What happened? God sent His word to him: "Put the blood on the doorpost, on the lintel, and when I see the blood I'll pass over you." Guess what they did? Before the death angel came, they put the blood on the doorpost. And then when the death angel came, it was exactly like God had said: for the just shall live by faith. Faith alone.

Verse 29, "By faith they passed through the Red sea." Verse 30, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down." Remember that one? Joshua is out there one day, doing some spying duty. He says, "Well, the wall looks weak over there, maybe. I don't believe there's as many guards over there..." And all of a sudden, he runs into a man – no kind of man like he's ever seen before. Do you know, I credit that dear

man. I credit old Joshua with some courage. I believe he put his hand on a sword hilt, and he said, "Whose side are you on? Are you for them or are you for us?" The LORD said, "I'm Captain of the LORD's host." An old black preacher said He didn't come to take sides, He came to take over.

"Captain of the LORD's host, oh I'm so glad you're here." And God told him how to take Jericho – the most foolish military tactic you've ever heard of in your life! "What are we gonna do, LORD? Are we gonna put our bazookas here, and LORD, are we gonna have our AK-47s for whatever they are over there? LORD, are we gonna drop the bomb in here?" God says, "None of that, put your sword up. All you're gonna need for this one is some marching boots and a horn. It's all you're gonna need." And they marched around Jericho, as God said. And on that seventh day, they blew those trumpets. And just – listen – before they saw it, God gave it to them; and they had it. And then the walls came tumbling down. Now the just shall live by their faith.

"Rahab..." you say, "Brother Mike, you're going through the history of the Old Testament." I know, that's it. Rahab; you know what she said to the spies? She said, "Forty years ago when you left... forty years ago when you left Egypt, we heard about the God that was leading you. We heard it, and we turned to jelly." You remember 39 years before that, they had come right up to the edge of Jordan. And they sent in spies. And ten of the spies came back and said, "Boy, walled cities," I imagine Jericho was the first one they saw, "walled cities all the way up to heaven. Giants in the land. We can't do this." And God says, "Okay, 39 more years out in the desert, till this generation dies." And they did. And the kids came in. How did they come in? On the word of God, by faith.

And Rahab said, "We heard about it." The spies told her what to do; she did what they told her to do, stepped out by faith. I bet she was saying, "How on earth can this little red strand save me? I mean, what if they don't see it? What if it..what if... But I'm gonna do it because God said it." By faith. She lived in the wall. Every part of that wall fell down but her apartment. The just shall live by faith.

I could go through a lot more here, but I can almost hear somebody say, "But Brother Mike, that's the way God dealt in the Old Testament. You know, God didn't deal that way in the New Testament." Well, you better go back and read your Bible, to begin with. But notice what he says in chapter 12: "Wherefore seeing we, we New Testament Christians, we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us— whatever God leads us into; whatever the word of God is to us." And then listen, "Looking unto Jesus the author and the finisher of our – what? what? what? – faith." The author and

finisher of our faith. He's been talking about faith all the way through here. Jesus Christ is the author of faith, and He's the fulfiller of faith.

About eight months ago, God began to prepare me for what has so far been the hardest year of my life. In 1992 I had a kidney transplant; that was nothing compared to what I've been through in the last year. But God began to prepare me, and it started in this first few chapters of the book of Hebrews. He began to show me that Jesus Christ: absolutely yes, God in flesh, Immanuel; O yes, but: Jesus Christ the man. The man Jesus Christ. Do you realize that everything Jesus Christ did, He did by faith? You say, "Brother Mike, I don't believe that." Turn to John chapter 5, you will when I'm through with you. John chapter 5. I'm going to read you a most astounding statement. Verse 19, "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, – get these next words – the Son of Man can do nothing of Himself.' " Look at verse 30, "I can of Mine own self do nothing."

You know what He said in verse 19? He said, "Here's the way I operate: what I see the Father do." You see, they saw the promises afar off, and they embraced them. "For what I see the Father do. For whatsoever things He doeth, them also doeth the Son likewise." It's not what the Son is doing independently of the Father, but it's what the Father is laying out to be done. It's the word of God coming to me, and I do what the Father is doing.

Look at John 5:30, "I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of My Father which hath sent Me." The Lord Jesus says, "Everything I do, I do by hearing My Father, and seeing My Father; and that's how the miracles are done in My life."

I thought it was amazing in that 6th chapter of John. Multitude comes to Jesus, they need to be fed. Verse 5, "When Jesus lifted up His eyes, and saw a great company come unto Him, He saith unto Philip, 'Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?' " He presented a problem, by the way. "And this He said to prove him: for He knew Himself what He would do." He took the little loaves and the fishes, and fed 5,000. How did he do that? Because that's what He saw the Father wanted done.

When He stood at Lazarus' grave, He prayed, out loud, but He said, "Lord, the reason I'm praying out loud is not because I need to, but so these standing around could hear and understand that You hear me always." He called Lazarus forth because that was the will of God. The just shall live this way.

Now hear me closely. I'm just about through, but listen to me closely. You need to learn to have, if you're saved, you need to learn to have a faith relationship with God. You need to let the Lord lead you. "They are sons of God who are led by the Spirit of God." And it happens to be that that word "sons" right there, means "mature sons". They're grown up sons, who have learned to be led by the Spirit of

God. Now listen to me very, very closely. We have a way to know whether it's God speaking to us or not. And this is it (the Bible). This Book is it. You hear people all the time, well they went down and shot up McDonalds, and said God told them to do it. He is a liar. He's a liar. God didn't tell him to go shoot up McDonalds. Mm-mmn. You better check, when you feel impressed.

You know, we are such creatures of extreme. "Oh, I feel led to wear this particular tie today. I feel impressed." I'm not saying God won't tell you which tie to wear. But if He does, it'll probably be unusual, and it'll probably be for a specific reason that only He knows about. But I'm gonna tell you something: You can get so bound up in the "every thing that goes through your mind must be God telling me to do something, 'Oh, I'm about to go crazy.'" That's not what I'm talking about. What I am talking about is, God's people learning to discern the voice of God. God will lead you. God will speak to you.

Can I say this one more time? Jesus Christ suffered, the just for the unjust, – not so you might know a book, not so that your doctrine can be straight, – to bring us into a living fellowship and relationship with God. Do you know the Lord? Do you? If you do, learn to live by faith. In your beginning of Christian life, you've already lived by faith. If you trusted Christ, if God put faith in your heart, faith arrived alive. It arrived, turning interested. It did. And if you did that, your life started with faith – your spiritual life. Learn to walk with God that way, because that's God's plan. Four times in the Bible, four times, God said, "The just shall live by their faith." He died to bring us to God.

Father, I thank You for the joy, and O God, the awesome responsibility and privilege of preaching Your Word. I pray that You would continue to help us today. Bless Scott, and Bob, and others who lead. O God, Lord when I look over this congregation, I think about times when You came down in such mighty power that You absolutely disrupted programs and plans and ideas. And Lord, I believe that's why we're meeting. O, I know we have to have structure, but O God, O God, Lord would You come among us again. Lord, would You reveal Yourself again. O God, we long, we long for, not just a personal walk in our own life, but to see the church of God today walking with their God. Lord, help us. Father, have mercy upon us. Rain down upon us, I pray. In Jesus' name, Amen.