

A Sinner at the Judgment Bar!

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Do You Know Christ?

By Peter Nortier

Bible Text: Matthew 27:1-2; Acts 2:22-24

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One of my favorite Psalms is 116.

“1 I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. 2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. 3 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. 4 Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. 5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.”

Amen? Amen. Thank you, Matt, I appreciate it and thank you, Ed. I appreciate you leading and going with me because I don't know what I'd do without it.

If you have your Bibles, I want you to turn with me to Matthew 27:1-2 and 11-14.

“1 When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: 2 And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

“11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. 12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. 13 Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? 14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.”

Let's bow for prayer.

Our Father, thank you again for this time tonight. Bless this service as never before. Give listening ears, attentive minds and do whatever work has to be done. O, our God, above everything else, glorify thyself in all that's said and done in this hour together. We ask you, Lord Jesus, for thy sake. Amen.

Our subject tonight is I mentioned in the bulletin is “A Sinner at the Judgment Bar.” Now, listen carefully if you will, hold your seat as I give you truth that a lot of people don't understand: the Lord Jesus Christ being the perfect substitute that he is, was tempted in all points like as we are. Now, listen carefully: nobody gets saved without Holy Spirit conviction and when the Holy Spirit moves upon an individual, what does he do? I'll tell you right: first of all, he awakens that individual to his need of the Lord Jesus Christ and we need to understand that and I say that to you very kindly because I mentioned before the greatest thing that can happen to you if it ever does, is for the Lord Jesus Christ to reach down and saved a sinner. And the Lord Jesus Christ is our perfect substitute so, therefore, he knows in full extent what we learn a little bit about with regard to Holy Spirit conviction. When God opens the heart of an individual, I'll tell you right now, something takes place. That individual, first of all, is shocked and that individual is surprised and then that individual is brought unto conviction and, I'll tell you right now, we don't know how long God will keep them under conviction but, I'll tell you right now, that individual will personally hear the voice of the Son of God and that individual will know beyond a shadow of a doubt that God is speaking to him. He doesn't know if he's speaking to anybody else or not but he knows and he knows that he knows it, that God is speaking to him.

Now, this is brought out from Genesis to Revelation because in the Garden of Eden, what happened? God sought Adam and you can read that in the third chapter of the book of Genesis and you'll find out when God sought Adam, what did he do? He said, “Adam, where art thou?” And in the tenth chapter of John we find again, the Lord Jesus said these words, “My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me.” And then also in John 5:25, he says again, “The hour is come and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live.”

Now, let's look at the Lord Jesus Christ for just a few moments. Last time, we saw him as he was being betrayed by Judas. I tried to teach that a little bit about the kiss of death. Tonight, we're going to look again. The Lord Jesus Christ is taking his position as a sinner. Now, listen carefully: nobody ever gets saved without knowing what it means to be a sinner. You can be lost and not know it but you can't be saved and not know it. I've come across people down through the ages or down through the years I've been in the ministry and I've asked them, I said, “Tell me how the Lord saved you.” “Well, I don't know if I am or not.” Well, then it's our business to find out because, you see, salvation is not a “hope so, think so, guess so, wonder so,” or “surmise so.” Salving is a “know so.” And the Apostle Paul wrote it very clearly in 2 Timothy where he said, “I know whom I have believed and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

Let me ask you a question tonight: do you know Christ? Not do you know about him but do you know him? Is he real to you? If he's not the dearest person to you this side of eternity, there is something wrong, my friend. You say, “What are you talking about?” My wife and I have been married for 56 years. She's still my bride. But are you listening? The Lord Jesus Christ is closer to me than she is because he's my absolute, all-sufficient Lord and Savior. As I've said before and I'll say it again: the greatest thing that can

happen to a person if it ever does, is for the Lord Jesus Christ to come and save that individual.

Now, the Lord Jesus Christ paid for our sin. Listen carefully if you will. We'll follow him tonight for a few moments as we at least seen him coming out of the Garden of Gethsemane and we're going to see first of all, the position of the Lord Jesus Christ as the sinner. 1. His position was ordained and planned by God. Always remember one thing: the death of Christ is not a tragedy, it's not a mistake. The death of Christ was foreordained and planned by the Lord God of heaven back yonder in the counsels of eternity. We need to understand that. You say, "Preacher, what are you talking about?" Well, let me turn you, if I may, to Acts 2 for just a moment and beginning at verse 22 down through verse 24. The word of God says very clearly these words,

"22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know."

Listen to these words, "Him," referring to Christ,

"23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: 24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

So, we find here the Lord Jesus Christ takes his position as a sinner, ordained and planned by the determinate counsel of the Lord God of heaven. Now, how come? The same reason that the Lord does this to us. You say, "Preacher, what are you talking about?" The Lord Jesus Christ was here on earth and remember very clearly, he was absolute God and he was also absolute man. As man, he got tired, he got hungry, he even became angry and he also had a sense of humor. A lot of people don't seem to understand that but we find very clearly that he was very man and very God. And being very man on this earth, what do we do? We find very clearly that "he learned obedience by the things that he suffered." You'll find that in the book of Hebrews.

Someone might say, "Wait a minute, he learned obedience by the things that he suffered?" Yes, listen carefully: in the Garden of Gethsemane, he overcame this difficulty and what was it? The difficulty was to surrender to the will of God and to say, "Thy will be done." You and I have that problem even now if we know the Lord Jesus Christ. I'll tell you right now, his will is to be uppermost in our minds but what is the difficulty? It's our difficulty to surrender and say unto the Lord, "Thy will be done," no matter what comes about. So many times we gripe and complain and everything like that but we need to learn one thing: we need to learn obedience unto the Lord God of heaven. I'll tell you right now: for these people that tell you, "Yes, I'm saved," but there's no change in their life or anything life that, something is wrong because "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation, the old man passes away and behold all things become new." In the Garden

of Gethsemane when my Lord took his place as a sinner, he surrendered to the will of God and he said, "Thy will be done."

Now listen carefully: Christ's mind was tested, manifested and perfected as a mind of submission and obedience unto the will of God. Now, that goes on in our life at the same time. I've been in the ministry over 50 years and I'll tell you right now, I still find it difficult for me to completely surrender to the will of God. And if you're honest with yourself and you know the Lord, you have the same problem. You see, here we are, we have this difficulty. Well, the Lord Jesus Christ is our perfect example and as he surrendered to the will of God, so are we to do the same thing.

Then we find also, listen carefully, we see not only did our Lord say, "Thy will be done," but what in the world did Christ face and what did he submit to in our behalf? Let me give you these things if I may. 1. He submitted to death in its organic connection with divine truth. Now, you say, "What in the world are you talking about?" I've said it before and I'll say it again: I have a message that I preached a number of years ago and we find, what is it? In 2 Corinthians 1:9-10 we find these things take place and this is what the Apostle Paul said and how true it is. And this is what takes place in Holy Spirit conviction. In 2 Corinthians 1:9, "we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us."

You've heard the statement more than once and it's true, once we're saved, we are saved when we get converted. We are 1. Saved from the penalty of sin. 2. We're being saved from the power of sin. 3. One of these days we're going to be saved from the very presence of sin. And we find that that's true. Alright, but now I want you to notice: under conviction we learn what? We learn that we are under the sentence of death before God and the Lord Jesus Christ learned the same thing. Not only in the Garden of Gethsemane but also on his route to the cross of Christ. You say, "What are you talking about? Did he face death in its organic connection with divine wrath?" Listen to it, here's the death that he faced: the unmitigated wrath, the anger of the Almighty against sin and the manifestation of his displeasure against everyone that is chargeable. Now, hold your seat: we learn that under conviction. "What are you talking about, Preacher?" We learn 1. that God is holy, we are unholy. God is sinless, we are sinful. We are made to recognize under Holy Spirit conviction that, I'll tell you right now, the Lord God of heaven is angry with us as he's angry with the workers of iniquity and to whom we have today in so many people in our churches. Yes, they're self-righteous but I want to say to us very kindly: if we don't know what it means to be lost, we don't know what it means to be found by Christ and the Lord Jesus Christ is taking his place here before our eyes tonight as a sinner at the judgment bar.

He not only faced death in its organic connection with a divine wrath but then he also did this: he faced also the curse of the law, the hiding of the Father's face, the withdrawal of the light of God's countenance along with the whole weight of God's wrath and indignation. Now, hold your seat as I give you the truth: under Holy Spirit conviction, we face the same thing. You say, "Preacher, what are you talking about?" Alright, listen

carefully: before God deals with us, God's law, we don't have much to do with it. And like the book of Romans in chapter 7, it says, "For I was alive without the law once but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." Under conviction, we find this is what takes place. The law of God becomes God's instrument and we are made to stand before him with a knowledge that we are under God's curse because God says very clearly in Galatians 3:10 and I'll tell you right now, I've had people tell me, "Well, that applies only to the Jew." It doesn't because Galatians is a book that Paul wrote to the church at Galatia and it was composed primarily of Gentiles. That's us. And listen to what it says, "For as many as are under the law are under the curse of the law." And we find in Galatians 3:10, we find very clearly, "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all points of the law to do them."

And the Lord Jesus Christ taking our place, what did he do? He faced death in its organic manner with regard to the wrath of God being completely upon him, then he also faced the curse of the law because cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things of the law to do them. Now, hold your seat, here's the reason: my Lord was hung on a tree. I know people that sat the vast majority of our preachers will teach you this, they say, "Well, the Lord Jesus Christ was hung on a tree because that was the way the Romans crucified people." No, that wasn't it at all. My Lord was hung on a tree because, I'll tell you right now, he's a fulfillment of the brazen serpent that Moses made back yonder in the book of Numbers. And we find that serpent was put on a pole and we find that was a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then, secondly, the book of Deuteronomy says very clearly, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." And the Lord Jesus Christ was put on the cross of Calvary because, I'll tell you right now, he was enduring the curse of the law that at one times was resting upon all of us as sinners but my Lord took it from us and endured it for us.

Oh, I hope and pray you know what I'm talking about because I'll tell you right now, when we get into this we find very clearly there was not only the third thing, we find out not only was it death in its organic connection but then we find also there was the curse of the law and then we see, as I mentioned before, the hiding of God's face, the withdrawal of the light of God's countenance with the whole weight of God's wrath and indignation and I want to say to you very kindly: when you and I are tasting a little bit of the wrath of God, listen now, if God didn't spare us, we die. Under Holy Spirit conviction, we are made to understand just a little bit of that. God opens our hearts and he opens our eyes and we are made to understand that yes, God is angry with us. He's angry with us and the only way we can have fellowship with him is through the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. And when we begin to taste a little of the wrath of God, I'll tell you right now, if God didn't spare us, we'd die and go to hell because we couldn't take it.

But my Lord took it all on my behalf and he took it all on your behalf if you know him tonight and if you don't know him, I hope and pray that he'll deal with your heart until you do know him. You say, "Preacher, what are you talking about?" Well, he was not only facing the curse of the law but then we find also he was facing the whole wrath of God resting upon him. Now, again, this is not popular preaching and I know what I'm

talking about. My wife and I are living in a convalescent home and the last couple of Sundays, I've been bringing my radio down there to turn on the broadcast. You say, "Why are you doing that?" I say, "I'm paying for that broadcast and I want to know what's on." I'll tell you right now, you ought to see some of those people scatter. They just take off. They don't want to hear it. Maybe that's the reason some of you never listen to me. I don't know but it doesn't make any difference. In case you didn't know it, I'm on the radio at 8:00 every Sunday morning, WFUR AM. You tune me in and see for yourself, if you will, what kind of preaching I do.

"What are you talking about?" There are a lot of people that don't like that. The other night, I brought a song down and there were some blind people there and I brought a song down and I turned the volume up a little bit and lo and behold if I didn't get a complaint right away. I had a tape with some blind singers on it and they were singing,

"Some call it heaven, I call it home.
Some call it dreaming, let me dream on."

It goes on like this, you know, and we find very clearly,

"Some call it paradise, somewhere beyond the skies,
Some call it heaven, I call it home."

I don't know about you, but I'm going there and I know I am. I've never seen heaven. I can't describe it to you but I can tell you this: this old sinner is going to go there. Are you going with me? I hope and pray that you are and it's the greatest thing that can take place, isn't it? Some people say, "Well, Preacher, how can you be so happy?" I'll tell you how come I'm so happy: I know the Lord and the Lord knows me. And that's the way it ought to be.

But so many times it's not that way. How come? Because my Lord took my place and we find he took my place yonder in the Garden of Gethsemane and tonight he's standing before Pilate and we find these three things happen: he faced not only death in its organic connection; he faced also the curse of the law; and then he faced also the complete wrath of God. Are you listening now? Listen carefully and oh, may it strike a desire in our heart. Listen now: this is the horrible condition of every individual outside of Christ. I have loved ones that are still unsaved. They face that. You have loved ones that are unsaved. They face that. If they die, they'll die and go to hell. And we find that very clearly and that's why we need to pray and preach and point and persist like never before. Because why? That's the only way we're going to reach people. "I can't lead a soul to Christ. Brother Gary can't lead a soul to Christ. You can't lead a soul to Christ, that's the work of the God the Holy Spirit." Well, we can do these three things: we can preach, point and persist as well as pray. That's four of them. And then we wait on the Lord to do it. Are you listening? God answers prayer.

I haven't told you this story but in 1965, my wife and I were pastoring a church over here on the east side of the state. It was a Baptist church and you say, "What were you doing

here?” “Well, I’m finding more fellowship here than some of the Baptists. If you want to know the answer, that's the reason I’m here.” We were there and this couple came in from Maryland, they lived in Maryland. The name was Beulah Anderson and her husband's name was Francis. They came to us in 1965. She was converted, he wasn't. She asked me in 1965, she said, “Brother Pete, would you pray for Francis?” I said, “Sure.” I said, “We'll put him on our prayer list.” And I have one, it's a long one. I prayed for him and I didn't pray for him as regularly as I should because none of us every do but we find I prayed for him and 35 years later, think of it, '65, 30 years later, 1995, I got a letter from her and she said, “Hallelujah! Praise God! Guess what? Francis got converted at the age of 81.”

I saw him in Panama City or just outside of Panama City when I was holding a meeting and I walked up to him and I said, “Francis, tell me, what happened to you?” He looked at me and he said, “God stepped in and saved me.” He said, “I know him now and I’m going to heaven when I die.” I said, “You couldn't say that before?” He said, “No, and you remember when you met me? I hated you. I couldn't stand you and I couldn't stand what my wife would stand for but I found out very clearly you folks had something that I needed.” And that had been 30 years. God still answers prayer. Do you believe that? Alright then, keep praying and don't stop.

Now, why do I tell you all these things? Because the Lord Jesus Christ took our place as a sinner before the Lord God of heaven. As he stood before Pilate and we see very clearly, we're going to look at him now and we've seen him in his position as a sinner and now we're going to look at the prosecution of Christ as the sinner. I want you to notice: Christ was arrested and accused by the Sanhedrin which is a symbol of the law. Matthew 27:1-2 we find very clearly, “When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death.” Now, hold your seat, the law of God is the same thing. “What are you talking about?” The law demands that you be penalized. I mean, the law has to have a penalty fulfilled.

A number of years ago, I was a bus driver and I got in an accident and a motorcyclist got killed. I was charged, tried, and convicted of negligent homicide right here in the state of Michigan. I was pastoring a church at the time and we find very clearly they didn't try me as a bus driver, they tried me as a preacher and that's nothing unusual because if they can get something on a preacher, boy, let me tell you something, they have a hay day. The newspapers, boy, every week they came out, big headlines, my name across there. My wife saved some of them and hopefully she threw the rest of them away but I was convicted and I stood there before that judge. The jury convicted me and here's the reason they did: he was a preacher, somebody died, if we let him off, they're going to accuse us of favoring him. So, what did they do? They tried me. And I stood there before that judge, stood there that morning. Now, listen carefully, some of you may say, “Preacher, I never heard a thing like this before.” But God actually made me willing to go to jail. I'd even dream about at night. You say, “What do you mean?” I did, I'd dream about it at night. I could dream and in my dream it was as vivid as it could be. I was walking through those prison cells and this is what they were saying, these convicts were saying, “Ah, here comes the preacher. Preacher, preach to us.” And I don't know whether I said

audibly or not but I always said these words, “Yes, I am and if you don't repent you'll all die and got to hell.”

And I stood there before that judge that morning and I'll tell you right now, he was known as a hanging judge. You say, “What are you talking about?” There were three cases before mine and he gave them the absolute penalty and the penalty that I faced was \$2,000 fine and two years in prison. Now, unless you've ever been convicted, you don't know what I'm talking about. But it's like Holy Spirit conviction, an individual that's never been under Holy Spirit conviction doesn't know what we're talking about until they experience it. As I stood there before that judge, I crossed my hands and I put my hands behind me and I stood there at the military parade rest and I'll never forget the words he said, he said, “The purpose of incarceration is for rehabilitation. But,” he said, “this man doesn't need to be rehabilitated.” He said, “It's an unfortunate accident but the law demands a penalty. This is my sentence,” he said, “\$200 court costs, \$200 fine and a three month probation whereby he cannot drive his automobile from 1:00 in the morning until 5:00 in the morning unless it's church business.”

Now, that's my penalty but when that happened, the whole courthouse which was packed out and they just cheered. They cheered. But I'll never forget it because we always recognize one thing: the law demands a penalty. The State of Michigan law demands a penalty. The law of God demands a penalty and the law of God says “the soul that sinneth, it shall die.” And you and I can't save ourselves. You and I can't meet God's demands. We have to have a mediator and how glad I am that the Lord Jesus Christ took my place. Now, what did he do? He stood there in prosecution: he was arrested, accused by the Sanhedrin which is a symbol of the law of God. Now, listen to what he was accused of: he was accused of blasphemy, perverting the nation, forbidding to give tribute as well as setting himself up as king. Are you listening? That's how guilty we are. You and I are many times guilty of perverting the truth. Anybody here never told a lie? Raise your hand. We're all a bunch of liars, aren't we? Yeah, you see. You never told a lie in your life. Alright, anybody here never disobey your parents? Raise you hands. Matt, I know you better than that.

Why did I tell you this? Are you listening? When we break one point of the law, we're guilty of all and every one of us here tonight are guilty of breaking every one of the Ten Commandments but aren't we glad and aren't we thrilled that we don't have to pay for it? My Lord did because, you see, he stood there before the Sanhedrin and before Pilate to be convicted as a criminal. He was arrested, accused by the Sanhedrin, he was accused of blasphemy and then I want you to notice: he never said a word. Do you know why? I'll tell you: these things that they accused him of, they became legally his by imputation. And when my Lord died, he died on the cross as the world's greatest sinner because what was he doing? He was taking our sin. He was enduring our penalty. He was facing the judgment of God and he took every bit of the judgment of God. That's why when he cried out, “It is finished,” I'll tell you right now, it's a victory cry.

But notice carefully if you will, not only was he accused but we find he was silent because these things were true of him and then they also are true of an individual when

under conviction. Then he was arraigned before Pilate and Pilate here is a symbol of our arraignment before God. Pilate had the Lord Jesus Christ brought before him by the Sanhedrin, then the Holy Spirit of God brings a sinner before God. Now, salvation is a traumatic experience. It happens one time in our life and I'll tell you right now, we never get over it. It's the greatest thing that ever takes place but before it takes place, Holy Spirit conviction makes us feel, stand before God trembling and afraid. Condemned, guilty, silent because we cannot say a word, helpless, hopeless, hapless. The only thing we can do is what the Lord Jesus Christ did not do. What was that? We cry for mercy. The Lord Jesus Christ as he stood before Pilate, listen now, we find very clearly, we find he was arraigned before Pilate, a symbol of our arraignment before God and we find very clearly, what took place? We find the individual like Christ, stands silent before God because the law of God convicts us of our sin and every mouth is stopped and the whole world becomes guilty.

Then, the assignment of death. Listen now, it's acknowledged and agreed to by both of us. You say, "Preacher, what in the world are you talking about?" Well, I can give you my personal experience if you will. When I was under Holy Spirit conviction, and you listen now, I was a Baptist preacher right here before I got saved. Now, people don't understand that. They say, "How could you go through that?" The reason that there are people maybe right here in this church tonight or in this church membership. I went through the Catechism just like you did. I know what it was. I went through it and when I left and I went to the military, I had no use for God and I'll tell you right now. That training that I received back yonder when I was a youngster, thank God it never left me. You see, you never know. That's why it's so important for us to do what? Plant the word of God whenever and wherever we can because you never know what God's going to do.

Alright, the Lord Jesus Christ stood before Pilate silent. I stood before the Lord one day silent. Are you listening? This doesn't happen to everybody but I prayed this prayer: "Lord, I'm such a rotten, dirty, good-for-nothing, hell-bound sinner. Send me to hell and be merciful." And I didn't know it but four years later in the book of Job, I found out that Job practically prayed the same thing. Well, I'm glad God didn't send me to hell. Aren't you glad he hasn't sent you to hell? Aren't you glad that you're alive tonight and you have the privilege of serving the Lord? And aren't you glad tonight that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Savior of sinners?

Then we find very clearly, notice carefully, the assignment of death was acknowledged and agreed to by Christ. Christ was delivered by Pilate to death and made no plea. Do you know why? "He was like a sheep brought before the shearers. Dumb." So, "he openeth not his mouth." It was a fulfillment of Isaiah 53. My Lord never uttered a word and I'll tell you why: our sin was laid on him by imputation so that he became legally guilty for it and he took our place. Now, if this is new to you, then you praise the Lord. If you've never heard it before, you just thank God for the truth because it's there.

Then we find what happened. The assignment of death was acknowledged and agreed to and then we find Christ never asked for mercy. You and I do and that's why I like the prayer of the publican, "God, be merciful to me the sinner." The Lord Jesus said, "I tell

you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased and whosoever abases himself shall be exalted.” And I don't know about you but one of these days, I'm going to be exalted to be with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then we find also what happened. We find there was the assignment of death but then also this is what happens with us: there was an acquittal and an acceptance in the beloved. You and I are acquitted. Now, hold your seat and I'll give you this proof. Listen carefully now: if you're saved here tonight, the law of God doesn't have any charge against you. If you're saved here tonight, the justice of God doesn't have any charge against you. If you're saved here tonight, the wrath of God is not upon you. If you're saved here tonight, the holiness of God has no charge against you. Do you know why? Because of my Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. What did he do? He fulfilled the law of God. He fulfilled the wrath of God. He fulfilled the holiness of God. Because the justice and the wrath and the holiness of God cries out for the damnation of a sinner and the mercy and the love of God cry out for the salvation of the sinner. And my Lord, what did he do? He endured all of this and that's why God can be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Christ Jesus.

Oh, what a great salvation we have and what a privilege it is to know him and we find very clearly in what takes place when we get converted there's an acquittal and the acceptance of our beloved and the first thing that takes place is this: conviction is gone. Conviction is gone. I can tell you many stories of individuals that I know personally who have been under conviction and I'll tell you right now, when the Lord saved them, the first thing that took place is this: they said, “Pastor, conviction is gone! And I can't go back under it.” I said, “And you can try all you want to but it's an impossibility.” Because my Lord gives us, what? A complete salvation.

That's why we don't have to speak in tongues. A lot of people today, you know, they want to speak in tongues and everything like that. I say this: when they talk like that, they're not ready to meet the Lord. There's something wrong because Colossians 2:10, “And ye are complete in him.” And that word “complete” in the original language means “to fill up a cup to the very overflowing.” If you've ever done that, you fill a cup to the very overflowing where it can't take another drop, that's how complete we are in our blessed Redeemer.

Do you know what I'm talking about? Are you there tonight? I hope and pray that you are and that's why I say the greatest thing that can happen to a person if it ever does, is for that individual to come to know the Lord Jesus. We've become acquitted and accepted in the beloved because Christ is our substitute, conviction is gone and in its place comes reality and then there's one more thing: appreciation and service become our mode of life. We can't thank the Lord enough because of what he's done for us and we cannot thank him and praise him enough. We find service becomes our way of life.

People don't understand me. I'm 85 years of age. I've got four by-passes, three stents, a pacemaker and they took out three feet of my stomach. Coupled with that, I've got

cancer. Now, people don't understand that. They say, "Well, you look a picture of health." I say, "I feel that way." And I'm busy. I'm busy. If I can't find a place to preach, I'll tell you right now, I'll find one sooner or later and God opens one door after another. Sometimes they close on me like they have. The door is closed for me to go any longer to the Guiding Light Mission. I won't tell you anything about that but that's it. I don't go there anymore but I go to the Soldier's Home and I'll preach there again Wednesday night. Matt, you're there and I hope you get a chance to hear. Anyway, why do I tell you this? Beloved, I cannot thank the Lord enough for what he's done for me and he's called me to the ministry, he's given me a place to preach or given me an opportunity to preach. I've preached on the radio and I've preached on the internet and, beloved, I'll tell you right now, the voice of this old preacher is going around the world and all the glory belongs to God. He's doing it all and one of these days, best yet, one of these days, we'll be caught up together to be with him because he's coming after us and I'll tell you right now, I don't believe it's going to be very long when he does. I'm ready to meet him and I hope you are.

Now, why do I tell you this? Because, listen my friend, as I mentioned before, the individual never gets over of what the Lord Jesus Christ means to him. Then, I like to use this because I'm a military man in one sense of the word, I'm a Chaplain in the Michigan Civil Air Patrol and if you're not familiar with that, well, I'll tell you right now, the Civil Air Patrol is a secular organization but I've been in it for some years and just recently I got another award from them and it makes it one of several that I have. Why do I tell you this? Because our mode of service becomes a way of life and in Titus 2 we read, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lust we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works."

We live in a rest home over there, a convalescent home and I'll be honest with you, when we go to the supper table, it's almost like being in a war. It is because they come in and boy, some people gobble their food down and they're gone. I said, "Well, where is the fellowship that they talked about?" Well, at my table, I have a young man and he's been there for a number of years and he's a little bit off. I have another lady that just recently came in and she recently came out of the home down there in Cutlerville, Pine Rest, she was there for a couple of weeks and bless her heart, she loves to talk and I let her talk. But the other fellow, he's kind of opinionated and, of course, I am too and so we hit it off real well, you know. You know how that goes. But anyway, when I first brought the broadcast down there, boy, I'll tell you, Don is his name, he's usually the last one gone, when I first brought the broadcast down there, boy, he couldn't wait to get up and he took off. Do you know why? They got a religious veneer but I'm afraid a lot of them have missed Christ.

Now, they love my wife. I don't know if they love me or not but I don't worry about that as long as they love my wife, that's enough for me. I'm having a good time there but I'm going to witness down there one way or the other. When we brought the song down there,

“Some Call It Heaven,” first thing you know, the man came up to me and he said, “Mr. Nortier, we like music too but that's too loud. Would you turn it down?” Do you know why? One person complained. Several others came up to me and said, “Don't ever quit doing that.” Well, we're trying to put some life in the place and I'm trying to tell those people and I'm trying to show them very clearly because several of them are older than I am but I'm going to try to show them very clearly.

Even though we're getting up in age that doesn't mean we still can't serve the Lord. You here tonight, you can serve the Lord just as well as I can. I know you're not called to preach but you can pray and I hope you have. You'll pray like never before and I'm hoping when Brother Terry gets back that some time in the spring we can have an all night prayer meeting. How many of you have ever been in an all night prayer meeting? Raise your hand. Nobody. You just don't know what you're missing. I'll tell you right now, if we have an all night prayer meeting, we'll gather from 7 at night until 7 in the morning and we'll be there all night. We'll be awake all night and we'll pray and we'll preach and we'll praise the Lord and I'll tell you right now, you'll come out of there and you'll be thrilled to death as you ever came and then you watch the Lord work.

I don't know about you but I'm concerned that on Sunday night there are so few people from CRC that have come regularly. I'm concerned about that because one of the marks of a church going downhill is when people begin to drift away and they get out into the world. Beloved, let's say this very kindly, what does the Scripture say? “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as a manner of some is but so much the more, exhort one another as you see the day approaching.” Now, these new kind of churches that are coming up, they've left the old time gospel. I went to one of them and I make no bones about it, I said point blank and I walked out. I said, “That whole bunch are going to hell even though they've got a religious veneer.” Because, I'll tell you right now, there is no reality of Christ in that church. There is a reality of Christ in this church or I wouldn't have ever been here. Let's make sure that that reality doesn't die out but it burst into a flame until it'll do what? It'll shake the church from top to bottom, put it on fire like it ought to be and we find very clearly it will affect everything around us because I don't know about you, I could talk to you all night about this, but I've been in an awakening. I've been in an awakening. Sometime I hope I can teach about that a little bit later on.

Let me finish with this: the Lord Jesus Christ took our place as a sinner, he stood before the Sanhedrin which was a picture of the law, they accused him, he never said a word, he stood before Pilate as the governor, a picture of God the Father, he stood there, he didn't ask for any mercy, he was guilty because by imputation he took your sin and my sin and as he stood as a sinner before the judgment bar of God, I'll tell you right now, you and I will not stand before the judgment bar of God unless we fail to get to know him in this life. My hope is that every one of us have received something today that will thrill our hearts and cause us to appreciate our Lord more than ever before.

Let me close. The greatest thing that could happen to you if it ever does is the Lord Jesus to save you. I'll tell you right now, our prayer ought to be, “Lord, have mercy and teach us to be a better servant than ever before.”

Shall we bow in prayer together?

Our Father, tonight thank you again for this time. Forgive us where we fail thee. Help us to appreciate you more and serve you better. O Lord Jesus, thank you, thank you for taking our place, enduring our wrath, enduring our judgment, paying for our sin and redeeming us by thy precious blood that God might be just and that justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. We cannot thank you enough so help us to learn more of thee and to be better servants of thine. We ask you, Lord Jesus, for thy sake. Amen.

Would you take your songbooks and turn to number 353. One of my favorite songs. Do you know what it is? "Victory in Jesus." Let's sing it together, shall we?

"I heard an old, old story,
How a Savior came from glory,
How He gave His life on Calvary
To save a wretch like me;
I heard about His groaning,
Of His precious blood's atoning,
Then I repented of my sins
And won the victory.

"O victory in Jesus,
My Savior, forever.
He sought me and bought me
With His redeeming blood;
He loved me ere I knew Him
And all my love is due Him,
He plunged me to victory,
Beneath the cleansing flood.

"I heard about His healing,
Of His cleansing pow'r revealing.
How He made the lame to walk again
And caused the blind to see;
And then I cried, "Dear Jesus,
Come and heal my broken spirit,"
And somehow Jesus came and bro't
To me the victory.

"I heard about a mansion
He has built for me in glory.
And I heard about the streets of gold
Beyond the crystal sea;
About the angels singing,
And the old redemption story,

And some sweet day I'll sing up there
The song of victory.”

The Lord bless you and the Lord keep his face upon you and the Lord shine upon you with his joy. Dismiss us now with thy blessing and help us to appreciate you more. We ask, Lord, in thy precious name. Amen.