

Forgiveness – The Central Theme of the Whole Bible is the Cross of Jesus Christ

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Bible Text: Isaiah 53
Preached on: Tuesday, August 14, 2007

School of Prayer

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I see we have people from all walks of life here tonight and from all backgrounds of the church. And I am trying to learn in some places I am told and I feel very happy not to have a tie on and not to have a jacket, just to do my top button up. And I see some dear, dear people from all... I used to say from the Mennonite and the Amish and you just look at me in the eyes and say, "We are just washed in the blood Christians."

So I don't know what to call you, but thank you for being here and then I see people with ties. I take it you are Baptists.

I think I am going to take my jacket off and then I will be a half a Baptist and a half a Mennonite tonight. I am not sure how to do this. Forgive me, not knowing what to do, but they have brought a video camera.

Do you know, in my country in many churches if you don't have a jacket on they lose respect for you forever and will never allow you in the pulpit again. That is to them reverence, not show.

So you have got to be so careful where you are, what you do and to be able to win some you become anything for them and I am willing, but God bless you from my heart, every one of you from all your different backgrounds in Christ.

So long as you are washed in the blood and united in Christ, then God smiles at you tonight. I believe that with all my heart.

The central theme, the central theme of the whole Bible, the central theme of the whole Bible is the cross of Jesus Christ. The central theme of the whole Bible is the cross, the cross of Jesus Christ. And the cross of Christ is revealed in no other chapter or passage of the Scriptures as in Isaiah 53. The cross of Christ is revealed in no other chapter or passage of the Scriptures as in Isaiah 53.

"He was wounded for our transgressions," God says.

To understand what God is saying here listen carefully where God through Isaiah cries out, "Who hath believed?"

In this building, who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities... when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.

“He will be satisfied,” God said.

When did God look upon you satisfied with what you brought to him to forgive you of sin? Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to the cross I cling. When did you come with nothing in your hands I bring? Nothing else, but the cross, the blood of Jesus, the sacrifice of Christ, the payment of Christ on the cross. And by grace are ye saved through faith being justified freely through faith in his blood. There is no forgiveness apart from grace as the result of faith in the blood of Jesus. When thou shalt make his soul, his payment for sin, for your sin on the cross, when thou dost come with his death, the payment he made for me for he was wounded for my transgressions. I don't have to be wounded. He was bruised. The chastisement of our peace was upon him. With his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned every one, God says, to his own way. The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

None of us will pay anything for the sins we have committed if God sees we come with Jesus Christ death, with the cross of Christ and the cross alone God will look at.

When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, God said, he will be satisfied. When thou shalt come with nothing else in thy hands. Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to

the cross I cling. God will be satisfied. God will be satisfied. He will in no wise turn away anyone who comes to him through Christ Jesus. But don't come with anything else.

Do you remember how Christ said two men, two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a publican? Now you must know the difference between these two men. The Pharisee was a religious man, born in religion, raised in religion. He believed the religion of God that God ordained. He was so sold out that he dressed religiously. He was unashamedly religious. By the way dressed you could see him coming down the street that that man was totally sold out to his religion. He was unashamed that the world would see by the way he dressed that he was deeply, devoutly religious. But did that save him? Did religion save him? Being sold out unashamedly even by the way he dressed, did that have anything to do with his salvation? No.

Here he comes to the temple to pray and the one a Pharisee, the other a publican. The Pharisee was exactly the opposite to the publican. A publican is despised by religious people. He is irreligious. He is not a man who frequents church. He is not a man who frequents the house of God. He is despised by the very profession. He is known. He couldn't be religious. He isn't God fearing.

But now he are two men, the religious, dressed religiously, sold out in religion. He comes to pray. The other, an irreligious man comes to pray. Look at what happens. Look who God forgives. Look who God forgives, the one a Pharisee, the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are. I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust adulterers or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week. I give tithes of all that I posses."

And the publican standing afar off would lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven but smote upon his breast saying, "God, be merciful. God, be merciful to me a sinner."

I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. Jesus said. Why?

You see, this man came as a sinner to be saved, to be forgiven. This man couldn't put himself into the category of a sinner. How can you be saved unless you know you are lost? How can you genuinely cry to God for mercy and seek God in God's ordained way unless you put yourself into the category of a sinner? You know what God says concerning religious who can't be saved because they cannot see themselves as other men are, as other men who come to the house of God weeping, begging God for mercy and he stands there reasoning in his heart why he doesn't have to do this, why he doesn't have to ever come to the house of God and do what another man will come, forgetting other people, just crying to God to be justified, for forgiveness. This man, he begins to reason and he thanks God that he is not as other men are. I don't have to be like this.

There is a reason why he never has to be put into the category of a sinner seeking God in the house. “I fast. I tithe. I am not as other men are.”

He names the sin other men do and not like this publican. He wasn't just speaking words. He was reasoning with God.

Why? Do you know what God says? Horrible words, “All your righteousness is as filth.”

Can God use a word like that about religion? “Filthy rags in my sight. All your righteousnesses as filthy rages in my sight, if it keeps you from salvation, if it keeps you from seeking me as a sinner to be saved, crying for mercy in a way I can have mercy that keeps you from looking to me for forgiveness in the way I can look upon your cry.”

If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves. The truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. That isn't coming again and again, “Forgive me, forgive me.” That is to acknowledge I am a sinner in need of forgiveness and mercy. One encounter with God in such a way in desperation, “God, be merciful to me, the sinner, the one who needs grace in this building, not the one who stands saying, ‘I don't need grace and this is why I don't need grace, this is why I don't need to come knowing I am condemned because I am not condemned in his eyes.’”

If we confess in such a way our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar. His word is not in us.

If you can't put yourself into the category of a sinner, you are calling God a liar for God has said all have sinned. There is none righteous, no, not one, not the Pharisee, Nicodemus. How is it you can't understand and a teacher, how that you can't get the cross, even you can't get to heaven unless you are born again, unless you come to God in repentance and cry to God for mercy without nothing else in your hand but the blood of Jesus?

Do you know what your great sin is? Do you know what your greatest sin if religion keeps you from salvation? If goodness, good works, what you haven't done, what you have done, how you have been brought up, how you have behaved yourself, if that keeps you from seeking God in desperation knowing that others deserve damnation but not you, your great sin is that you can't put yourself into the category of someone who nailed Jesus to the cross with the murder because you are going to the same damnation the murder is going to though you never committed murder. You are going to the same damnation as an adulterer, so in your cleanness of life.

I wonder how many religious people—and God must grieve over this with a grief you and I couldn't imagine—I wonder how many religious millions as they sink into hell cry out, “God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are.” But they are as other men are. They

need to be saved from religion and good works like the sinner needs to be saved from evil works.

But no man can be saved who cannot see himself as lost. That is your great sin, that you cannot realize that there is nothing God will look at in your life like Jesus Christ's blood. And the moment you do that, that is the first thing you have ever done in your life that God could consider you becoming his child, consider you being forgiven. We put big sins and small sins, you know. The murders must go to hell, but do you know in Revelation when it speaks of all the people who will go to damnation, the murders, the whore mongers, those who identify with evil spirits and witchcraft and Satanism in its context, you know right there another sin is all liars. All liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.

You lied. Do you think that is a small sin? No. And, God, why is that sin? That is as evil as... it is sin.

This is echoing for some reason, brother.

When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin he shall see his seed Jesus. He shall prolong his days and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, not of your soul, not what you did, what Jesus did, what he allowed him to go through, what God went through for you. And he will be satisfied, but nothing else you have ever done or haven't done will keep you from eternal damnation.

When will you come with nothing but the blood of Jesus? For only then God will save your soul. Only then, oh, the central theme of the whole Bible is the cross of Jesus Christ. The central theme of the whole Bible is the cross of Jesus Christ.

As you page through this book from cover to cover you will find that there is the message of the cross for the lost. You will find page upon page upon page as you go through sacrifices and offerings and everything just pointing to the cross. Everything as you go through this book from page to page. In the Old Testament it is pointing to the cross. It is this the message of the cross. As you go to the New Testament as everything is fulfilling what the Old Testament was pointing to, as you go through this book you will find there is the message that the cross for the lost, but be careful now. Beloved, there is also the example of the cross for the saved. There is the message of the saved for the lost page upon page upon page. You will just somehow find. This is what God...

But parallel to that page upon page upon page, Old Testament and New, you will not only find the message of the cross to the lost, you will find the example of the cross for the saved.

He was oppressed. And he was afflicted. Yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, it saith he openeth not his mouth.

Jesus said these staggering words. “Take up the cross and follow me.”

Have you?

Take up the cross.

What does God mean when he says to all who would follow him, all disciples through the ages to you and I, “Take up the cross and follow me”?

Philippians one verse 29. “For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.” Unto you it is given on the behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.

When Jesus said, “Take up the cross and follow me,” when Jesus said, “Take up the cross and follow me,” he meant far more, far more than to expect a life of difficulties or persecution if you follow me. When Jesus said, “Take up the cross and follow me,” he meant far more than to expect a life of persecutions and of sufferings or difficulties. I can take you religious across the world. I can take you to multitudes of people who do not follow Christ, but who follow other religious who would testify of persecution for their faith, of suffering, of being wrongly treated for their faith. But when Jesus said to us, “Take up the cross and follow me,” he meant far more than expect a life of persecution if you follow him. He meant, “Follow my example as they nailed me to the cross.”

Have you?

Child of God, have you ever taken up the cross and follow him? He meant, “Follow my example as they nailed me to the cross.”

1 Peter two verse 19, “For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously”

Have you followed the example? Have you followed the example of the cross, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps? Have you? Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth who when he was reviled... Have you done what he did, sir? Have you taken up the cross and followed Christ once in your life since you have been saved?

Do you know if you take the message of the cross for the lost, you lose the right to preach the message of the cross for the lost? If you do not have the ability to live the example of

the cross for the saved you have no right to preach the message of the cross to the lost unless you have taken up and you live by grace the example of the cross for the saved.

Matthew 18 verse 21. “Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.”

In Mathew seven verse one Jesus warned, “Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.”

In James, James wrote in chapter two verse 12, “So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy.”

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy,” Christ taught in Matthew chapter five verse seven.

And in chapter six verse 12 he taught us to pray, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”

And went on to say in verse 14, “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Do you believe these words? Forgive to be forgiven. Forgive to be forgiven. I don't know what point doctrinally to speak of here. But I am not going to lose the right to preach what Jesus says for fear of trampling on people's toes who say Christians must be

forgiven. Jesus said you won't be forgiven. Was he speaking to the unsaved? No. Your heavenly Father will not forgive you if you don't forgive your brother. Every one from the heart. So likewise so my heavenly Father do also to you.

We don't hear this preached in the pulpit for fear of trampling on men's doctrine, you know. I don't place myself in any doctrinal camp. Do you know why? People don't like me to say that, but I don't want to lose the right to preach every word in this book. And I am going to tell you loud and clear here, Jesus said these words. Do you believe he meant them? Forgive to be forgiven.

I was here in America last year and did a tour and I came to a home where there was a godly man, a godly woman and they had a large family. Oh, lots of children. And I was early in the morning having breakfast with them to have fellowship with this family, to get to know them. It was all arranged that I come. They said, "Have fellowship with this whole family."

And it is my custom in a home to ask each member of the home, no matter how godly the home: When were you saved? When were you saved?

I came to the one child and heard one lovely testimony after the other. Eventually we left all the ladies and the girls in the kitchen washing all the dishes and went to the lounge, all the men, the young boys. There was one young boy sitting there that I hadn't asked about his salvation and I turned to him and said, "And when were you saved? When did you come to God for him to forgive your sins that you knew that the Holy Spirit bore witness of your spirit that you are saved?"

And suddenly I saw this little boy's eyes get big. And the little lips were quivering and he looked fearful and I said, "Wait. Don't. You don't have to tell me when you were saved if it embarrasses you or is hard for you. I know you are saved in this God fearing home. I am sure you are saved. You don't sit there worrying now. I didn't mean to upset you asking you."

But, you know, his father came and sat next to me and his father looked at him and I noticed that everyone in the kitchen stopped working and came and sat down and looked at this young fellow. And his father said, "Maybe you ought to tell when you were saved. Maybe you ought to share how God saved you."

And he looked up at his father and then he looked at me with wide eyes and he was finding it hard to speak, but he said, "Sir, this is not my real father. My real father is dead. And when my real father died I was glad. I was happy when my real father lay dead. He was so evil, the way he beat my mother and beat us. When my father lay dead I was happy. He was so evil. But then my mother died of a broken heart. He had so broken here. And suddenly all of us children were split apart, never to see each other again. Only my sister and I were together.

“And so we were sent to my grandmother, my father’s mother far across the country. And my grandmother was as evil as my father. She didn’t want us. We knew that the moment we arrived there. Granny hated us. She beat us. The first day she beat us and beat us and beat us and screamed and pushed me out the door and shut the door. I slept in the dark the whole night. She didn’t feed me. The next day no food, the next day...

“And so I went into the town and started opening the dirt boxes and started to eat. Eventually the police took me, found me, took me back to my granny and when they had gone my granny began to beat me again screaming. And she beat me and beat me until I thought I was going to die. I thought she wouldn’t stop until I was dead. I thought I would die that night. And then she pushed me out the door as I was whimpering in pain and locked the door and no food and left me in the dark again.

“And so I ran away. I left all together, went on the streets of this town, as one town and just lived out of the dirt boxes of the restaurants with all the street children until the police found me and took me to an orphanage with all the other children. And there in the orphanage soon some lady and man came who wanted to be foster parents to me and took me away as foster parents. But they didn’t want me for love. They were wicked evil people. They wanted me for something else and I was so hurting and so fearful and so hating everything that moved and when it was found out what these people were and how bad they were they rescued me and took me back to the orphanage and now I am back now in the orphanage.

“And another foster parents came and I was scared when I went to them, but they were worse, worse than the first foster parents. They were so evil.

“And when I finally was rescued again, when it all came out and taken back, then this man and this lady came to the orphanage and when they wanted to take me I screamed, ‘No, please don’t let me go with them.’

“I was so scared of everything that moved because everything that moved was evil in my eyes. Nothing loved me, only hurt me.”

Tears were pouring down this boy’s eyes as he told me.

“But they took me and it was months and months of me staying away from everyone in this home, scared that they would come near me, scared, not believing anything had love until one day my heart began to accept that these people are different and I watched the love in their eyes for their own children and I watched the love in this home. And eventually I lost all the fear towards them and became drawn to them and I came to love them and I loved them. And I drew near to them and trusted them and my daddy would tell us about Jesus, preach to us every night from the Bible as a family, take us to church.

“And one night I said to my daddy, this is my real daddy now, sir. I said, ‘I want to become a Christian like you.’

“And my father helped me to get on my knees and ask Jesus Christ to save my soul, to forgive all my sins that I go to heaven and to come into my heart and to make me his child. But that night God said something to me that my father didn’t say. As I was on my knees, God said, ‘I want you to forgive your granny.’

“Sir, all I had lived for for years I was living for nothing else but to grow up so I could go and find her and kill her. All I wanted to do in life was just to be old enough to find her and kill her for throwing away her responsibility that I suffered so much. I lived to kill my grandmother. I had nothing else to live for.

“But now on my knees God says, ‘I want you to get rid of all this hatred, all this murder in your heart. I wan you to forgive her as wicked as she was.’

“And I fought with God. I said, ‘No.’

“And after a long time fighting it really with God I came to my father and told him what God was saying in my heart. He prayed for me and talked to me.

“One night as I was on my knees I said, ‘God, I cannot forgive. I cannot forgive, but I want to forgive. Give me the grace that I don’t have, God. I cannot forgive in my own self, but if thou dost help me. God, give me the grace I don’t have to forgive. I want to forgive.’

“And suddenly, suddenly a peace came on my heart, sir, a peace that passes all understanding. It was like a wave of divine love just swept through me and I knew that I was right with God. And only then did I know for sure that I have the smile of God on my life, that I was walking with God, that I was right with God. And from then onward I have known that God has saved my soul.

“And I am living now for my father to say to me, ‘Now, you are old enough for me to take you to your granny.’ Because I all I want now is to go to her to tell her I have forgiven her and to tell her that I love her and to tell her that I don’t want her to be judged by God. I want her to find forgiveness so she doesn’t go to judgment or hell. I want her to be saved and I want to live, now, sir, for the day my father said I am old enough that he will take me to my granny. I want to tell her that God can forgive her like he has forgiven me.”

Tell me something. If that child could find the grace from God to forgive that woman, what is it that you can’t forgive, sir in this world of others? Tell God what it is, the reason you can’t forgive people who have harmed you. If that boy could forgive, by God’s grace because he allowed and wanted grace he didn’t have and God gives, when... when does God expect us to forgive those who hate us and wrong us? When does God expect us to forgive those who hate us and wrong us?

Beloved, they were not standing there crying out, “Forgive us for the wrong we are doing to you,” when Jesus cried out from his heart, “Father, forgive them for they know not

what they do.” Jesus forgave while they crucified him. He forgave them while they crucified them. He left us an example on the cross that is staggering. Can you? Can you, child of God? You only have one chance to forgive as Christ forgave, while you are being wronged. Then comes the second chance, the second opportunity, the second best in Christianity, to take up the cross and follow Christ.

Later, after you have revealed anger and bitterness and self pity and resentment.

You know, I can tell you how crucified a man is with Christ by how he forgives those who wrong him. Do you think you have the right to say the words, “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me”? Do you know, preachers, most of this book we have no right to preach unless it is written across our lives by the Holy Ghost? You have no right to quote such a Scripture unless it is written by God across your life. “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me,” through me in its context.

Christ forgives through us. He gives us the grace to forgive. And the ability you have to forgive evils as they are done to you, reveals how much Christ is in control of your life. He gave grace to that boy when that boy wanted grace.

Do you want to take up the cross and follow Christ?

“Agree with thine adversary quickly whilst thou art in the way with him.”

What does that mean? Forgive your adversary while you are with him. Reveal Christ to him while you are with him. Let Christ reveal himself. Why? Oh, so that judgment doesn't come on you for not forgiving. You read the verses that follow. They are horrifying.

Jesus calls out to us, “Forgive your enemy while you are with him.”

Why does God say that? He doesn't want to just prove the point that you can forgive those who wrong you. He wants to win them. He wants to win. He died for them as much as he died for you. He loves them as much as he loves you. He wants to win them.

Listen to what he says a few verses later. He says, “Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.”

Tell me. Have you ever done that? Have you ever turned the other cheek right then, right then, while people are wronging you, not a year later after you have hated them and undermined them and kept a distance from them? And don't reveal Christ.

When do you take up the cross and follow Christ? While you are being wronged.

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies.”

Do you? When they change or while they are wrong to you?

Listen. I said to you, “Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you. And pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?”

Tell me, sir, if you can only reveal love to those who are perfect in your eyes, what have you got more than anybody out there? I can tell you how real you are, sir, with God, by how you reveal Christ to the ugly, to those who wrong you, while they are wronging you.

“Take up the cross and follow me. Take up the cross and follow me. Follow my example as they nailed me to the cross.”

You think of that young boy.

I was just a preacher, a young preacher. And he turned to me and said, “When I was a boy, my father died and my mother swiftly married another man six months later. She couldn’t survive alone. And this man was so evil. He abused us as children. I won’t go into the details for fear of these children here. But,” he said, “Sir, I couldn’t defend myself what he did to me, this man, and what he did to my sisters. I stood there hating as he just threw me aside as I tried to stop him. Mommy wouldn’t listen to us. Mommy wouldn’t believe us.

“And years went by, sir. But, oh, the hurt and the hatred and the bitterness in my heart because I was too small to stop it. And what he did to me and what he was doing to my sisters as I stood looking.

There are wicked people in this world, let me tell you.

“And then when it was finally found out his mother got rid of him, the police barred him and banned him from coming anywhere near the town, let alone near the home.

“And then God one day saved my soul.”

And this young preacher told me, “God saved my soul. And on my knees God said to me, ‘I want you to forgive that wicked man all his hatred and murder in your heart, all you have lived for is the day you can grow up and murder him.’”

“It is just like that little boy all over again. You just had this bitter. I want you to get rid of it. You can’t walk with me harboring all of this hatred, all of this bitterness, all of this murder. I will avenge him. But I want you to forgive him, that you don’t have to walk through life crippled with hatred and bitterness and [?]. You must forgive him.

“And, you know, I grappled for months and months. I grappled. I wept. I groaned. I said, ‘How can I forgive what he did to my sisters. Look at them. Look at them mentally, what is left of them.’

“But one day God so cried out to my heart. He said that I said, ‘God, I cannot forgive him, but I want to. Give me the grace to forgive, God, so that I don’t have to have all this hatred in my heart for the rest of my life. Please give me the grace I don’t have.’”

He prayed what that little boy prayed. And, you know, as he prayed those words suddenly God came and he said almost word perfect what that little child said. It was like suddenly peace that passes all understanding like a wave of divine love just flowed over him and he was lifted for the first time after all those months of being saved into worship for he knew his life pleased God.

I was in a home many years ago, 30 something years ago, when I was a young preacher. And this woman in that home struck me. She was probably the most godly woman in the whole town. She had young teenage girls when I was a young preacher.

What I really noticed about this lovely soul is she couldn’t say an unkind word about anyone. Have you met a Christian like that? She sat agonizing if something was being said wrong about someone even if it was true. She tried to find something good to say about somebody. And if she couldn’t say anything good to defend anyone, she sat there in agony that someone was being pulled apart, even if it was true, she felt like there was nothing in her ability to be angered in anybody’s wrong.

Now that, you might think, is going too far. But listen. The fragrance of her life struck my heart, the gentleness. Years went by. Last year I went back to that town. Years and years had gone by, 30 years.

Her children were no women with their own children, all teenagers grown up. Those girls are now married and that lady came down from the farm up. Her son brought her for a meal while I was preaching in the town on a Sunday and she sat at the table and I looked at this woman and at the godliness of her life. It came back like a vengeance to me, of the impact, the fragrance, the she had been... that in the whole town no one had left the marked impression on me those years... and I as I sat there we were talking the same fragrance, only more was just there, the gentleness, the tenderness, the inability to have anger and hatred no matter what was being said. She just had kindness to say. Otherwise she said nothing.

And when she left I looked at her daughter and I said, “You know, your mother is so godly. I don’t think she is capable of saying an unkind word about anyone.”

And her daughter looked at me and the tears came down her face. And she stood up and said, “Keith, you don’t know the half.” She said, “You know, Keith, my father was not a good man. My mother was saved, but my father was not saved. My father was a monster. He was so evil that one day when he walked out the door, my sister and I screamed at my mother and begged her weeping, quickly, let’s run. This isn’t what God wants of you, mommy. This isn’t Christianity. God doesn’t expect you to face this all your life. God doesn’t want this. Mommy, let’s get away from him. He is evil. You can’t live the rest of your live like this with this man. Let’s get out.’ And we begged her weeping.

“And my mother stood there, tears coming down her face as she looked at us and she said, ‘No, no, no. When I said to God, “Till death us do part,” I meant it. For better or worse I meant it. I didn’t stand there lying. I meant it. And, my girl, your father is not a psychopath. If he was a psychopath and our lives were in danger I would run. I would say to any woman if her life and her children’s lives were in danger I would take them by the hand and run with them. But your father is not a psychopath. He is just unsaved. He is just a sinner and I am going to bring him to Christ, girls. I am going to bring him to Christ. I am not leaving him.’

“But then she said these words to us, Keith. My mother looked at us and said, ‘Listen, girls. One day when I stand before God I will never have to give account to God for anything your father did or said. I will never have to give account for anything your father said or anything he did against me. Your father will have to give account to God, but I won’t have to give account to God for anything your father said or did. But, but I will have to give account for how I reacted. Don’t doubt that. I will have to give account to God for what I said and how I reacted to your father’s wrong. And I don’t want to give account to God for anything I said or did to your father no matter what he did to me. I don’t want to have to give account to God for one word I ever said no matter what your father did.’”

Do you know what that lady said?

“Keith, we are married to Christian men. And they are not perfect. They sometimes fail and they sometimes fail badly, but before we saw a word, our consciences remind us of our mother. In 53 years, Keith, she never failed once toward her husband. She never failed once and he came to Christ in the end. And before we react we remember the grace our mother had. We remember the words she said to us and the example she was to us that by grace you can, you can forgive and forgive and forgive Peter and forgive Peter, not seven times, Peter, on and on and on.”

By God’s grace you can reveal Christ. You can reveal Christ.

I have been in many, many thousands of homes in the last 30 years preaching, many, many thousands of homes of Christians. And there are very few Christian homes I have ever been in where I didn’t become conscious that the husbands need to forgive their wives. I say it is to shame. It is shameful. I have been in minister’s homes in the

hundreds where I didn't become conscious within moments of the minister, let alone a normal Christian, is bitter against his wife.

You can't hide it, you know. And God says, "Husbands, this can happen, but I don't want you to allow it. Be not bitter against your wives."

Do you know what God says about a man who doesn't love his wife? He hates himself. He does not serve God. He is not a psychiatrist. God knows man so through and through that man doesn't know where his thoughts are before God sees where they are coming from.

If God says you hate yourself, I guarantee you, if you don't love your wife, you hate your own body. You hate yourself. God knows you literally live in self hatred if you don't love the one thing that must be won if you are right with God is your wife.

I can tell you how holy a man is by the way he speaks to his wife, full stop. I haven't to go a moment further to inquire about his life. Don't get bitter. Forgive. She is a weaker vessel. God says. Why does he say that to a husband? She is weaker than you. I want you, therefore, not to become bitter. Why does God say that?

Oh, beloved, listen. Listen, husbands. She bore your children. Do you know what that cost a woman's body? She raised them she washed their clothes. She made their food. She made their beds. She raised them for you and not only them, she had your clothes washed. She made your food. She kept your home what it is. Do you think you were the only one tired at the end of the day? Do you know what went out of her body and she is weaker than you, sir. She is not a little bit weaker of you. God made her so much weaker than you, that you have to forgive her. You have to forgive, because God asks you and tells you, "Forgive."

How many husbands need to forgive their wives so they can get right with God? Forgive to be forgiven. And it starts in the home, sir, not with the enemies out there. How many wives are bitter against their husbands?

I could shock you by taking you to some of the names that are almost household names in the world where I have been in homes where husbands and wives are living together as good as separated in the home. When it finally comes out, you know, they open their hearts and he wife... there is a bitterness. They cannot forgive this man for the way he failed.

But he is saved. He is saved. God forgives her, but she can't forgive the man that God says be in subjection to.

You know, there is nothing as ugly as a dear soul that isn't in subjection out of love to God and to man and forgives him, and forgives him, not seven times.

She just forgives and still in subjection for the love of Christ and for Christ's smile out of love and love comes with forgiveness.

Do you know what it is like for a man to go out in this world and be the breadwinner? In case you think he failed for no reason. Do you know what it is like to survive in the world today for most Christian husbands who go out there to keep you alive and to keep you with a roof over your head and to keep you living with any comforts? Do you know what is left of him by the time he comes home?

And on top of that do you know what it is like for a man with a moral decadence to have the burden as the head of the home, the fears of what will happen to the children as a wave, the tide of modern decadence defiles children from 10 years old upwards, that there is very left that aren't totally defiled through and through.

And he wants this home to be like a fortress and he can't do it. He is trying. Do you know what burden he carries in his prayers and his responsibilities and all that it is to keep the home going?

And, oh, yes, the devil wears out even husbands. And they might be worn out when sometimes they are irritable, when they aren't Christ like, when they fail you.

Wives, can't you forgive him? Just look a bit past that he could be perfect in a perfect climate. He is not in heaven yet. Forgive. Forgive him. How many fathers need to forgive children?

You wanted to have the testimony of Christ on your home. All you wanted was the glory of God in your home. You have brought them up on your knees, praying them through, feeding them the Bible and suddenly one child wants the devil, one son wants and chooses to go out in the world and serve Satan with all his heart. And, oh, the hurt in the father's heart. He is right in his heart, oh, the shame that came on the home, the testimony of Christ crumbling in the home, the bitterness, the sorrows, the grief and the testimony lies in ruins of the home that could have just glorified God [?].

And, oh, fathers, you need to forgive. You are bitter against that child. You are angry and all the grief he brought in the home. So you are brought up to follow Christ and all the shame.

How many fathers need to remember the father heart of God? Look at what their prodigal did.

How many of you need to ask God for the father heart that was shown to you the moment you turned? There was no judgment. The moment you turned he knew there was just one thing, forgiveness. Does your son know that or do you make it impossible for him to come to God because he doesn't see a father heart of God in his own father? The father's forgiveness, do you just judge him? You can't forgive him. You are bitter again.

Oh, how many fathers need to forgive their children and to show them that no matter what they have done there is this forgiveness waiting, longing for them to come back.

Maybe that is why they can't come back. They have no forgiveness of their own father, how can they look past you to God?

How many children are bitter against their parents? You know, we live in a world today where if you go out in the unsaved homes you won't believe what is left of homes. The bulk of the unsaved homes there is this hatred against their parents. The whole world cries out: Rebel against authority. All the music, all the films, everything is just a crying out: Rebel against authority, beginning in the home.

And the fruit of that being sown and sown in the unsaved, unrestricted, unrestrained homes, suddenly you find there are a few homes that children don't hate and bitter against.

But, you know, the tragedy of the day has spilled over to the church. How many Christian's homes, Christian boys and girls can't forgive their own fathers and mothers for some personal failure in his life, for some misjudgment in you, in his childhood?

Oh, he gave you a roof over your head. He worked like a slave to keep you clothed and to educate you. Maybe he failed, but if he has got God in him, he is more sorry for his failures than you. Even if he hasn't called out for forgiveness in his meekness and his weariness, sometimes he wasn't everything he should be. But you, child, if you are a Christian, forgive your father. Forgive your mother. Forgive to be forgiven, God said, even to you children. Don't hold bitterness against him.

How many in laws? Oh, we used to joke about in laws. You know, I don't joke any more. It is such a tragedy what in laws have become in this world and in the church especially. I can't believe what is going on home upon home. Your in laws interfered, oh, your marriage could have survived if they had just left you. It was their interference all the time. All the time interfering. You couldn't work things out and your marriage lies in ruins. And you are a Christian, young man. You need to forgive those in laws and not be bitter and full of the hatred and hurt that is in you. You need to forgive them.

If you look them in the eye and let them know you utterly forgive them, for God requires that of you that you don't have this bitterness of hatred towards your in laws.

How many in laws need to forgive the boys, the young fellows you think [?] cheat, [?] and all the pettiness in your heart, the hatred, the venom in your heart towards them through your eyes. Why didn't you forgive him if you are a Christian?

I mean forgive them in a way that he... he can forgive himself, that he knows you are giving him another chance, you are trusting him no matter what failures.

How many preachers need to forgive, to forgive their congregations? How many preachers are full of bitterness against each other's preachers in a denomination?

Do you know who crucified Jesus Christ, brethren?

It wasn't the Romans. It wasn't the Jews. It was the religious leaders.

Do you know why they crucified Jesus? When they stand before God one day they won't be able to say it was because he blasphemed. Oh, long before they found his [?] against God that they found an excuse to crucify him. Before any fault, they couldn't find any fault. Long before that the hatred of hanging on every word, looking for something to kill him.

Do you know why? Jealousy. You know how much jealousy is amongst the preachers? They were jealous. That as their sin, that he drew the crowds.

Let some preacher be used of God and watch what other preachers do to him. The Pharisees are alive and well on planet earth today. You can't believe what men have done to me. I still can't believe it. I have looked in amazement and as I have got on my knees weeping and said, "Why, God, why would preachers...?"

And God eventually said to me, "They are jealous, jealous."

Do you know I used to pray when any preachers and oh how they tried things you couldn't believe to destroy me, to wipe me out, to simply bar me from pulpits in the land. I used to pray, "God, stop them. This is unjust, Lord. It is not true. They are going to close doors, Lord."

But, you know, I don't pray that anymore. In the school of God, God takes you a bit higher in level and whatever they do now I just say to the Lord very different things. I say, "Lord, this must be needed. Otherwise I would not allow it. This must be needed, God. I must be that others want to put me in the dust. So, Lord, just have thy way. I don't hurry thee. Whatever it is that thou art doing, God, just do it if it is needed for me to be trusted for the pulpit. And, Lord, help me to be Christ like. Help me to be Christ like to these people, to reveal Christ, God."

Do you know what the great tragedy of Christianity is, beloved? Have you ever thought what the great tragedy of Christianity is?

It may shock you. The great tragedy of Christianity is that if you won't forgive, if you can't forgive and you won't forgive, you lose the tender walk with God you could have known. The Holy Spirit is so sensitive and don't doubt this. He withdraws from the tenderness he would have had with your life the moment you don't forgive and won't forgive.

The Holy Spirit withdraws from the walk you could have known with God, the relationship, the walk with God you could have known.

You pay a greater price than the person are not forgiving. Do you think they are paying a great price for your not forgiving them? You are pay a greater price. You lose the walk you could have known with God.

And that is a price to pay.

And you can't forgive. If you can't forgive, it affects you. It affects your spirit to walk. It destroys your spiritual walk with God if you can't forgive, it just destroys you. It affects you mentally. You begin to think irrationally. I have watched Christians who are just not rational the way they are thinking. It is just the twisted thing that comes of your whole personality in spite of the Holy Ghost being in your heart. Everything comes out wrong. If you can't forgive you don't only destroy your spiritual walk you destroy your mental health, you destroy your health in the end.

How many Christians have lost their health harboring anger and resentment and bitterness all the time and there is no peace? God's peace is gone. There is no communion with God. Oh, the price you pay if you don't forgive to be forgiven and know the smile of God and the tenderness of God and the consciousness of your life pleases God is that voided? Is that young preacher... is that godly woman who for 53 years didn't fail did? That her children are scared how they react to their husbands because they know God can give grace.

Forgive to be forgiven. Forgive to be forgiven.

I wonder if I could shock you all here tonight. I wonder if I could shock every one of you to your hearts. You have heard so many appeals, haven't you, to be saved to this and to that.

I am going to ask you, those of you sitting here tonight who need to ask God for forgiveness for not forgiving that this sin I your life that has probably caused God more grief than the sin those people who have made you angry is in God's eyes. In his eyes it has probably caused him far more grief.

Forgive me, God, for not forgiving. Forgive me. I need the blood of Christ for being so long to come to a place where I know in my heart that just to have the smile of God and the grief I must have caused that didn't concern me. Oh, God, forgive me that I have not taken up the cross to follow thee, to follow thy example as they nailed thee to the cross. I thought I had the right to present the gospel, the message of the cross to my children while I didn't live the example of the cross. No wonder they don't follow thee properly.

Oh, God, I need forgiveness because I couldn't forgive for all this time. I have been so long in forgiving. Forgive me for this terrible sin. And, God, give me the grace. Give me the grace, Father, tonight, that I don't have to utterly forgive. Do a work of the Holy

Ghost in my heart and with the blood of Christ and will forgive through me. God, I want to forgive. I want to love my enemies, not hate them. I want to bless them that curse me, to do good to them that hate me, to pray for them which despitefully use me and persecute me.

Oh, God, give me the grace I don't have.

I want to ask every single person sitting here and this will cost you to admit it even if you are a preacher. I want every one of you if you are a boy or a girl, a father, a wife, a husband. I want every one of you that stands in God's sight tonight and needs desperately to say to God, "Oh, God, forgive me for being so long in forgiving and the grief it must have caused thee. Forgive me for this sin, God. By the blood of Christ cleanse me and, God, give me the grace tonight to forgive that I will utterly forgive and begin to love my wife and begin to love my father and begin to love my husband and subject myself to him, begin to love my enemy, to do good to them. Oh, God, give me the grace to forgive. Forgive through me. I would take up the cross and reveal Christ to them, not myself. Forgive through me, God."

I want those who need to say that to God to stand right now and say, "God, I come and I ask thee to forgive me for being so long in forgiving and I ask thee for grace to forgive, to utterly forgive, grace I don't have so that I can love that thou canst love through me, God."

Oh, I know it is costing you to stand. But imagine what it is going to cost you if you are too proud to admit that this is your case and you go on turning away from what God should have done if you had just opened your heart and admitted it to God. Come all of you standing, will you come and stand here in the front here please? Just make your way. Let's make something sacred of this.

I know what it costs you, but God will love you. And the devil will tremble because of the walk you have found with God that you haven't known and the Christ likeness you will reveal if this will be your lot to the day you die that you determine by grace to take up the cross and follow Christ.

Well, all your life...

Come. Let's all bow our heads. Can everyone in the congregation stand please? And I want you out there not to judge these standing here. You have no right to judge. God alone judges. All you have the right is to respect those here who seek God. And I want all of you out there to say, "Amen," to this prayer.

I wanted everyone in the front here please could just pray these words after me. I know that God does not look at the words that proceed out of the mouth. He looketh at the heart from whence they come, that if you in spite of them being my words leading you can just say, "God, these are my words," God has an holy obligation to himself and his promises and his integrity to not turn his face away from you, but to answer this prayer fully and

don't dare believe he won't. He wants this more than you. So pray as best as you can from your heart now. And all of you out there can just say, "Amen."

Will you pray aloud with me?

Oh God, forgive me that I have been so long to be forgiving. Forgive me for the grief it must have been to thee and to man that I could have one day respect and even their souls. Wash me in the blood of Christ from being such a grief to thee. Forgive me this night because of the blood of Christ and give me a clean start here tonight. Help those that I did not reveal Christ to. So forgive me whether they are in my home or whether they are my open enemy. Help them to give me another chance to reveal Christ to them and to trust my Christianity that while I live the example of the cross I will have the right to preach the message of the cross even to the most ugly life the devil could send my way. Give me that right by thy grace. Forgive through me, God. Give me the grace that I don't have to utterly forgive those who have wronged me or failed me. Love them through me, God, that they may see Christ in me and nothing else. Give me this grace to the day I die not by effort of my own, but spontaneously in my every reaction no matter how trying the circumstance they may see the fruit of the Holy Spirit which is Christ. I ask this in Jesus Christ's name, out of love for him. Amen.

Well, now, beloved, God bless you. I know it cost you to come up here, but it would have cost you so much more if you hadn't. And I believe that above what you have asked God tonight, he will give you, above what you have asked God tonight, he will give you that grace and he will give forgiveness in the heart for those that you have failed that you thought were the failures. He will give them the grace. I believe with all my heart as they look at your eyes and your lives from now on to start trusting your old religion and your testimony and to respect you. I believe that with all my heart.

May God bless you deeply.

I am here for two more nights and I thank you for coming. I thank you from my heart for coming. Will you pray for me, please? I think I came up here half a man tonight. They have made me preach so much this last weekend. And I flew and traveled. I had to get up three this morning and I think I have slept about three hours in all together in the last 24 hours. Will you pray that God's touch on my body, my life, my mind that tomorrow I may just come anointed by God?

I do trust that somehow God will so visit our hearts in these three meetings, these three days that we will never recover and that the fruit of our lives will go on and on and on and on and on from these three days. Now that said, you seek God with me.

I want you all to pray for this week, men. I know I am nothing and I don't have to be reminded. God, please don't remind me, God. But I want you all to pray for this week, men, this place, men, that God would touch him, anoint him in such a way that none of us, none of us will escape God's deepest message tomorrow night and that we will none of us recover from what God does. If you pray for that, he will do it. If you look past this

man and past yourself and just, oh, look to God for me, for God to guide me what to preach and God to so anoint me and anoint your hearts with me and the atmosphere that God would make it so holy that he would visit us and set us so afire and make us so Christ like that we will walk from this place to stagger the world and the powers of darkness with what God does in our lives. I know he wants to. Will you pray for that, though? And will you bring others tomorrow night? Will you bring others if you can and if you are in the circumstance in the surrounding area of people you know? If your business says you can't just bring yourselves, prayerfully, but will you drag others, perhaps, try and drag your enemy. It would [?] if you look at them differently with God's grace. You will be stunned how you look at them tonight if you phone them up or see them tomorrow morning. Try and bring even your enemies. See what God can do through them even if it is your father in law, ok?

It is amazing what God can do through us if he can love through us. Oh, let God do that through all of you standing out there tonight also. But, oh, spend time in prayer. Fellowship is lovely, you know, and while you are here I know you will have that. But, oh, fellowship with God, try and do as much of that as you can in these few days.

We have come to these meetings, these last two meetings to seek God, his voice alone.

Now, I think a lot of you have traveled far and I saw you longing to go to your knees to be with Jesus. So if you need that then don't linger. Go home. Go to your rooms. Go to the hotels or to wherever you are staying at and try and get alone with Jesus now that you have done this commitment here tonight.

May God wonderfully bless you all now. I really mean that. And my heart longs for you all to walk with God.

Let's just have one moment of silent prayer and then we are going to go. I wonder if everyone here would just speak to Jesus now alone. Just for one minute say something that will thrill heaven. Even you, young boy, say something that will thrill Jesus Christ's heart. Be saved before you leave this place. If that's what you want for him to do in your life. Every one of us just speak to God for a moment and then I am going to say, "Amen."

Now, God, answer these prayers in mercy because we all asked them in the name of Jesus Christ and because we all ask them wanting to please thee, God. Amen.

God bless you all.

I wonder if I could make a suggestion before we all move here tonight. Brother, you can come stand here. You have obviously got something to say. Please, come here.

I wonder if I could make some little suggestion. I am going to ask it. I saw how the mothers battled here tonight and I agonized with you and I am sorry that there is nowhere for you to go. That isn't the fault of anyone. But perhaps so that you don't have to walk out in the cold as I saw some of you doing and there is nowhere really to go, we are going

to try and make a plan and I think this dear man with a little army with him is going to make one of these loudspeakers go into some room right close to this hall that sits out of where you are not going to feel in the way. And you are not going to feel obliged to walk out the door like some of you did or stand all night in the back there holding your baby.

So we are going to make a plan and tomorrow the moment your little baby cries that you feel and you can just go someplace we will show you before. Our brother will show you. We have got loudspeakers. We are just going to get a long cord and we are going to make sure that you are out there and you are not worrying. And as this poor, dear old man isn't going to stand here nearly fainting in the pulpit trying to concentrate while I watch you all agonizing back there with your poor babies crying like that. So we are going to do something for those of you.

Please attend the meeting with your children. I believe that is right. But the moment you feel that you just want to go somewhere if the child is crying, then don't stand in the back or walk into the cold like this tonight, like you did. I want you to and sit down in some room we are going to get where your baby can cry his heart out and we will have a loud speaker louder, ok?

And even those that seem lovely to have, brother, that is going to put off, ok, so that we can just have quietness tomorrow night.

Sorry, that a preacher tells you to do all that and it is not your fault, brother. You have done the best you can, ok? God wonderfully bless you all.

Now our brother would like to say something, probably about what time tomorrow and so I am going to give him the loudspeaker so he can just remind you clearly of what is going on the next few days. Thank you.

Voice:

Thank you, brother Keith. Tomorrow night we will probably have a closed circuit TV. Tonight we had some difficulties getting things to work. I think we know what we need so we will be a little bit better set up tomorrow night. And also tomorrow night we will start soon after seven o'clock now that we all know how to get here.