

You Are the Best Christian They Know

By Paris Reidhead*

That's the first time I've ever had the name Paris appreciated. Thank you very much. Most of them think I am something out of Mythological History, rather than something real.

A pleasure to be with you. A joy to be here. Let's bow our hearts in prayer. Our Father, we thank and praise Thee for Thy presence. Thou has spoken to us. Thou has unveiled Thy face and heart to us as we have sung together as our hearts have been thrill by the ministry in song. And now as we come to the Word we do rejoice the very Holy Spirit that inspired the Word that guarded its being recorded and kept for us, is here to apply it to our hearts and to our lives. And Father there are no two of us in the same place tonight. Our needs are so different and yet Thy name is El Shaddai - the God who is enough. Thou art enough for every burden, every failure, every heart ache, every aspiration, all the desires that Thou has place in our hearts. Thou art enough. And so we ask that this may not be just listening to words about Thee but a meeting with Thee. We may sense that Thou artest near as the air we breathe, as close as the light upon our faces. Thou art not the light, Thou art not the air, Thou art God but in Thee "we live and move and have our being" (Act. 17:28). So we plea the precious blood of Christ over and upon us as we think together about Thy Word. In the worthy Name of Thy Son the Lord Jesus we pray. Amen.

How many of you know and love Christ, could I just see your hands? Thank you. Thank you just as a suspected. You know the Sunday evening service is rather a recent addition to the church life of the Christian world. I think it actually had its beginning in Colonial America. You know in those days the biggest auditorium in the community was the local church. Have you seen if you have gone through the towns of New England in the East where the population of the land was? And so on Sunday evening the whole community would gather in the church auditorium. And politicians would come to speak and there would be varies debates on subjects. And because the church permitted the community to use it for its assemble hall, they gave the preacher the privilege of adding an exhortation to all the sinners that were there Sunday night that hadn't come Sunday morning. And so it was called an evangelist opportunity. But my experience has been that if you call Sunday evening "The Sunday Evening Evangelist Hour" all the sinners come on Sunday morning and the saints come Sunday night.

Now, I'm sure in the company of this large there are several that do need to meet and know our Lord, but since most of you have testified to your trust and faith in Him, I think it is wise to speak to you. Now you see you're supposed to be part of the force not the field. That means that the service begins when you leave tonight not at the time we started. This is the time of being instructed. This is when you learn to use your manual of armors. This is when you acquire those disciplines and those principles and precepts that you're going to use as you ministry to the Lord throughout those 168 hours until you meet the next Lord's Day. And I trust you will be here midweek for prayer and for refreshing, but basically, you know, God's strategy was not that the people should be one with the Lord inside the hall, but should one with the Lord in the home, in the shop, office place and school.

Now that is based on this principle: "After that the Holy Ghost has come upon ye, you shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Act. 1:8). He didn't ask if you wanted it to be. He didn't say how would you like to voluntary for a little while. He said, "You shall be witnesses!"

Now one or two things have happened since you've come to know the Lord. You've been a witness, maybe you haven't been a very good one. But you've been a witness the moment you named the name of Christ, you got a mark on you and people are looking at you to someone you are the best Christian that they know. And if they ever come to Christ, it will be because they met you and known you and very likely very possibly. On the other hand, you may be a stumbling block or a stone of offense standing in their way. So it is very important for us to take seriously this responsibility that is ours of being a witness.

We live in a day when there are so many voices. On the radio, on television, and in so many other ways. And there are voices that saying Lo this is the way or that is the way. Come this way, go that way. And there is confusion reigning. Oh if somehow the Lord Jesus could stand again and talk to people the way He did. And then there would be authority. Then when He spoke

they would understand. Well, that's precisely what I want to try to help you to do so that this week you're going to be able to stand in His place and permit Him to speak for Himself.

Now you'll have to agree, I'm sure, that the Lord Jesus understood the subject of salvation better than anyone else in the world. You will also have to agree that He loved lost people more than anyone else has or could. You're going to have to agree with me as was spoken by Him, "My Word is spirit and it is life" (Joh. 6:63). And remember when the silence of Heaven was broken and the Father spoken. What did He say? "This is My beloved Son, hear ye Him" (Luk. 9:35). Now isn't that what you want your unsaved neighbors and friends to do. Well, I'm going to ask you to do something tonight. Most of you didn't come prepared with notebooks as they did in the seminar in the last two days. But the people that made your Bible were so sensitive to the fact that this night there would be a need that they put five sheets of white paper in the back of your Bible. Now, I'm suggesting you just write one through five. I may even get through five. At least I will go as far as I can. And I want to give you five verses of Scripture and I want you to familiarize yourself with them, so that when you are talking to someone about Christ. And may I say this, I do not know of course by whom you are employed. Perhaps you are employer and you'll appreciate what I am saying for your employees. And if you are an employee, I am certain you'll understand the rightness of what I am saying. I do not believe that the people that pay your wages are paying them so you can use your time to witness to people about the Lord. They're paying you to work at the task that they have hired you for so you can make a profit, so that they can stay in business and continue to pay your wages. But you have the responsibility to witness by your life and by your prayers. And there will be someone that will come to you and say, "You know I've been watching you and there is something different about you. I would like to have a chance to talk with you." Now don't take the opportunity right then and say, "I am so glad." Make an appointment. Meet them in the local cafe or somewhere. Then you will have plenty of time. But what are you do when you sit down with them? What are you going to say? He didn't say ye shall be philosophers and meta-physicians and scholars. He said, "You'll be witnesses." And a witness tells what he has seen and heard and experienced.

Now, if you've heard the Lord Jesus speak these words to your heart then you're entitled to use those same words to speak to their hearts. That makes sense? Alright, but you have to know where they are.

So the first one is Matthew Chapter 5 and verse 20. It's in that portion we familiarly call the Sermon on the Mount and it was in the portion in which the Lord Jesus is giving a full length portrait, a picture of the happy, the blessed person. Now you know that the blessed person the happy person is the one who knows our Lord in a vital, real, genuine way. And therefore, it is a description of the new man. But always you've got to remember that every thesis has an antithesis. Or if you wish every positive has a negative. Or if I will still carry it one step further, every front has a back. If you see what looks like the front of the hand and you quickly run around and there is no back, you didn't see a hand. You saw a representation of one, because there has to be the opposite. So when He is describing the blessed man, the happy one, there is going to be the opposite. And so here in this 20th verse, the Lord Jesus is telling the people what He doesn't mean. Now He told them what He does mean. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 5:3). "Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth" (Mat. 5:5). And you know what's happening to these people sitting on the hillside listening. They're thinking, "Oh, He is talking about our Rabbi. He is talking about one of the Pharisees." And so they look back and see at the edge of the crowd a Rabbi and a Pharisee. They sort of wave, a timid wave as, "That's you He is talking about. You're so meek; you're so poor in spirit." And so the Lord Jesus, to disabuse their minds, becomes very, very candid and this is what He says, "I say unto you that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and the Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 5:20). Now, that's pretty straight to the point isn't it? He is saying don't look back to the Rabbis and the Pharisees and the Scribes, because I'm not talking about them. And if you don't have more than they've got, you're never going to make it.

Well, the important thing is for us to find out is what the Scribes and the Pharisees had, what their righteousness was, and then we have a frame of reference. First *Scribes and the Pharisees were fundamental in their theology*. You see they were in contrast to the Sadducees. Now, the Sadducees did not believe in the inspiration of the Bible. They did not believe in the inspiration of the Torah. They did not believe in life after death. They did not believe in the necessity of blood atonement. They did not believe in the existence of angels. They didn't believe in very much, except make the best deal you can with the Romans. That's what they were interested in. They wanted to get as much as they could out of this life. So the Scribes and the

Pharisees are the fundamentalist of their day. Fundamental in their theology. They believed in the inspiration of the Bible. And they believed in the existence of angels. They believed in life after death. They believed in the necessity of blood atonement to wash away sin. All of that. And Christ said, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and the Pharisee, you're not going to enter the kingdom of heaven." So their theology was fundamental.

The second thing we discover about the Pharisees is that *they were evangelist in their zeal*. It was said of the Pharisees they would encircle the globe to make one proselyte. No trip was too long. No trip too dangerous or arduous, too full of hazard, if at the end there was a possibility of converting someone to Judaism. Now, is there anything wrong with evangelist zeal? Nothing at all. What's the matter with it? Well, like fundamental theology, evangelist zeal good as it is, isn't enough.

The next thing you've got to understand about the Pharisees is *they were devout in their practice*. They prayed three times a day and the shortest of their prayers would be about 12 minutes unless they rushed. And some of them rushed. And some of them stood on the street corner, so that everyone could see them pray. But the fact is the Pharisees and the Scribes were devout in their practice as far as prayer went. They did pray. And they memorized the Torah. That was their schooling and they also tithed. They tithed oh down to the ridiculous. A mint, a little bush scrubby grew by the side of the house. Used to flavor tea. And somebody would pick a hand full of mint and take it to the local Pharisee. And he would say, "Oh, thank you dear friend." And he would count out sprigs of mint, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. And then he would take that tenth one and give it to somebody else. He tithe the mint. The anise that they used for flavoring cookies. A little spice, he would break that into ten piles. Cumin, which was a spice or and which was also the cheapest kind of money. It was about a hundredth of a mina. Just the poorest of the poor used the Cumin. And so he would tithe even down to the ridiculous. So here he is fundamental in his theology, evangelist in his zeal, devout in his practice and Christ said if you don't have more than that you're never going to make it.

But there was something else. The *Pharisee and the Scribe were premillennial in the hope*. They were looking for the personal, bodily coming of Messiah to set up His throne to give back to Israel the glory that she'd had under David and Solomon. And Christ says, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and the Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." And you can understand when you're sitting over a cup of coffee and you're reading that. Somebody is reading it with you and you talk to him about what the righteousness of the Scribes. Most of the people you meet are a member of some church sometime. They went somewhere, something has been done to them. They have like the Scribes and the Pharisees most of them a lot of them at least a lot of religion and no life. What you've got to do is some way to understand that what they brought with them wasn't enough. You've got to let the words of Christ as Sword of the Spirit pierce the heart and so you would come to **Matthew 5:20**. That's the first verse that you wrote on the little white pages on the back of your Bible. And then it'll help them to understand that what He is talking about is something other than the average ordinary run of the mill religion, be it Christian or Jewish or Islamic whatever it is, it is more it's other. You see, dear friend, so many people in the churches today that have thought that salvation is a plan. Isn't that tragic? They don't realize that salvation is not a plan, that it's not a scheme of doctrine, that it's not a list of Scriptures verses, that it's not a decision, but that salvation is a person. "He that hath the Son has life" (I Joh. 5:12). Not he that hath the plan of salvation has life. Or he that hath a list of Scripture verses hath life, but "he that hath the SON," because life is in the Son. That's why Paul said to the Corinthians, "Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know you not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ be in you, except you be reprobate?" (II Cor. 13:5) Salvation is a person.

So what do we find, this verse lets us get right through to the heart of the matter and we don't have to be offensive. And the Lord Jesus is talking for Himself. These are His words and you don't have to defend them. Then what does He mean referring to the Pharisee? What was his righteousness? You can remember those things, I said can't you? He was fundamental in his theology. He was devout in his practice. He was evangelist in his zeal and he was per-millennial. That isn't hard to remember. You can just tell those things to him and one of them is going to hit right home. O, he means me.

Now the second thing, that's found in Luke Chapter 13. Turn to Luke Chapter 13, verses 3-5 and we see the second Word. This you know is an occasion when people were around Him and there had been a couple of current events. Pilate had killed some Galileans in the temple and mingled their blood with the blood of the sacrifices. The Tower of Siloam had fallen and eighteen

people were killed. And so the subject is brought up and the Lord Jesus said, "Answering unto them, suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luk. 13:2-3). And then in verse 5, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Now who is saying this? The One who loved people more than anybody else in the universe, enough to go to the cross for them. And what is He saying? There is an absolute condition for escaping perishing and that is they have to repent. And "except they repent, they'll perish."

Now, that brings us to a question. The next Scripture you take them to **Luke 13:3 and 5**. They read it and you know what they are going to say to you, "Well, what does repent mean?" That's a logic question when you hear it? If you have to repent before you perish, the people listening to you talking to are going to want to say, "What does it mean to repent?" And you've got to watch here because you ask the average person "What does repentance mean?" You know what they are going to tell you, to repent is to be sorry enough to quit. Because in Corinthians it says, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance" (II Cor. 7:10). And people have somehow gotten the idea that sorrow and repentance are somehow tied together, but they are not.

Let me illustrate it. Suppose I have in this hand a hammer, this hand a nail, and this is a board. And I take the hammer and I work the nail into the board. Did that change the hammer into the nail? I don't have a hammer anymore because I pounded the hammer is gone is changed into a nail. No. Or because I worked the nail into the board, I don't have a nail anymore. They changed into, no. Hammer is hammer, nail is nail, board is board and the hammer drives the nail. So he says godly sorrow is the hammer that works repentance into the heart, which is the board. So it isn't sorrow. Sorrow maybe a hammer, but that's only an incidental. Many times sorrow is not involved. Doesn't have to be involved in repentance. What is it? The word means to change one's mind. From something to something.

Now we are coming down to the issue. What is the mindset of the sinner? What is the attitude of the sinner? Well, I'll tell you what it is. The essence of sin is this, at the age of accountability every one of us made a chose as respecting the government of our life and that chose was, I am going to do what I want to do. Isaiah said it this way, "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way" (Isa. 53:6). What's that mean? We've all said, I'm going to be god in my life. I'm going to decide how to be happy. I am going to call the shots as though the way I live and govern my life. That's the essence of sin. I am going to do what I want to do.

Now maybe the sinner didn't shake his fist at the face of God. Maybe he paid no attention to God. But the Scriptures says, "All have sinned," and sin is the committal of the will to the principle of pleasing oneself (Rom. 3:23a). So what is repentance? If the attitude of the sinner is that I am going to govern my life and do what I want to do and to repent is to change one's mind, one's purpose, one's attitude, one's direction, one's governmental principle of life. What's it going to be changed to? A new principle. I'll do what You want me to do. You see, "Except you repent," means that as long as a sinner is set to live in treason and rebellion against God, there isn't any possibility of his being forgiven. He has to repent! And repentance means he has to change his mind about who is going to be boss. It's from I'll do what I want to do to I'll do what You want me to do. That's the precondition for faith. Now that's all we have to tell that person.

So we are sitting in the cafe having a cup of coffee and you have gone through **Matthew 5:20, Luke 13:3 and 5**. And you show him, "Except you repent." Let Christ talk to him, not you. You may help explain a little bit. What the word means, but it's really Christ who is the authority, not you. So you have to press the point. That's the thing. He is like someone who is shooting, fighting with God. He has a sword and a spear and a gun and he is in warfare with God, I am going to do what I want to do. Do you think that as long as he has the gun and the sword and the spear, he can turn around and say, "Now God, I have been fighting you and I want you to forgive me." No. Don't be silly. He has to repent and bring forth words, speak for repentance. Throw down the gun, throw down the sword, throw down the spear, and sue for peace! I'm going to do what You want me to do. It is impossible for people to savingly receive Christ, "except they repent." Let Christ tell it for Himself. Give Him a chance to speak to the heart.

Then there is a third verse. **Matthew Chapter 18, verse 3**. Matthew 18 and 3. And here we have, the disciples gathered around kind of an interesting experience because they are saying who's going to be greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Remember

James and John had their mother fix a big lunch. The boys were coming down from around Jericho when they get up to Galilee to the home of James and John. And they've all had one of her great lunches, buffet lunches that they've had. And the boys are up against the wall sleeping in the shade in the middle of the afternoon. Mother of James and John comes to the Lord and says, "Lord, when thou comest into thy kingdom let John sit on thy right hand and James on thy left" (Mar. 10:37). That's what they have been talking about. And so the Lord Jesus now knowing their hearts, brings a little child and sits the child on His lap. And He says to them about him, "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 18:3).

So now you are sitting in the cafe, having coffee that is getting cold. You ask for some hot water to freshen it up a little. And you turn to a new verse Matthew 18:3. What's the logical question? Well, what's it mean to "be converted and become as a little child"? Well, what's the attitude, adult attitude? The adult attitude is you can't tell me anything, I know all I want to know. And what's the child's attitude? Daddy what's this? Why that? Where is the other? Open, inquiring and asking. And what the Lord is saying that that hard attitude, I know it all and nobody can teach me or tell me goes.

I'll give you a case in point. Remember when Paul and Silas were up at Philippi. And they had that very interesting afternoon when they were publicly beaten and put into prison even though Paul was a Roman citizen and that shouldn't have happen to him. They're in the dungeon there. The jailer is sitting up in a little balcony looking down at the open space with the cells. There is Paul and Silas; they've had their hands chained to the wall. They're standing there their backs are beaten. They hurt all over. You know what the fellows in the jail are going to say, "What are you guys in here for?" "We're here because of we were talking about Jesus." "Well, who's Jesus?" "Well, He is God's Son. God who came in the flesh." And they're talking and I don't know what Paul said, but in a minute I'm going to tell what he didn't say.

About 11 o'clock, 11:30, Paul's voice is getting a little hoarse from answering questions. It had been a hard day. And he says, "Silas, heist the tune." And Silas says going back to Psalm 27, "The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear. The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid. When the wicked, even mine enemies came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell" (Psa. 27:1-2). Well, who the angel of the Lord sees this song service going on praising the Lord and rejoicing. The way we were a few minutes ago. And no angel wants to interrupt a good praise service, does he. So he just waits till they're finished and then he steps into that situation. And he points. And when he points you hear tumblers and locks begin to grade. You hear the dungeon door screech as they open. And shackles fall off and swing against the wall and the prisoners are free.

But it is a funny thing, the prisoners are free but they don't move. The chains are off but they stay there. Well, why? God wasn't wanting to disrupt law and order in Philippi, all He wanted to do was save some folks. And so there is a smart jailer there. He knows that he was way out of line when he beat a Roman citizen. He is going to lose his tassel on his helmet for that. He's really going to lose his stripes for that. And he knows also that he beat this one who is a servant of Jesus of Nazareth and this one had an angel that came open this and so he is in trouble there. And he also knows that all these prisoners that are there are going to run out. He is going to lose his life for letting the prisoners go. He is in a bad way. Now, he does the only honorable thing. He pulls his dagger out and he fits in between two leafs on his breast plate and he gets ready to fall on it, to take care of the matter. And just about that time Paul says, "Do thyself no harm. We are all here" (Act. 16:28). Now I want you to see a haughty, arrogant, proud Roman jailer who has "become as a little child." What's he do? "What must I do to be saved?" (Act. 16:30)

You know what I'll like to do, if I could. Maybe it's good I can't. Don't worry about it. I'd like to declare a moratorium on the public preaching on the plan of salvation for about a year in America. I'd like to preach the holiness of God and the justice of God and the law of God because the law is the school master to bring men to Christ. And I would like to so exalt Him in His holiness, in His justice and set forth the exceeding sinfulness of sin without mentioning the plan of salvation until sinners begin to cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" Because we're doing is harden, Gospel harden a generation of sinners of telling them of how to be saved before they have any interest in it.

Well here somebody had interested in it. "What must I do to be saved?" That's what it means to converted and be as a little child. Isn't that marvelous? Christ is saying it. And over the table in the cafe, you're saying that's what it means. You're telling him, "Hey listen, what the Lord Jesus has said is you better come to Him and let Him tell you how to be saved."

Then one last verse. I'll never get to five, but I will stop with four. In **John 3:3 and 3:7** it says, "Except". Now in the King James Version all four of these have the wonderful little English word "Except". Your other versions don't have it and that's why I use the King James, no that isn't really why. I use the King James Version, but it sure helps. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Joh. 3:3). So what are you talking...what've you said? "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and the Pharisee." "Except ye repent you'll perish." "Except you be converted become as a little child. You'll not enter the kingdom of heaven." "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." You have to explain. The only way to go from one kingdom to a higher kingdom is by the action of the higher kingdom.

Look, here is a little globule of chemical in the soil and it says, Oh, I would like to be plant. It's not good enough to be just mineral. Just to be chemicals here in the soil. I wonder if there isn't a short course at Dale Carnegie teaches, "How minerals can be come vegetable." But there isn't. I'll tell what happens. A little tendril from the grass roots reaches down and wraps around that globule of phosphorus or pot ash. And the first thing you know it's born from above. Now it's vegetable. But the vegetable also has ambitions and it says, I wonder how I could be an animal. I'm already being vegetable better than mineral. But how can I ever get out of this ground? Can I pull myself up by my roots? And train yourself and train myself to be animal. The answer if no. But along comes a hungry cow and wraps it rough tongue around the little green grass. The grass is born from above. The cow says, I wonder what I can do? And along comes a hungry man and eats the cow. And it's born from above. Man says, What can I do to fit myself from heaven. Can I do this in India? They say if I measure the continent. If I lay down stretch my fingers out make a mark put my toes where my toes were go across the continent that way. That'll help me. Oh no, dear friend in India, that won't help you. You see the only way you can be born from above is when One reaches down with the nail pierce hands and in response to your believing Him, raises you and imparts His life. You have to be born from above, born from above. Salvation is a person! And in answer to that faith Jesus Christ comes into the heart. Tells us we've been born of God.

Now do you see what's happened? You have been sitting there for 15 or 20 minutes. You've taking someone through these Scriptures and the sword of the spirit is beginning to do the work. That's what we are so anxious to see happen. Why you've got one hundred and sixty-four hours ahead of you before you'll be back here next Sunday morning. Look at the privilege you have of sharing Christ with someone. But what are you going to say? Why don't you let the Lord Jesus doing the talking? Let Him say it and you just point it out. And watch what happens.

Let's bow in prayer.

Father in Heaven, should there some here tonight who are like the Pharisee and Scribes, who have everything, but life from above. Oh Spirit of God, grant them the mercy to discover the worst about themselves while there is time enough something about it. What a tragic thing we read our Father later on in this Sermon on the Mount, when the Lord Jesus said, "Many will say unto me in that day Lord, Lord and I will say away with you. I never knew you" (Mat. 7:22-23). So might it be Father that everyone in this hall knows on the authority of the witness of the Spirit that they've been born from above.

Then our Father, for each of us as we go into the place of study, work, office, or shop, or factory, home wherever it is. Help us by Thy grace this week to be effective witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ. Give us the joy making a situation, using a situation where the Lord Jesus can speak for Himself. To someone who He would see brought out of death into life. That we might be effective labors together with Thy in this great task. Thank you for this church and for these people and this privilege of sharing together. We ask now our Father that which Thoust would do in these closing moments might be done to the glory of Christ. In His worthy Name. Amen.

Now you'll turn to John Chapter 6 and write this down as the fifth Scripture, **John 6:53**. You have to have a bit of background on it. Begin with verse 47, though the actual verse I wish to refer to is 53. In verse 47 the Lord says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are

dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then said Jesus unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum” (Joh. 6:47-59). “Except ye repent eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood” (Joh. 6:53). What means this? That’s the question. That the one sitting across from you on the table in this little cafe is going to ask, “Well, what does it mean to eat His flesh and drink His blood?” What means this? It is so important. This is how we have eternal life. How is it done? And it is up to you to understand. That when we repent of our sins, and savingly embrace the Son of God. Savingly embrace. Did you hear savingly embrace the Son of God. I said at the seminar I never ask people anymore. Do you know the Lord? I never ask that because I have found there are so many that think they know the Lord. The question isn’t do you know him, the question is does He know you? Not that you know Him, but does He know you? And so what we are talking about here is that company of people that in true repentance and in true faith have savingly received the Son of God.

Now the result of this is that He becomes the life of our life. When one drinks and eats that which they have taken in is going to become “flesh of their flesh and bone of their bone” (Gen. 2:23). And so it is when we savingly received the Lord Jesus Christ, He becomes our life and He it is that tells us that we are born of God. You understand, of course do you not, that salvation if as we’ve said a person, the person has to be capable of revealing His presence. So when we’re talking to this person in our little cafe where we are witnessing. Sharing we have got to have him understand that whereas we can tell them something about how holy God is. And how sinful they are and what God did for them. And what they must do. We cannot tell them when they are born from above.

You see God, the Holy Ghost, is the spirit of adoption and He has never advocate His sovereign prerogative. He said, “We are to be witnesses.” But He never said we were to usurp His prerogatives. “We are to be witnesses to Him,” but we are not to take the place of God the Holy Ghost who is the Spirit of adoption.

So when one has savingly received the Lord Jesus Christ. Here it is said “eating His flesh drinking His blood;” oh He becomes life of our life. When He joins Himself to us making us anew, then He is going to tell us that we are born of God. So what you are going to say to the person to whom you’re speaking, Dear friend this is what it means the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross for you under the weight of your guilt and of your sin. He was there publicly vindicating the holiness of God. He was satisfying the law of God, that God might be just. And the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. And now when you have repented of your sin, you have received Him savingly, He is going to join Himself to you. And you are going to learn that you are God’s child, because God the Holy Spirit tells you.

Now I’ve pointed out that the only person in the universe that has the right to tell a person that they have pass from death to life, is God the Holy Spirit. But what has happened in Protestantism is that we as personal workers have dared to commit a sacrilege. We have dared to assume that because someone says they agree with what’s printed in the Scripture, that we somehow or other listening to them say I do believe this. Now have a divinely given incite, omission if you please, to says that because they have said they believe, we have the authority to say, “Now you’re a child of God.” And nobody in the universe has that right but God. We are to tell them how holy God is, what God did, what they must do, and then press them to wait until they hear God tell them they are born again. Not us, God.

Now that’s why the churches of England were closed to John Wesley¹, because he dared to tell the people of England that they could not assume that they were Christians born into the family of God until they had the witness of the Spirit. They knew that

¹John Wesley (1703-1791) Anglican cleric, Christian theologian, and founder of the Methodist movement.

inner knowing that transcends the necessity of any further proof. Well, you say that in most places in America today and you do create quite a fuss. Because most of our evangelism is based on our giving people the four spiritual laws or the plan of salvation. Now do you believe? Already, write your name down, that means you're saved. And then we have the brashness to say, "If the Devil tells you you're not a Christian use this verse to fend him off." So we arm them with the Word of God to fend off the Spirit of God when God would do a really work in their hearts. Oh, what a travesty.

So what is He saying, "Except you eat My flesh and drink My blood"? What is He saying? He is saying, I will become the life of your life and you will know it. You will know it! Because when you take food you're hungry, famished, you're starving and you have eaten food, you can feel the strength. You know it! Someone doesn't have to argue into it. You ate; the strength is coming back into your body. And so He said when you receive Me, you're going to know it, because I will become the life of your life!

So who's the one who can tell someone they are born of God? God the Holy Spirit. Listen to this verse, "In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law. To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And since we sons, He hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:4-6). Oh, the tragedy of it, doing it the other way.

How marvels it is when we are willing to take the time and let people come to us and tell us that they are born of God. What a tragedy happens when we usurp that prerogative.

I was speaking in the New York Gospel Tabernacle of the Alliance when I was a preacher there as I have to you tonight. And I said if there are those among you who have really spiritual need I invite you to go into Wilson Chapel the room to the right. And I'll be in in a few moments to talk to you. And among the people that went into that room was my son. Then a freshman in high school. I saw him go, but people spoke to me before I could leave. And when I got into the room, one of the Christian workers had been with my son. And when I came in he stood up and my son stood up from where they had been praying and he said, "Oh, I am glad to see you, Pastor. Jimmy has something he wants to tell you." And very dutifully Jimmy said, "Dad, I have accepted Jesus as my Savior." I was sick. Sick? Yes because I knew Jimmy, but I said nothing. We just prayed again, asked God to bless Jimmy. But I and my wife were both concerned because what I wanted to do with him is what I am suggesting to you. Jimmy, when God has met you and you know you're born of him you tell me because I knew my son demanded reality. But he fell into the hands of someone earnest and sincere who thought he could circumvent the divine work and usurped it. The next summer I was speaking down at Harvey Cedars Bible Conference. Jimmy was with me. We stayed over Labor Day and stay the next day to see some of the local things, historical things that are in that part of New Jersey. We made our way back to our home in Green County, New York. Jimmy had been driving. I had gotten sleepy on the Thru-way. We turned off at the Catskills, New York. We were going up route 23 toward our farm home. And as we turned on the road that would go the back way up the mountain to where we lived, Jimmy pulled over to the side of the road and said, "Dad, before we go home, I've got to stop the car and I got to talk to you." He said, "Do you remember last year down at the Tabernacle when I told you I was saved?" I said, "Yes, Jimmy." He said, "Dad, it was but a few days, a couple of weeks later, and I realized nothing had happen. I wasn't any different than I was. I didn't have anything." And he said, "I've been trying for all these months to pretend like I am Christian." He said, "Dad, I don't know if the Bible is true. I don't know if Jesus Christ is God. I've heard you teach it all my life, I know that." He said, "I don't know. I have nothing Dad. And I can't be a hypocrite and I can't pretend any longer." Well, I knew what he was going through. I had been trying to tell him spiritual integrity demanded we know the worst about ourselves. And I prayed as he is talking, "God, guide me to what I say." When he had finished, I said, "Jimmy, you know the plan of salvation." "Oh, yes. You know I do." And I said, "Someday Jimmy, you're going to realize how lost you are and you're going to realize how desperately you need a Savior. Someday, you're going to open your heart to Him and the Lord Jesus Christ is going to come in and He is going to change your life. And I want you to promise me one thing son, whenever that happens, if I am still alive wherever you maybe and wherever I may be, I want you to come and find me, where I am, and tell me that you're born of God. Will you promise me that, Jimmy?" "Oh, sure I will Dad." "Well," I said, "I will tell you something else. I'm never going to bring the subject up with you of my own accord again. I'll be standing by any time day or night to talk to you about the Lord. But you're going to have to open the conversation. But your mother and I are going to praying for you every day and some several times throughout the day that God will bring you to Himself." He said, "Okay that's fair and I promise." He started the

car and we drove home. I told my wife. Before the Lord that night, we covenant to pray daily for Jimmy to come to know the Lord. He went through high school nothing more was said. Attended church with the family, went through it, but nothing more was said. Then he went to school. He went to Cornell University. And it was there his first year; I was so concerned I didn't know what was going to happen. I had to make a trip to Texas. When I came back on this particular night in the middle of the week, I saw a little Volkswagen in our yard that I didn't recognize. I went inside and I found that Jimmy was there with his friend Gene Chase had driven him from Cornell. And they were sitting there visiting with the family and I joined them for a while, but I had come from Texas that day was very tired. I excused myself and said, "Well, I'll see you folks in the morning. You'll have to excuse me I'm going to bed." And I started in toward our room, when I heard a voice say, "Dad, can I speak to you a minute?" It was Jimmy. We sat down at the dining room table. He said, "I got to leave at four in the morning. I've got a test at 8 o'clock. But I just had to come and tell you. When I first got to Cornell I started to do everything I thought I wanted to do. I was just waiting to get away from home to do. It wasn't as much fun as I thought it was going to be. And Gene Chase realized I was unhappy and he came to me. He asks me to go to pray meeting with him one night to the little Alliance church and we talked until about two in the morning. And then he asked me the next Wednesday and I didn't want to go, but I went with him. We talked again." He said, "I went to bed about eleven o'clock or twelve. I waken about two and I couldn't sleep. And you told me I would realize how lost I was and how desperately I needed a Savior." He said, "I don't know. Somewhere between three and four I asked Jesus Christ to come into my heart and He did. And He told me I had been born of Him. And I told Gene the promise I had made to you. So we left right after my last class today and I just had to tell you. I had to tell you that I've been born of God." Oh listen, "when you eat His flesh and drink His blood" you don't need to have anybody tell you. He'll tell you. You'll know. You'll know.

Now we're going to pray, again. Oh, Father of Jesus, Father of Jesus, we lift our hearts to Thy and among us and around us, beside us, near us are so many that have everything, but life. Oh Thou God of all grace, help us though to live among them that we will be a living testimony and so share the truth. And through us they'll come to discover the need, realize that Thou art desperately, longing, yearning and ready to meet them if they'll but be totally honest with Thee. Father we would ask Thee therefore now, bless this people pastoring all who work carry responsibility and all the members and friends. And let its witness radiate from out this place of worship and fellowship into this community the factors and offices and shops, until being confronted with claims of Christ is the norm. It becomes easy for people to talk about the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you Father for your presence, while our heads are bowed and eyes closed just let me ask this, Are there those of you tonight who would say I personally have a need that's been represented by these texts that you've read and explained and I do want to be remembered in pray, if you'd raise your hand. It would be the first step in dealing with the issue. Would you do that? If there is such a need. Now let me ask one another question, I have neighbors, I have friends, I have family, those close to me, I have good reason to think that they are in desperate need of Him. Oh they know the right words, but they're more like your Son then I am happy to believe. I want to meet them, witness to them and help them. I am committing myself now to be available to share what You've given, and what God gives me to give. But I want to be concerned about those who have a name to live that maybe dead. Would you raise your hands? Indicate yes all go over. Thank you Father for your presences with us and for these that have responded. By saying they are going to be laborers together with Thee. In this task of bring men to Thee. We ask it in thanksgiving in Jesus Name. Amen.

* Reference such as: Sunday Evening, after 1969 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.

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