

# Do You Know The Lord

*Salvation*

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**Bible Text:** 2 Corinthians 5  
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And I'm gonna begin in 2 Corinthians 5 and I want us to turn there. We're just gonna take some glimpses at some things that I think that you need to hear. In 2 Corinthians 5, this passage is extremely important. Paul is talking about ministry, he's talking about why he is the man he is, the motivations behind his life, some of those being a reverent fear of God, the others being the love of God in Christ, but I want to use this passage and a few others in order to direct it to you, to your heart. I want you to discern whether or not you truly know the Lord. I want you to discern whether or not he truly knows you.

You see, Paul says here – well, let's just look in this passage. Look in verse 16. He says, "Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer. Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come." Then he says in verse 18, "Now all these things are from God." If I were to come here today and just look at you according to the flesh, look at you according to reason and logic, I may assume some things about you that are not true. Why? Because of what I said when I first walked into this pulpit, I have a deep admiration for this school. I do not think you could be in another university where you would be more exposed to the true Gospel of Jesus Christ than here. Now having that in the back of my mind, you would think that I would come here and give a message all to Christians, a message to each one of you, because obviously you must all be Christian because you've all come to this school, this school which I so much admire where the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached on a daily basis. So if I was judging things according to the flesh, I would come here today and teach on the Christian life, or teach on the Christian ministry, but I'm not going to make that assumption in the flesh. I want you to know that I know that even though you may be in one of the best Gospel schools in America and in the world, there are still some of you here at the sound of my voice that have heard the Gospel over and over and over and over and over and yet your heart til this day is not truly drawn to it. You do not know God and God does not know you. You see, there is a great blessing to be exposed continually to Gospel preaching, but there is also a tremendous danger. I disciple my children usually about four or five times a week going through the Scriptures with my children. They have heard more Gospel in the few years of their life than I heard until I was probably 30, and I always remind them using the Scriptures of what a great privilege it is for them to hear such things from their father,

and yet what a great responsibility, that we can somehow identify ourselves with Christ and identify ourselves with the body of Christ in a church, or identify ourselves with a biblical university and yet still be outside of Christ.

So what does validate our confession of faith? What does prove that we are genuinely Christian? And I want to look at some of those things this morning, but I pray, I beg that you would listen, listen to me. Listen like you've never listened before in your life. Not because I'm the best preacher that's ever stood in this pulpit because I am not, but listen to me because you've been able to listen to such good preachers in the past and you are still unconverted, you are still without Christ, in the secret chambers of your heart dwells only sin and self and pride and the world and not the Lord Jesus Christ or a love for his Gospel.

Now I just want to look at a few things here in this text before we go on to our main teaching, and look at this, first of all, in verse 13, "For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are of sound mind, it is for you." That's the people of God. "For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died." What is Paul saying? What are some of the things that governs his life as a Christian? First of all, in verse 13, it's God. A love for God. A God-ward mindset that what he does, he truly longs to do it for God, and when he doesn't do it for God, it hurts him, it breaks his heart, he repents. Why does Paul live the life he lives? He does it for God.

Now let me ask you a question: the life that you live, the life you live in this university, the degree you have chosen, the lifestyle in which you walk, is it for God? And don't play with me. Is it really for God? Don't just say the words. Is it really for God? If we were to open up the heart chamber that holds the motivation, would we see that you really are doing what you do for God or is it all about you in God's name? That is the question.

Paul said he was driven by a love for God and then he says also in verse 13, and "if we are of sound mind, it is for you." Another great motivation in his life was he did what he did not only out of love for God but out of love for God's people. He truly loved God's people. He wanted to be with God's people. He wanted to help God's people. And now we see this all throughout the New Testament, we see this idea that the vertical validates, or the horizontal validates the vertical. We see this in 1 John, "If you say that you love God but you do not love your brother." We see this in Matthew 25, the division of the nations, the sheep and the goats, that their unbelief in the Christ is proven by the fact that they cared very little for the people of God.

Now let me ask you a question, student: are you doing what you do for him or is he just some little piece of clothing you put on, some outward thing, a mere confession? Or do you, ask yourself this question, in your own heart just ask yourself, be your own preacher this morning, preach to your heart, ask your heart: do I actually do what I do for him? And some of you who are given over, some of you who are trapped in sin, some of you who live in worldliness and carnality, you're going to have to say, "No, I live a carnal lifestyle in the midst of Zion. In the midst of a place where the Gospel is preached, I live a carnal lifestyle. My heart is full of carnality. I drink it down. I was thinking carnal

thoughts when I came in this building and I'll think those thoughts when I leave if this day is like any other day." I'm trying to hurt you, make no mistake about it, but in order to help you I'm trying to hurt you. Think. Discern. Examine. What you do, is it for God? What you do, is it out of love for him and out of love for his people?

Then he goes on and he says here, verse 17, "Therefore if anyone is in Christ." Now notice the inclusive nature of this statement. He's not saying if some people are in Christ. He's not saying that within the sphere of Christ there are different degrees. He's not saying that all these carnal people are in Christ and they are truly Christian, but just a few of them have really sort of matured or kind of caught the idea of what Christianity is all about and they're going on with the Lord, and the rest of them not at all but they are in Christ. That's not what he's saying. He's saying if anyone, if anyone is in Christ. In Christ is another way of saying if anyone is Christian, if anyone is saved, they are a new creature.

Are you a new creature? Now here we're going beyond style of life. Here we're going beyond profession of faith and what are we doing? Ontology. We're going deep now. We're talking about you in your innermost being, are you a new creature with new desires? Are you? There is a sense in the epistles of Paul, we find it in Romans, we find it in Ephesians, we find it in Colossians, this idea of put on Jesus, take off the world and put on Christ, dress yourself in Christ. That's true, that's biblical but he's talking in the context of someone who has been radically changed on the inside. So Christianity is not primarily about ethics. Christianity is not picking up a book and finding all these new principles to live by and then grinding it out in order to conform your life to those principles. That is not Christianity. Christianity is so powerful, conversion is so powerful that if a man were to be converted and did not have access to any principles in the Scriptures, he would still live a different way.

You say, "Can you prove that?" It's proven every day around the world where people are dying for Christ and they don't even have a complete New Testament. Now we need Bibles and we need to renew our mind and we need to put on Christ and we need to do all that, but unless inside you are a new creature, all of it's just religion, it's just rule-keeping, it's just Phariseism. The problem today in American Christianity is you don't even have to be a Pharisee and you can still be a part of a church. You can profess Christ and you don't even have to fake righteousness. You can profess Christ, live like a demon and you're still in the body, you're okay because our Gospel, our preaching, our theology is so bad. But you did not learn Christ this way in this place. You know. You have been taught. If anyone is in Christ, he's a new creature. Are you a new creature? Do you remember what you were like before? Do you remember the moment that you changed?

Let me give you an idea, just a short illustration of what that change is like because I want to be very very clear. There is a sense at the moment we are in Christ, we change. We change from the inside. We become a new creature with a new heart. Our heart of stone has been removed, a heart of flesh that responds to God has been put in its place but what does that mean? The moment we believe, the moment we are converted, we are changed and yet that change keeps going on. It keeps progressing.

Let me give you an example. A man who is lost, completely unconverted, he gets up in the morning, he's late for work, he's running out the door, it's snowing outside, he's got a big important meeting, he doesn't have all his work done and he's full of nerves. As he's getting ready to open the back door of the house to get into the garage to drive out in the car, his wife comes walking down and says, "Could you take out the trash?" He turns around in a fit of rage and he goes, "What's wrong with you? Don't you know I have a meeting? Don't you know I'm late? Don't you know this, that? You take out the trash! I'm sick and tired of you!" And he walks out the door. He feels totally and completely justified in everything he's done. He can justify everything. He's got pressure. He's got problems. His wife is inconsiderate. Everything. He goes to work, he's fine.

Three months later, he's converted, truly converted. He truly becomes a Christian. Truly. Six months later the same scenario again. It's snowing outside, he's late for work, he's got a terrible meeting that the boss is breathing down his throat about. He's just really in trouble. He doesn't have all his work done. He's so full of nerves and he's going towards the door and his wife comes down and says, "Can you take out the trash?" He turns around and he goes, "What's wrong with you? Don't you know I'm late?" He does the exact same thing. You say, "Well, what's the difference?" And the moment he does it, it's like a knife went straight to his heart and turned. He knows he's guilty. He knows he's wrong. He knows he must repent but he bucks up against it and he goes out the door anyway. He gets in the car. He's absolutely miserable. He can't stand it any longer. He makes his way to work. He's going into the meeting and finally he just tells his boss, "Look, I'll be there in five minutes." He gets on the phone. He begs his wife to forgive him.

What's happened? What's happened? It's not that he's taken on a new form of life, he has become a new creature with a new relationship not only with God but with sin. He can't tolerate it anymore like that. It gets him. Why does it get him? Several reasons. One that gets him because he really is a new creature. The illustration of Charles Spurgeon with the two hogs or the one hog and the two plates of food. I don't know if you've ever heard that. You take a beautiful plate of the best food in California and put it over here, you put a pile of garbage here. You let a hog loose in the back, where's the hog gonna go? I was raised on a farm, I know exactly where he's gonna go. He's gonna go to the bucket of trash. Why? He's a hog. That's what pigs do, pigs eat trash. They like it. They wiggle their tail and they're not ashamed. They eat it. But while that pig has got his head stuck in that bucket eating trash, if I have the power in a second to change him into a man, what happens? The very food he was gulping down, the very food he was gulping down, that he delighted in, it now sickens him and nauseates him and he throws it up. And when he pulls his head out of that bucket and turns around and sees you, he's ashamed. Why? Because he's not a pig anymore. He's a new creature, and that new creature that he's become can no longer stomach what he did before.

Now let me ask you a question: if that illustration offends you, realize this, I just described conversion, the conversion of every person who's ever been converted. Can you say that that's happened in your life? The things of the world, the things of sin, the

temporal things, the carnal things, the sensual things, I'm not saying that a Christian can avoid them altogether, I'm not saying that a Christian never falls, all that is truly possible, but being a new creature in Christ, the Christian cannot tolerate it. And being a child of God, God in his good providence will constantly be working to discipline and deliver his child. Are you Christian? Are you? Don't throw up that blockade in your heart. O that the Spirit of God would tear it down. Don't reason yourself away from salvation, that God would illumine your mind. Some of you do not know God and God does not know you. Now surrender. Repent. Believe the Gospel. Turn away from your wickedness and your worldliness and your playing church and trust in Christ who is mighty to save.

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature and old things pass away and new things come. I have never been a religious man. My wife questions even my own civility. I was born in the woods and some people say that's exactly where I should have stayed. I'm not very proper. I don't know which forks to use. In the hotel, they put me in last night, I was just amazed at all those new things in the bathroom. I'm not a very cultured person. Not a religious person. I don't care about looking nice or in style or anything else. So why am I a Christian? Why? It's not because I like the rules, even though I do like the rules now. It's because of him. It's because of who he is. It's because of what he's done. If I were to describe my Christianity, I would describe my Christianity as this: I'm in a wild animal that's been roped down by the love of God in Jesus Christ. It's a thing of the heart. It's a thing, it's a deep river. It's not superficial. It's not something you put on. It's what you are because of who he is and what he has done.

Now look with me just for a moment to the book of Philippians. One of the greatest definitions of a Christian in the entire Bible, Philippians 3:3. Paul is constantly having to deal with religious people, with Judaizers, and what were Judaizers basically? They were people who were always putting on and looking for external marks: circumcision; allegiance to the temple; washing certain pots; cleaning their hands. All external marks. And Paul says this, "we are the true circumcision," we're the ones that are truly God's people, we are the ones who truly belong to the Messiah. Well, how do you know? He goes on and he says, "who worship in the Spirit of God." Let me ask you a question, now just answer this question: is your life, answer this question, don't you avoid it, is your life marked by worship? Now I know that all of us, even the most mature believers, can wane in our passion and we struggle against apathy, all sorts of things, that's why we must constantly be abiding in Christ, but let me ask you a question: is your life marked by worship, and is that worship that you do helped by the Spirit? Not just carnal, "I've gotta worship." Not just, "I've gotta do this." A forced thing. A discipline thing. A thing I must make myself do. That's not what I'm talking about, even though at times we must crucify the flesh, we must discipline ourselves, and we must worship, but the true believer, their life will be marked by worship. They will worship.

Is your life that way? Young man, listen to me, is your life marked by worship? Do you worship Christ? Do you worship God in Christ? Do you worship being helped and aided by the power of the Holy Spirit? Is there a sense of being drawn to him? Of not having to worship but desiring to worship? Is there ever a sense of getting caught up in worship as though you were in the middle of a strong tide in the Pacific and it was pulling you

almost beyond your control? Do you have any sense of this supernatural working of God in your life where you desire to worship him? Where you read things in Scripture and you want to worship him? Where you hear things and you fall on your knees and you worship him? Where something good happens in your life and you worship him? If that is absent from your life, then just what are you? Just what do you have?

I'm amazed that so many people in the church today even want to go to heaven because heaven is only about God. It's only about the will of God and it is only about the worship of God, and yet in the church those three things are so often not even practiced. People will do everything in their power to avoid it.

Son, daughter, please, is your life marked by worship? Now some of you would have to say no and it is because you are not converted. There are others of you who would have to say, "I have really grown apathetic." You know, the worship here today, the songs that were chosen, the spirit of the song leader, everything was just, I was very happy. I was very happy. I was delighting. It felt like, it just felt like rain, a living stream. But some of you who are Christians, I want you to listen to me and, listen, I'm telling you this because I have the same problem. I'm not judging you. I have the same problem. When you get even the best of things over and over and over, they become so commonplace. I remember the first time I went through the Andes Mountains in a train, and this old missionary, Homer Crane, he was like 350 years old. He'd been there all his life. And we're in this train and we're going through the Andes Mountains and I'm, you know, I'm 24 years old and I'm like, "Wow! Look at that! The majesty and all this and they're so gigantic!" And he's snoring and I thought to myself, "How can he do this?" About 10 years later, I was leading a group of students through the Andes Mountains and they were all going, "Whoa! Look at this!" And I'm snoring because it's the same thing, one of the greatest sins that we commit as men against our wives, that any moment that our wife becomes commonplace, we've sinned. You see, to have something so special that the first time your wife laid eyes on you and you laid eyes on her, and that one special holy moment and you felt like your heart was gonna bust out of your chest, and even dance, and then two years later, you go out to the car and she's standing by the door and you get in the car and wondering why she doesn't open the door and get in the car. And that's sin. That's sin.

But we do the same thing with God, Christian. I mean, there are people, people in Iran in this moment that are in prison in Iran, suffering in horrible prisons, that if they could break out for a few seconds and been here this morning, what would it have been like for them? I'm not trying to hurt you, I'm saying I have the same problem but, listen, one of the marks of true Christianity is that we worship. One advantage of being a most wretched man before conversion, and I was, is that it somehow fuels a worship later on when you realize what you were, who he is and what he did for you. It's one of the reasons why John Newton could write the songs he wrote.

He says, "Look," he says, "we are true circumcision. We are true Christians who worship in the Spirit of God." This is not just discipline, it's not just forced, it is a supernatural work of the Spirit in every child of God that he promotes worship in that child. He

promotes worship. Is the Spirit of God working in your heart promoting worship? Leading you to greater worship? And then he goes on and he says this, "we are the true circumcision who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus." Do you? Do you? Do you glory in him? I mean, do you glory in him? Do you rejoice in him? Do you boast in him? Do you think about him? Is he the motivation of your life? His glory, his splendor, what he's done, who he is, what he's worthy of, is that the thing that's pushing you? Do you glory in him. Is he your only boast? Is he your only boast? Do you delight in him? Do you think about him?

I can honestly say this morning, alarm goes off, didn't go off, I woke up just right before it, 4:30. I'm 52. It's getting harder every day to get out of bed. And I said to myself, I said in prayer to him, "I will get out of bed. I will do it for You. I will not do it for those students. I will not do it for, I will do it for You. I will get out of bed for You." Is that your life, "I will do it for You. I will do it for You." Why do we not sin? If you say we should not sin because it'll wreck your life, that's true but if that's your ultimate motivation, that's idolatry. Sinners think that way, self-preservation, "I will not sin because it will harm me." Why do you not sin? Because you want him. Because you want him.

I was sharing with my brother Holden, I work with him at Heart Cry, and this morning when we were sitting around eating breakfast and I said, you know, I read an amazing thing in Deuteronomy. I had never seen it before. God says to the nation of Israel, "I brought you out in order to bring you in." That's what he says, "I brought you out to bring you in." Why do we come out from the world? Why do we not touch that which is unclean? It's not because we just want to be clean, it's not because we want to proper folk. If that's the case, go be part of a Pride & Prejudice cast. That's not why we do it. Why do we do it? We come out because we want to come in. We come away because we want to be with him. I hear these songs so often, you know, these songs about heaven and streets of gold and gates of pearl and all these different, I could care less. I just want him.

Yesterday sharing Christ on the plane with a lady, I purposely went through everything that our ministry does. Everything from teaching Gypsy children to read, to feeding this, to doing that, to buying boats in the jungles, to all sorts of things. I went through all of it just so then I could say this, "And if I died right now, I would go to heaven and not for any of those things I just mentioned, but because Jesus Christ shed his own blood for my soul. I hope to swing out into eternity on that scarlet thread and that scarlet thread alone for Him. For Him."

Young men, let me ask a question: where does your loyalty lie? Young lady, where does your loyalty lie? Well, it says blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. A lot of times we think of some sort of Catholic monkish-type of withdrawal holiness, that's not what it's talking about. What it's basically saying there, blessed is the unalloyed heart, the heart that has no competing loyalties.

You know, young man, you're raised in a place where if someone says to you, "You're a sinner," you can laugh because sin is a rather popular thing today, promoted on all levels.

So if someone calls you a sinner, you probably could laugh about it, but if I called you a disloyal traitor and I said it that way to your face, you'd be ready to fight me. Do you not know that in the Bible sin is disloyalty, it's betrayal? You can profess Christ with your mouth and yet your whole life is a betrayal to everything he did on the cross, to everything that he is. Is your life a betrayal or do you truly know him? Can you betray him openly and freely without any pain of the heart? Without any prick of the conscience? Or when you betray him, and we all do because there is no man who does not sin, does it crush you as Peter was crushed the night of his betrayal?

Are you, Christian, do you glory in Christ Jesus and then it says "and put no confidence whatsoever in the flesh"? I'm amazed at so many people, I'm not kidding you, religious people, church people, all sorts of people that I ask them, "Are you trusting in Christ?" And they will tell me, "Yes, yes." But then I'll keep pressing them with questions and bring them to a point where they'll finally say, "Yes, I think, I hope I'm good enough, I mean, I hope I'm trying." Have you come to the point where you've realized there is absolutely no hope for you and that the consequences for that hopelessness is devastating? It's eternal.

A lot of times when forums open up and people want to ask me questions, there's always a few young men whether it's on the internet or whatever, who try to really get me, I guess, and they'll say things like this, "Why don't the guy just loosen up? What don't the guy just, I mean, why is he always on, I mean, he's just always, it's so intense. What's his deal? Why don't he just, you know, take some tea and take a hot bath or something?" Do you know why? Because I am looking right now at a group of people some of which will one day be transformed in heaven to be so glorious that if I saw them right now in their glorified state like the prophet Daniel, like the prophet John, I might even have a tendency to try to fall down before their feet and worship. That's how glorious they'll be. And there are some of you that are sitting here today that throughout all eternity will be twisted, the most horrifying immoral monsters that could ever be conceived by the mind of a man. Do you want to know why I'm intense? Because some of you will spend an eternity in heaven and some of you in this very room will spend an eternity in hell. Now tell me how I ought to think and act.

You see, it really is costly and it really affects you when you believe this stuff. I can't come in here and give you a little sermonette and have everyone walk out and say, "Paul's a real nice guy." Do you realize that the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 5, he says, "knowing the fear of the Lord," what does he do? He persuades men. Now a lot of people misinterpret that passage. They think that what Paul is saying is, "Knowing that these people are going to stand before God and be judged, I'm going to persuade them. Knowing the fear that is coming and the judgment that's coming upon those people, I'm gonna do everything in my power to persuade them even though," as it says in 2 Corinthians 5, "even though they think I'm out of my mind." It's not what he's saying. He's saying this, Paul's saying, "Knowing that I will stand before God and everything I am as a preacher and every motivation of my heart will be revealed, the veil will be skinned down like cutting through the body of a deer, everything about me will be

skinned down and will be manifest before God, and therefore fearing God, I preach this way whether you think I'm logical or insane."

You see, there's much at stake here. There's much at stake here. My great fear for you is not that you have not been exposed to the Gospel like so many places where I preach, my great fear for you is that you've been exposed to the Gospel over and over and over but you have not ears to hear, and if you have not ears to hear, do not blame it on the sovereignty of God, it is your own fault. Listen! Examine yourself! Examine your ways! Do you know Christ and does Christ know you? Does he?

Some of you are going out to minister, all of you are going out to minister. Some of you will go out and you will minister life because you have life. Some of you, you'll just find a way to get through these next few days, you've dreaded this like you can't believe it and you're just gonna try to find a way to make it back in here again and start life all over again without this kind of ministry. Some of you will minister life because you have life. Some of you will minister death because that's all you have. Some of you are genuine Christians and you're rather timid in your heart and so you are afraid about going out and witnessing. I understand that. You're afraid about going out and minister. Every time I get ready to stand up in the street and preach, I want you to know something, I'm afraid. I understand that but some of you just do not care because you do not know him, because you do not carry that precious treasure inside your heart.

Now I want to close by just looking at something rather quickly and just go to 1 Thessalonians for a moment. Paul says in verse 4 of chapter 1 of 1 Thessalonians, "knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you." Paul says, "I know that you're converted. I know that you're part of God's elect. I know that you are Christians." How does he know? "For our gospel," in verse 5, "did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction." Has that happened to you? Has the Gospel come to you in that way or did you just pray a prayer and ask Jesus to come into your heart and then have some preacher pronounce over you salvation? Look what he's saying, "our gospel did not come to you in word alone," but what happened?" It came in power. It came in power. Did the Gospel come in power in your life, showing you your sins, showing you your need of Christ, revealing to you Christ, giving you real assurance in your heart that you are truly converted?

He goes on, he says, "for our gospel," verse 5, "did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. You also became imitators of us and of the Lord." Who are you imitating? Now I know I'm going to sound like some dinosaur from the past, some moral relic from the 50s with a flattop haircut, but who are you imitating? Give me your iPhone. Give me your iPad. Give me your computer. Let me see what you're watching. Let me follow you around and I'll find that some of you are imitating the world and the stars of this world, and the fashions of this world, and everything about this world because you love the world because you are of the world.

Who are you imitating? Paul said he knew these people had become Christians because they were imitating those who were Christians. It is getting such a heartbreaking thing for me to see, even among these new Reformed guys and these new young guys with all their good theology, they're grabbing a hold of their good theology but it's not making its way down to anything. It's not changing the way they talk. It's not changing their masculinity. It's not changing femininity on the other side. It's not changing clothing. It's not changing speech. It's not changing media. It's not changing anything so don't talk to me about all your good theology. Leonard Ravenhill used to say, "Everybody wants a new definition of Christianity. What we need is an old demonstration of Christianity."

Who are you imitating? I don't care if you quote John Calvin if you look like the world. I don't care if you carry a John MacArthur Study Bible if you look like the world.

Who are you imitating? Even some of you Christians need to hear this. Stop trying to look like a cleaner version of the ungodliness that surrounds you. We're not relevant to this world because we look like the world, because we're completely different. As I say, a \$50 haircut, cool glasses, skinny jeans and tattoo does not a prophet make, but a man and a woman renewed in their mind by the power of God and the power of God's word. He said, "You became imitators of us having received the word in much tribulation with joy of the Holy Spirit." I work with a man in Iran who's best friends, four of them have already been slaughtered. In Iran the church is growing unprecedented in that way, an unprecedented way. They're receiving the word in much tribulation. Are you walking with him with no tribulation or is the prophecy fulfilled in you that if you cannot run with footmen, how will you run with the horses? If you cannot serve him in the midst of a place where it's all about the Gospel and still you're filled with carnality and worldliness and you cannot serve him here, how will you serve him during tribulation? You will not. You will fall away. You will prove what you've always been.

Not these, they received the word in the midst of tribulation. Verse 7, "so that you became an example to all the believers." I'm going to ask you a question that I ask missionaries all the time, and this is where we're gonna end because you're going out to minister, this is what I ask missionaries: what part of your doctrine and what part of your life should be exported and what part should be quarantined? The Gospel you preach, should it be exported or quarantined? Your godliness, you're going out there to make the world a better place, would you want all those people out there to have your godliness, your personal piety, separation from the world, would that help them if they imitate you? If they follow your example, will that help them? Will their life be better because they follow your example of piety? What about your devotional life. How much of your devotional life would you want other people? You're going out to disciple the world right now, you want them all to have your devotional life or should your devotional life be quarantined?

Oh, I have spoken hard words here today but it is only because I love thee. I want so much for you. I want you to think. Those of you who are Christian, press on. Press on. Thirty years have now passed in my life and there's only one word for me, press on. Press on. In the mountains of Peru during the war, if you met a brother going down one of

those trails with his donkey or his burro and you said, "Como esta, hermano," what he would say is this, [Spanish], he would say, "Advancing." Advancing. If you're a Christian, advance in piety. In knowledge. Everyone wants to do all kinds of things but what you do don't matter if it's not what you are. Concentrate on being. On being. On being Christian. On being holy. On knowing God so that when you open up your mouth something other than just the typical evangelicalism comes out, God's word comes out. Advance, believer. Go! There's so much more for you. So much glory. So much more of his presence. So much more of his life. So much more of his power. I have 30 years on you and I have not even touched the foothills of the Everest of his power in the Christian life. Be encouraged. But for others of you, you've been marked today. You know your conscience is screaming at you. You know you're not right. You know it. Repent! Repent!

A dear friend of ours that works in the country of Peru as a missionary, in his testimony he tells how his brother was truly a great evangelist and he would go out with his brother on these ministry things and help get everything together, the platform, and he was so proud of his brother and he was associated with his brother. And so he and his brother were going around doing a work in Romania and people were getting saved, and one night as the preacher was preaching, this young man who had already done so much ministry realized, "I'm lost. I'm lost. I'm not a Christian." And he was so embarrassed, but praise God, the Holy Spirit would not let him go, grabbed a hold of his heart, shook him, held him until he came before his brother and the entire congregation and said, "I am lost but tonight Jesus saved me."

Maybe that same thing will be this weekend for you, you were sent out to minister but you realized, "I have nothing to give. There is nothing in me. I'm empty. I don't know Him." Now the devil will tell you that if you repent and go public with this, that the people will laugh at you and mock you. That's the same thing that happened to my wife. She went down the Amazon the ?? for the sake of Christ. She ate things a billy-goat couldn't eat and hold down. She was with me when bombs were blowing up and machine-guns were going off and everything, and she was not a Christian. And then one, one wonderful blessed night, God saved her and she was so scared, "What will people do to you, Paul? They're just looking for a way to take you down. This'll be it." I said, "I'd rather get taken down in the ministry and have my wife go to heaven." But do you know what? Believers, true believers aren't that way. Do you know what they'll do? They will weep with joy. They will be so happy. They will be so happy. Don't let the devil lie to you. Trust Christ, my dear one. My dear one, trust Christ. Trust him.

Let's pray.