

Have You Overcome the Evil One?

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

1 John 2:12, "I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his sake. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, children, because you know the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one." And it is very clear that there are different levels of people who know Jesus.

And you can see it there. John says first, "I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his sake." And that's the first step for most of us, that we know our sins are forgiven. And what I'd just like to share with you again is you can know your sins are forgiven. So, don't think you can just hope that your sins are forgiven. You can know that your sins are forgiven. There can be a witness in your spirit with the Holy Spirit that you are a child of God.

And I would encourage those of you who tonight are maybe doubtful about that, to settle that this very evening. If you are in some vague doubt about that, if you're not sure that you are going to go to heaven, if you're not sure that Jesus knows you and you're not sure that you know that he knows you, if you're not sure that you have peace with God, if you're not sure that if you died this very moment that you'd go to heaven, then I would encourage you to see that you can know that, loved ones. And this life with our dear Father is not built on vagueness and on shades of grey. It is very certain. "I write to you, little children, because you know your sins are forgiven."

And that's the first step in the Christian life. And the other step that he talks about is probably the most advanced one, "I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning." And I suppose those are the dear old saints who have begun to transcend time and have begun to see the eternal cross working right down through the centuries and to know the eternal cross, and to know God in the infinite, beyond time. But a very reasonable stage is the one between, "I am writing to you young men, because you have overcome the evil one."

And I'd like to address us on that level, "I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one." When we talk about Russia, or Iran, or Africa, or India, or China, we're talking about the need for young men and young women -- spiritually -- young men and young women, young men and young women who have overcome the evil one. We're not talking about the little children who are still preoccupied with the first principles of Christ: still preoccupied with falling into sin, confessing it, falling into sin again, confessing it -- battling their own inner problems with the evil one. Those dear ones have no time for anybody else. And they have certainly no time to begin to stand against the enemy in places like India, or the dark, dark enemy in places like Russia, or the bewildering chaotic enemy in places like Africa or the Middle East. They are so preoccupied with themselves that it's all they can do to get through to the end of the day.

Now loved ones, do you see that you have to take a definite step from being a little child who knows your sins are forgiven into the position where you're a young man or a young woman spiritually because you have overcome the evil one? In other words, you have to step into victory over sin in your own life. And until you do that, you have no pouring forth of Jesus' Spirit from your own

heart, because the pouring forth of Jesus' Spirit to others comes from a heart that is glad, and joyful, and light, and victorious. And you know if you want to argue over, "Oh, do you mean there's no sin in your life; there's no sin in your life?" I'm sure there are all kinds of sin. But there is no conscious sin! And that is the sin that brings the guilt to our dear consciences. And that's the sin that prevents us seeing answers to our prayers.

That's what God said, "It is not that my hand is short, or my arm is short, but your inequities stand between me and you. So that you cry to me in prayer and I cannot answer you." And so the only way we can be powerful for God in China, or India, or Africa, or Australia, or South America is when we've come to that place where we're free from this endless battle with the evil one.

Now, why I share it with you like that is we have to stop, as a body, seeing that as the great height we might reach, if we're fortunate, at the end of this life. Loved ones, if you wait for that moment, you'll be able to do nothing for Jesus in this present life. The Father wants us to hunger and thirst after this righteousness so that we will come to the place where we have been crucified with Christ, and we have been raised with him to the right hand of God.

Part of why I share this is I sensed as Marny was singing, and I sensed as others of you are committing yourselves to the whole ministry abroad, I sensed that the body is beginning to look something like a sleeping giant that is beginning slowly to stir. And perhaps it is that many of you are coming up to that 'magic 30' age. Or maybe it's just that we, as a body, are coming into some maturity. But I sense that many of you are beginning to count the costs, and beginning to settle: "Am I going for Jesus, irrespective of whether I get married, irrespective of whether I am happy, irrespective of whether I have the car I want, irrespective of whether people remember me or not?"

And loved ones, it is that kind of consecration that is needed to come through the cross to the resurrection side of Calvary. And I would encourage you this evening to see that it is a definite step. It doesn't matter whether you're an old miserable Wesleyan Arminian as I was. It doesn't matter if you're a happy old Calvinist. It doesn't matter whether you're a Baptist, or a Catholic. Throughout all our traditions loved ones, there have come two clear stages in all men and women's life. The first stage was when they were preoccupied with their own salvation. And they were concerned about whether they could get into heaven or not. And the second stage was when they began to be concerned about serving God and they begin to be concerned with what God's will was for their lives.

And everyone -- it doesn't matter in what terms they talk of it; it doesn't matter if they don't believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit; it doesn't matter if they don't even use the words full surrender or consecration, or 'death with Christ', or 'victorious life', or any of those terms; in every tradition you see that men and women first had to make their peace with God through confessing their sins, and repenting of their sins, and receiving Jesus' Spirit into their life. Then as that little candle came into their life and started to move around the corners of their life, they began to see the real darkness that was there. And sooner or later, it varied in time, some at 20, some at 15, some at 25, some at 30, some at 35, some at 50, some at 60 or 70, but sooner or later like Moses, they came to the place on a backside of a mountain where they saw that they were either going for God, whatever it meant for their own lives, or they were going to live the rest of their lives for themselves.

And I would encourage you to see that it is as clear as that. There is no vagueness about it loved

ones. There comes "a day when, I, George Mueller, died to self and died to sin." There comes a day when you pass from being a child who is always coming, "Lord, forgive me for my sin; forgive me for my sin;" to a time where you become a 'young man' or a 'young woman', because you've at last overcome the evil one in your life. And I would encourage you to see that that can be loved ones.

And I would ask you, if you're in any doubt this evening, especially after this service -- we're going to have a 'Seeker's Meeting' after the service, and we're going to try to have a 'Seeker's Meeting' up in the lounge every month -- a time when we'll be able to just kneel down in different parts of the lounge up there and just pray through to whatever is our need. And there will be some of us elders who are there and some of the rest of us who will be available to help you. But, if you are in any doubt about whether you are 'born of God', that is, if I were to ask you the question, "When did you meet Jesus?" And you would answer me, "Well, it's been a kind of gradual thing, you know. 'So and so' kept at me and I've just gradually come into it," well, I agree with you. I don't think you need to know the date. I frankly, do know the date. And I think many of us do know the date. I don't think you need to know the date, but you need to know a definite time when you established a friendship relationship with Jesus personally, a time when you confessed your sins, one-by-one, to him -- those things that you know are wrong in your life. You confessed them to him. And you confessed them plainly, in words even, but certainly, in a definite prayer. You confessed your sins to him. You need to know a definite time when you repented of those sins, when you said, "Lord Jesus, these sins that I have been committing in my past life and I'm committing this very moment, these sins are spears into your side. I see that I caused your death. 'Against thee and thee only have I sin and done this wrong.' And Lord, I personally am sorry to you for the personal pain and agony that I have caused you. And I turn from these sins. And I am going to have done with them this moment."

Then loved ones, you turned to Jesus and you asked him to come into your heart. And you remember that he said, "Behold that I stand on the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me." And you said, "Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I turn from all the things in it that are wrong and that are keeping you out, and I ask you to come in and abide with me. And I will obey you from this day forward." And then you committed yourself to daily prayer and Bible study. And certainly there were other sins that came into your life but you confessed them and you kept up to date with God.

Now, I would ask you, have you ever done that? And if you're vague about it loved ones, I would say honestly, it's possible that you're building on a shaky foundation. It's possible that you have not put your hand in the hand of God definitely. Now, if you say to me, "Well, do you have to do it as definitely?" Well, there's no doubt every man or woman that made a move with God in the Bible put a stake in the ground. At some time or other they put a stake in the ground, and at a definite time they made a covenant with God.

It seems that that is God's way. And if you say to me, "Well, can you not grow into it gradually?" well, loved ones, it seems that all of us who do it gradually are always in doubt. We're almost always in doubt. We're uncertain whether anything really happened, we're unsure where we stand with God and Satan can get at us and say, "Oh, you never did anything." So it seems that those of us who have come to a place of stability with God have at some point in our lives made a definite commitment to him, and not just, in our minds, or thinking it through, but a definite time when we made our transaction with Jesus. And I'd ask you, have you ever done that?

And then I'd ask you are you a backslider? Are you a backslider? A backslider is not one just who

has sinned, but one who has never kept their account up to date with God about their sinning. That is, they have allowed outward sins to come into their lives and they have not continued to confess and repent of them. They have begun to get used to those outward sins. And now they've rationalized them, and now they have a sinning Christian life. And they have real difficulty feeling the old desire to witness. They have real difficulty actually even feeling the desire to come to church, let alone come to a prayer meeting. And they are in a backslidden state. They are cold inside in their hearts. They don't like prayer meetings, they don't like Bible study, they have great difficulty coming to any religious service that has not some entertainment value to it, and they themselves are living really a secular life.

Now, I'd ask you are you a backslider? And if you are, you are in the same position as I found myself in. I found myself living a sinning Christian life -- in the ministry, in the Methodist ministry, but living a sinning Christian life. And the first thing I had to do was to get back to Jesus. Not as anything great, not as any great over comer, just as a child who had their sins forgiven. I had to get back to the Savior. And I remember, I've told you before. I read a Billy Graham pamphlet on how to come through as a new convert to God, and that's what I did. I came back to him again as I had come before when I was 17. And I confessed my sins one-by-one. And I turned from those sins one-by-one, and committed myself to turning from those forever if I had to, but keeping up to date day-by-day with my sins with God. And then I received Jesus into my heart again as my Savior. And no, it wasn't as great as it was the first time. God often asks us to walk in faith when we come back to him, but it was a definite act.

Now, I would say to you, if you're a backslider, don't somehow hope that being filled with the Holy Spirit will cure your backsliding. First, you have to get back to God as a child of his. You have to cease to be a child of the devil. And you have to come to God, and be one of those who does not commit sin, who abstains from outward sin. And where you do fall into any sin, you confess it, and you keep up to date with God. Because, of course, the great truth with the Father is that even though he wants all of us to come to a place of absolute victory, a place where we're free from the power of sin, yet he says, "A broken and a contrite heart, I will not despise." And so it is beautiful that our salvation is built on God's ever being ready to forgive and to deal with a contrite heart.

It's the impenitent heart of a backslider that God cannot deal with. And that's why it's so important for you to keep up to date with your sins. In a way, I often share with you, we shouldn't have a long list of sins every day. But if that's the only way you can stay in relationship with God, then that's what you've to do. You have to be honest about your sins. You have to continue to call sin sin.

So I would ask you first of all, have you ever given your life really to Jesus? Have you ever been born of God? Then, if you have been a backslider, have you ever come back to God? And then of course, the one that lifts us from the child that is forgiven into the realm of the young man or young woman that has overcome the evil one, is this dealing with inward sin. And oh, loved ones, I just know it so well in my own life. It's as if God witnesses to your heart as the years go by. If you make room for sin in your heart, eventually that sin will out. Eventually that sin will eat away at any salvation that you're experiencing with God. And whatever you think. Maybe you can never be lost -- maybe not. But at least, as Nee says, "You'll live as a dead man. If you're born of God you'll live as a dead person." But sin will eat away your place with God.

Now loved ones, that's as sure as day is day and night is night. If you regard sin in your heart

God cannot continue a close relationship with you. It's wrought right through scripture, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, then we have fellowship with one another, and with God." But, "If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, then we lie." And if you regard sin in your heart and continue to allow it to dwell there, it will eventually take over your whole life. So when you're a child of God the Holy Spirit begins to show you what we have learned in 'Churchianity' and in Christendom to call the little sins. And they are the little acts, the little feelings of irritability, the little feelings of anger, the little risings up, the little rebellions against Bible study, the little feelings that we don't want to go to the prayer meeting, the little bits of development that show that the original warmth of your love for Jesus is beginning to cool, and you begin to sense that you are becoming lukewarm, and you haven't the same desire to witness to other people that you used to have. And it's just tendencies inside you of inward sin that you begin first to experience. Actually, it's probably that they were there all along. But just now the Holy Spirit is sufficiently alive in you to begin to point them out in your heart.

Now, I would say this to you, don't settle for anything but the best. God has said, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." His servant Paul said, "God gave the Holy Spirit and cleansed our hearts by faith." Go for a clean heart. See that there's a delight and a joy in being able to come into a group like this tonight without a critical feeling, or a critical attitude towards anybody. See that it's possible to come into a fellowship like this tonight with your heart bounding with praise to God and with love for him, and love for all of us here. See that that's a beautiful and a normal pattern of life and that it is possible to live without irritability, and selfishness, and critical spirit rising in your heart. It's possible to live above continual uncleanness inside.

And loved ones, once you begin to see and admit that that is God's will for you, you're a great way on the journey to coming into the position of a young man, or a young woman where you've overcome the evil one, because Finney [Charles Finney, 1792 – 1875, American Presbyterian minister] is right. He said, "The first great step towards coming into the fullness of the spirit, coming into full consecration, coming into a place where you can serve God and not just be his child, is when you realize you are not in that position." He puts it this way, "When you realize you have not this blessing and you need that blessing, you need the fullness of the Holy Spirit, you need a clean heart. That's a great step."

So some of you, actually, maybe you need to come to the lounge tonight, because you need to just simply acknowledge to God, "Lord, I'm not putting up any pretenses here in this body. I'm going to declare to you, 'I need to come into the victory that is described in your word. I need to come into the place where I have a clean heart.'" And that's a great step forward loved ones, when you admit that and when you stop defending yourself in regard to what people think of you. That's a first step. And you know, the next step is to see the depth of that self and to come into – it's really a new conviction of sin. That's it. It's a new and a deeper conviction of sin.

And if you say to me, "Why can't this come upon you when you're born of God?" I don't know. It seems that some people came into it very soon after they were born of God. It's very difficult to find anybody who came into the fullness of the Spirit at the moment they were born of God. It seems almost as if our own unregenerate heart is so evil that we have no light at all within us. And it's only when the little candle of the Holy Spirit comes in that we begin to then see that the room is really pretty dark. And the candle of the Holy Spirit begins to go around the corners of the self life and reveal to us what we're really like. It seems that it's something to do with us,

certainly, because undoubtedly God can do everything in a moment.

But that's the first step; see the depth of that self life. And if you loved ones keep on thinking that you're risking your own salvation or your assurance of salvation when you do that, well Satan will get a hold on you. But don't you see that our salvation is because we were included in Jesus' death? That's it. God has included us in Jesus' death. He's destroyed us there and remade us. God isn't looking for something more from us. He isn't trying to squeeze some other thing out of us. God isn't looking for anything but our realization and our acceptance that we were crucified with Christ. And he's asking us to believe that in our heads, and to submit our wills to the truth of it as we're able. That's the basis of our salvation.

But when we come into this new conviction of sin, we're not so much talking about salvation as we're talking about dear children who love their father and who want to please him. They want to come to a place where their lives are pleasing to him, where prayer can be made real and can be answered, because Jesus said, "If you abide in me and my words abide in you then ask whatever you will and it will be done for you." So these children are children of the Father. That's what Paul called even the old carnal ones in 1 Corinthians 3. He said, "You're children! You're just little children of Christ."

Well, you are children. You're carnal. You're not spiritual, but you are children of the Father. And it's important to see there's a distinction between our salvation which is based on Jesus' blood that has been presented to God, and this further work of conviction that the Holy Spirit wants to do in us in order to make us a channel for the Spirit of Jesus. And so it's important for you to go with a whole heart to that.

And I think honestly, if you yield to the Spirit of Jesus within you, you'll feel what I felt. I just – I wanted to please my Father. I wanted to be clean; I wanted to be a delight to him. I didn't want this battle with this self within. I didn't want this enemy of God dwelling in my heart, pulling me at times his way, and then Jesus pulling me the other way. I said to God, "Lord, this is no glory to you. It's really a stain on your name."

And loved ones, when you come that way, and ask him for a new conviction of sin, the Holy Spirit will be faithful. And he will give you just a terrible time, just disastrous. If you're hard to live with now, you'll just be impossible to live with. And the Holy Spirit is faithful, he convicts of sin. He begins to show you what sin is -- real sin, that independence, that stiff necked self that wants its own way. And he'll begin to show you that all sin can be traced back to that, that you are just really a little puppet god, that that's exactly what you are. You are always proclaiming you want to serve Jesus, but you're a little puppet god that wants to serve Jesus in your way, as long as you get the things that you want, as long as you get the respect that you want. And the Holy Spirit will come down into your dear heart and will show you the many ways in which you would not touch that Man on the cross, many ways in which you wouldn't dwell with him for a second. You would not be insulted as he was insulted. You would not suffer the discomfort that he suffered. You are not prepared to be looked down upon as he was looked down upon. You are not prepared to be put out as he was put out.

And the Holy Spirit will show you that loved ones, and will expose to you the horror of that massive "I" that lives inside you. And as he shows you that, of course, I know you'll come to the same place as all of us have done, where you will see, "Well, listen, this is massive! This is too huge and too monstrous for me to hope to tame this thing! This is too big for me to train! This is

something that only God can deal with.” And of course, it’s like the forgiveness of our sins. I don’t know if you remember, but I remember when I saw my sins, I realized there’s no one who can remove them.

There’s no one that can remove the barrier that my sin put between me and God unless God himself does it. Unless God does something through Jesus on the cross there’s no way in which I can ever make myself right with God. And that’s what comes to you, about this new conviction of inward sin. You begin to see this self is unmanageable. It is sure enmity against God. “It is not subject to God’s law, indeed, it can’t be subject to his law.” It will not yield to all blandishments of the Holy Spirit. It won’t yield to all the books that I’ve been reading. This self has to be dealt with by God.

And you begin at last to glimpse the radical nature of the remedy. And that of course -- we have to be driven to that. Nobody here will touch death unless there’s no other way. And I know you’ll find it hard to believe but that’s what keeps you from dying. You’re hoping still that there’s another way through. You’re hoping that there’s another way over self besides death. And of course God’s dear word is so clear, “If a seed falls into the ground and dies, then it will bear fruit. But if it refuses, it will abide by itself and eventually die forever.” And God’s word is full of Jesus saying, “Whosoever saves his life will lose it. But whosoever loses his life for my sake will save it.”

And of course, that’s a hard thing to come to. It’s a hard thing to go to your own funeral, because that’s what it is. That’s what dying with Jesus is really about. And it’s only when you see that there’s no other way, that you’re at last able to even consider it. I remember, I was horrified, horrified because, as a good theologian, I had learned all about Jesus dying for me. And I thought the whole plan was that he would die for me so that I wouldn’t have to die. And then suddenly I saw this business, “If Christ has died for all then all have died,” and, “I live, yet not I, but Christ lives within me.” “I was crucified with Christ.” And it was then that I began to see that that was going to mean me, and I was going to have to face it. Was I, Ernest O’Neill, willing to accept the fact that God had destroyed me in Jesus and therefore this life was not my own? And that is hard, because we all have little hopes, haven’t we? All have little hopes that all our teachers have nourished in us, and all our parents have nourished in us. And we hope to be something for God, or we hope to achieve something, or it would be nice to have this kind of a wife, or these kinds of children, or have this kind of future. And of course, the issue is not that you’ll never have those. But the issue is, are you prepared -- to be prepared to do without all those, if God asks you? That’s what dying means. It means having none of those things but having only God, himself.

And that loved ones, that place of full consecration is a high and holy place to come to where you at last come to the ground of your heart, and you at last settle, “Lord God, I’m willing to have you only.” And then you think you’re through and the Holy Spirit says, “Yes, but why this? Why this in your life? Do you still care about what they think of you? Do you still want your own way? Do you still even want the right to say no?”

It’s interesting, that’s one of the ones that’s a problem to us. We like to follow Jesus as long as we feel we still have the right not to follow him. But to die to the right to say no, that’s hard. To die absolutely to the right of your own will to choose or not to choose, that is hard. And when you come into that realm, usually it’s just you and Jesus. Usually, it’s not even your dear wife, or your dearest friend, or the person who’s helping you pray through. Usually, it’s just you and the Savior. You’re into realms there that no other man knows about, no other woman knows about.

Only the Holy Spirit can take you into the heart of your particular darkness, because it's only you can see it.

But when the Holy Spirit brings you there, and puts the question to you, then that is the moment of truth in your life. And it depends of course, on how you respond to that question whether you really do accept your place with Jesus on the cross and therefore begin to receive all of the benefits of his resurrection. And the Holy Spirit knows what you do when you're at that point. And of course, it's there that you're raised from the dead. It's there that the Holy Spirit fills you and frees you and completely delivers you from self, and delivers you from the power of sin. Then at last, you're free not to sin. Then at last you can say, "Well, if I sin, it's my own fault, because I chose to do it." But now, at last, you're freed not to sin, and you can decide not to sin.

And that's why of course, Paul then gives those commands, "Put to death," or, "Have put to death within you the deeds of the body." And you remember he says, "Forsake this and forsake that." And we so often listen to him and say, "Oh, I can't, I can't." Well, he's talking to people who have taken their place on the cross with Jesus, and they are people who can. They are at last free not to sin. They're free to obey and to walk free from sin.

And of course, that's the place where you have become a young man, because you have overcome the evil one in your own life and you're then able to begin to take your place at the right hand of God, in Ephesians 2:6, and to overcome the evil one in the lives of your friends, your relatives, the lives of your colleagues at work and at school, and then most of all, those loved ones in the world that are waiting for such men and women.

Loved ones, I would ask you have you entered into that? And I would point out to you that it is entered into by faith. And anything that is entered into by faith can be entered into in a moment. And it depends on your readiness to submit. And then faith springs up in your heart. Could I point that out to you again? It is not mighty faith that is needed. There is a verse in Galatians, you remember, that says, "This life I live by the faith 'of' the Son of God." And the incredible thing is that there's a sense in which you can have faith. You can believe that we were crucified with Christ, on the basis of God's word. You can mentally believe. In that sense, you can have faith. But there is a deep faith that only Jesus can exercise for you. And of course, he can only exercise it in a person who is willing to enter into what that faith is held for.

And so, if you're not willing to be crucified with him and to be raised with him, the faith of Jesus cannot be exercised, because he will not force anybody. So there's a sense in which faith springs up from a fully consecrated heart. And I would remind you of that both in the new birth and in the fullness of the Spirit. The problem is never faith unless you mean the volitional factor in faith. Faith is belief plus obedience. Well the problem is always in the obedience level. But the faith, the belief part of faith, rises up as Jesus gloriously exercises his faith for your death and resurrection with him, in you.

So loved ones, the issue is always, "Are you willing? Are you willing?" And you know, I can't stress to you how absolutely fool proof coming through to either the new birth or the fullness of the Spirit is, because some of you, I think, are vague about it. But it's fool proof. That dear old conscience is faithful. It will keep objecting as long as you keep resisting it. So you can try all kinds of things. You can try to feel the presence of Jesus. You can try to pretend that Jesus approves of you. You can try to believe you're filled with the

Holy Spirit. But there'll be nothing real inside you until that old conscience is at last satisfied.

And we need to thank God for that. You need to thank God that the conscience within our spirits knows what God wants, knows whether we're in conformity to that or not, and is aware and able to examine us. And that conscience is what you must satisfy. And the Holy Spirit, of course, enlightens the conscience. And he's the Holy Spirit of truth. And he lets you know if you really mean what you're saying.

But that's what's needed, men and women who have at last counted the cost, who have counted up what they are worth and then have settled on the cross with Jesus. And then there is nothing -- the gates of hell cannot prevail against one who has died and risen with Christ.

And then that's what becomes a mighty army. That becomes a mighty army of saints who begin to move into the world and triumph over the chaos in the kitchen in London, or triumph over the opposing darkness in a situation like Afghanistan, or triumph over the noise and bustle of a wholesale sales convention, or triumph over the sickness that hits their home. Those are the saints that walk above and in victory, and are able, therefore to express the spirit of that victorious Nazarene. And that's, of course, why we're here.

What people want to see is Jesus. They want to see Jesus in victory. They want to see Jesus walking down the streets of their city. And the demons are exposed as he walks by because of his purity. Not because he's going through all kinds of machinations, but because of his clean, holy, purity, the demons expose themselves. And those who are disobedient are convicted. And those who need healing from their sickness are healed. The world wants to see Jesus. And Jesus has offered himself to you and me so that he'll become manifest in us. And that's, you remember, what Paul says. He says, "Death is at work in us, but life in you, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in us." And that's what we're here for.

And loved ones, the only way Jesus can drive the car of your life is if you get into the passenger seat and out from behind that steering wheel. And only then can he take you where he wants to take you. And until you do that, you'll always be pulling at that wheel, and he'll be saying, "Turn it this way." And you'll be saying, "No, no, I'll go this way." And of course, the most important time is when he sees a way that you cannot see. And yet you're behind the wheel so you can only see what you can see. And you can't see that that lake and that water will bear the weight of your automobile, and so you're going to avoid it. But, he knows. He knows that it will bear it. And so you'll continue to miss countless ways in your life, because 'you' are still in control -- going by sight instead of by his faith.

So loved ones, there is a vast difference. And there are many little churches, little Baptist churches, and little Salvation Army halls, and little Lutheran churches all throughout this great country, where little souls are coming through to this same thing that we're talking about tonight. So there are all kinds of loved ones, in traditions that believe these things and traditions that don't believe them, who want Jesus so badly that they're coming through. But there are still far too few of us. And that's what I share with you. Not that we're the only ones. There are plenty of others. But there are too few of us.

There is a great mass of Christendom that lives in defeat, and is no testimony to the world at all. And there are very few of us that have got out of our lives, and let Jesus take over and be Lord.

And there are plenty of us who are calling him, "Savior," but very few of us, proportionately, who are calling him, "Lord." And it's something that we have to settle with individually. And I would really encourage you to do it, because the things that we talk about in these Sunday evenings, and the thing that I should be talking about tonight, is his Spirit coming through. But I just realize again, that until you're filled with his Spirit, his Spirit can't come through. And it's vital for you to see that. And nothing short of full consecration will do that.

Now, if you say to me, "Well, can we carry on living a carnal life?" Well, you can. I am sure there are lots of loved ones that have gone into heaven living carnal lives. I am sure there are lots of loved ones who went into heaven living carnal lives, because, first of all, they really didn't know there was deliverance. I think there are many loved ones who have never heard that you can be delivered from carnality, or you can be filled with the Holy Spirit. I think there are many other loved ones that hungered after it with all their hearts, but came to Jesus so late, that they didn't come through. I think similarly there are many loved ones that have lost everything, because they have tried to live with carnality.

But, I would bring you to reality, "Are we going to try to get into heaven with the least possible consecration? Is that the level of our love of our Savior? Is that the level of our gratitude to him that we're going to try to see how cheaply we can get into heaven?" Or, "Do we really believe that this Jesus has come into our hearts and that his love burns for his Father in us, and that he has the same attitude in us that he had in himself when he said, 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me'?"

And isn't it such a different concept? My meat, my every day food, is to do God's will. That's what I'm here for, not to try to get my own way as often as possible and yet somehow get into heaven by the skin of my teeth, but to do God's will moment-by-moment and to live in victory. I think that's undoubtedly what he's called us to. And that's why Jesus has died. And I would encourage you tonight to see that you can come through to something definite.

Now, if you say to me, "Well, what about this praying through? You know, what if I go up to the lounge and I pray, and pray, and I get nowhere?" That's all right. You keep on doing that for years. You keep on doing it because that is a declaration to God that you are serious, that you are hungering and thirsting after righteousness. And so you don't go up to the lounge thinking, "Well, this is the big one. This is the big moment." You go there and you go as far as you can with God until eventually there will come some night when you say, "Lord, I cannot stand this any longer. I am prepared for any sacrifice, any surrender, to come into what you have for me." And of course, undoubtedly that is when God is able to be with you.

I remember that it was only when I came to the place where I was desperate and could bear it no longer that the Holy Spirit was able to deal with me. But, I would encourage you not to think anything about seekers meetings. What really what we need to do -- unless you have seekers meetings, unless there's a situation where loved ones can deal with God at length, really there's little chance of any great work being done among us. So I would encourage you to think about it sensibly, and think about it unemotionally, and see that maybe it'll be the 10th seekers meeting in this 1980, that you'll come through. But God will honor you. He will honor you if you begin to make this a priority in your life.

So, I would encourage you to try to establish, "Where do you stand tonight?" And then, "What does God want you to do as the next step in your life? And then, I would say, "Do it." And if you want,

by all means to pray in this prayer room, then do that. If you want to stay here and pray do that. It's up to you. But, I would make a move, loved ones. I would remind you that the easiest thing in this life is to drift, just to drift, year-after-year, to drift.

Margie Vest was saying to me this morning that it just does not seem eight years since she graduated from college and became a teacher. And of course, I think many of us would say it doesn't seem like 10 years -- and this is our 10th year together as a family of God -- and it doesn't seem like 10 years. And it's amazing how many of us are 30 that were young 20s. And it's amazing how many of us are 40, and how many of us are 50, that seemed so young 10 years ago. And life is moving on. And it will move on whether we do anything about it or not. And I would encourage you about those words, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." And how long can you go on saying? "Well, I know my life isn't victorious but I'm better than I was, and I'm going to plug along at it." How long can you keep on doing that before you have to start rationalizing sin in your life, and admit that you're drifting hopelessly, not really moving forward at all?

So loved ones, I'd ask you just to deal with God honestly in your own minds and in your own hearts. And then it's just about 8:12 now and it seems to me it would be good, if those of us who want can go up to the lounge and spend, maybe until nine o'clock, at least, seeking God. And we don't all need to go. It's only if God has laid it on your heart. But I do think many of us need to begin taking a definite step with God.

And I'd say to you this, "Look upon these" -- we'll have a Seeker's meeting every month, maybe it will be this Sunday in a month, maybe it will be the communion Sunday, but we'll put it in the bulletin. And I would say to you, "You keep going to those things until you get through." You just determine, "Lord, I am going to hold to it. And I will come to my Peniel [Genesis 32:23-31], and I will come to the place where I say, as Jacob said, 'I will not let you go, Lord, until you bless me.'" And that kind of grasping faith, of course, is what God answers.

So will you do what you think is best. And I mean, I'll be up there and there'll be others of us. And let's go to it, and get ourselves sorted out, those of us who need to.

Let us pray. Dear Father, we thank you that things are plain and straight, that the way is plain to a wayfaring man. A man, who is on his way, a woman who is on her way, will see the way plain before her. And we thank you for that, Lord. We thank you that it is only as we move forward that the way does become plain, but we thank you that it does become plain. And so Lord, we know that you, by your Holy Spirit are able to lead each one of us into a place of settlement and peace with you. And Lord we would pray for each other, pray for those of us who feel we should go home tonight and seek you. We'd pray for us, or pray as we're in our bedrooms, or in our living rooms, or our studies, that you Holy Spirit, will give us a real sense that we're dealing with you, not just with our own thoughts. And then those of us who will seek you in other parts of this building tonight, or will seek you in the frat houses, or in the Christian houses, Lord, we pray that you will give us a real sense that we are doing business with God and that the angels, and archangels, and all the company of heaven are watching.

And Lord, those of us who go up to the lounge, we pray that you will show us the way through, each one of us individually, and you will counsel us and deal with us. And Father, we thank you for your word that shows that there are children that know their sins are forgiven. And there are fathers who know you from the beginning in eternity. And there are young men, young women, who have overcome the evil one. And Lord we see that that's certainly where we should be today, and where

you want us -- first of all, for your own glory, then for our sakes, then for the sakes of those millions who want to see Jesus alive in flesh and blood again.

Now the grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with each one of us now and ever more. Amen.

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