

## **Abide in Christ/The Crucified Life**

If we could join our hearts to the Lord's heart, and if we can join our minds to the Lord's mind, I am very encouraged this morning for how the meeting started with the Scriptures that our brother shared with us, the songs that were sung and the individual prayers all seemed to speak of the dwelling place, of communion, of abiding, and that is exactly what has been on my heart, which I carry with me all the time—the issue of abiding. And I trust, as the Lord has been speaking, He is going to speak. So, as I pray, pray with me, and as you are led to even pray out loud, then speak out and pray.

*Lord, we are so grateful to You. Again, we want to say, Lord, there is nothing like You. You are a wonderful Master to serve, and we come now, and as it were, together we beseech the throne that You would speak, that You would present Yourself in a wonderful way, that in seeing You and in hearing You, we would be changed. We trust, Lord, that You would do that. We thank You for it even now. In Jesus' wonderful name. Amen.*

## **Miracles of God's Grace**

As of this past February, I have been in the Lord fifty-two years now, and that is not my credentials that I have been in the Lord fifty-two years; not at all. Because the truth of the matter is I came to the Lord fifty-two years ago, but He knew me much longer than I have known Him. He knew me, and He knew you while you were yet in your mother's womb, and He has pursued us with His love for all these years. And I have discovered over these years how He has proved to me His love, and He has proved to me His keeping power. When we think of it, we can look at ourselves and say, "How is it that I am here today worshipping the Lord, looking to the Lord?" When the world system has been against us, our own flesh has been against us, and the evil one has been against us, how is it that we are here today? It is by the conquering power of His love and His keeping power that we are here today. How wonderful! How wonderful! It is a miracle, brothers and sisters. And when I look out here, that is what I see. I see miracles sitting here in all these chairs, and the miracles in my own life. It is a miracle of God's grace.

It is interesting because over these past number of weeks I have heard these Scriptures read. And you will hear all these Scriptures today that you are very familiar with. This can be dangerous because unless the Spirit of God enlivens the Word to us, then it just becomes rote, because we have read them and read them hundreds of times. We want to trust the Spirit of God that He will enliven this word to us, and it would bring His life to us in a fuller way.

## **We Are Being Conformed to the Image of His Son**

Colossians 1:9-12: Paul, speaking to the Colossians, says, "For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light."

Now I just want to make a comment about these verses. It is progressive, if you noticed. These Colossians already knew the Lord; they were followers of the Lord, and he is encouraging them to go on in the Lord, to be strengthened in the Lord, and come to a greater knowledge of the Lord. It is progressive, as it is with you and I; this is what the Spirit of God is doing. He wants to work in your life and my life in such a way that we are being conformed into the image and likeness of His very Son. That is the working of the Holy Spirit.

### **We Received Consciousness of the Living God**

He says in that 13th verse: “He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us (or translated us or delivered us) into the kingdom of the Son of His love,”

Now I remember, and I am sure everyone here, I would hope, has had this same experience. We were in darkness, we were blind, we had no real purpose in life, and we went through this life in darkness, thinking it was light. Then in the mercy of God, one day, in the midst of my darkness and depravity, the Spirit of God came in, and the very light of Christ pierced that darkness. I saw how blind I was, and by His grace and His mercy, it caused something to well up in my heart to call out to Him and say, “Lord, forgive me; I want You to be the Lord of my life.” And in that moment, as we received the forgiveness of our sins, what also happened? We received consciousness of the living God, and this is such a wonderful gift. All of a sudden, now we discovered that we could communicate with Him. We can speak with Him, and He speaks with us, and I can hear Him. I began to understand His movements, His directions, which I was blind to before. You see, we have a consciousness of the heavenlies, a connection between ourselves and the very throne of God. That consciousness is ours now. And over the years to one degree or another that consciousness of Christ grows within us. So, we went from this atmosphere of darkness to suddenly being in this atmosphere of the Christ, and our whole life has expanded. You might say it is expanded throughout the universe, just as the knowledge of Christ will someday be acknowledged throughout the universe, and because we are in Christ, we can say something of that for ourselves. So, this whole coming into the consciousness of the living God is so exciting.

### **Abide in Me, and I in You**

John 15:3-5: “You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you.” (Now we have heard this right from the beginning of the meeting today, and that is why I am so encouraged. This is what the Lord is saying.) “As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.”

This word, “cannot” is a forceful word, “abide in Me and I in you.” “The branch cannot;” it is impossible! There is no other way. You cannot bear fruit of yourself. Unless the branch abides in the vine, it cannot produce fruit; neither can you. You cannot produce fruit unless you are abiding in the vine.

Verse 5: ““I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do (or some things you might be able to do, a little bit of something you might be able to do. No, it does not say that, does it?) nothing.” It says, “apart from Me, without Me, you can do nothing.”

### **He is Calling Us into an Intimacy With Himself**

Sometimes, we can participate in a lot of religious activity, or sometimes we can think about the times we have read the Bible from beginning to end or the times that we have preached it or taught it, but unless we are abiding in the vine, we are just spinning our wheels. “You cannot bear fruit unless you abide in Me.” That is what He is saying. He is calling us into an intimacy that He Himself had with His Father, and now He is calling you and I into this intimacy with Him. That is what He is after.

Verse 7: “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.”

I realized some time ago that I was saying to the Lord: “Lord, I want to pray, and I want to pray acceptably. I want to pray in such a way that mountains can be moved.” Sometimes that mountain is your spouse, sometimes that mountain is a child. There are many things, but I was saying to the Lord, “Lord, I want to learn how to pray effectively with power, with Your power, the power of the Spirit of God working in my life, and through my life.” And the Lord said to me: “You only get that kind of power if you are abiding in Me.”

### **Abide In My Love**

Verse 9: ““As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.”

So, what does it mean to abide in His love? What it means is that I am living in a great awareness of how greatly I have been loved by Him. There is a great example of this in Paul’s life, and I believe this Scripture that I am going to read encapsulates the whole life of Paul the apostle.

II Corinthians 5:14-15: “For the love of Christ compels (constrains) us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.”

Paul is saying, “For the love of Christ compels (constrains) me.” Paul came to realize how greatly God loved him, and he is saying in that: “What else can I do? He has proven His love to me over and repeatedly. He is the great lover of my soul. What else can I do but live for Him?” And that is what I see in that verse. The whole life of Paul was in that verse, “I am compelled by the love of Christ.” He was taken up by that love. He was conquered by that love. He was directed by that love. What else can I do but love Him, the great lover of my soul?

### **One Died for All, that All Died**

Then he says in that verse also: “For the love of Christ compels us because we judge thus, that if one died for all, that all died.” What he is saying, “Every person whose feet touches the ground on this earth was born in sin.” He says, “If One died for all, and Christ has died for all.” Even today, when we look out on society, we see all kinds of terrible things going on. We can look at prostitutes, drug addicts, adulterers, fornicators, all those people, and He died for every one of them, and He loves every one of them. And there is something in the heart of God that is going after each one of them as well.

But it is interesting what he says here. “And He died for all that those who live...” Now who are those who live? It is those who have come to that place of recognizing and admitting that we are sinners in need of a Savior. Now they have been given a new life; now they are outside of that darkness, but they can still see into the darkness of those who are trapped in the darkness.

“That those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and rose again.”

Interestingly, it does not say that they should live for other people. No! There are plenty of philanthropists and others who can be very giving in assistance one way or another. But he did not say that did he? “That they should no longer live for themselves but for Him.” And what that means is, that if I am living for Christ, if I am abiding in that intimate relationship with Him, then I will be looking out for you, and because I am being led by the Spirit of God, not just by my own emotions or trying to be a nice person or a good person. No! I am to live for Him, and in doing that, just as He did, as the Lord Jesus gave His life away in compassion and kindness, in generosity, in so many ways. And that is the way He will live and continue to live out His life through us in that same way, in this abiding relationship with Him. He is the Director of our life.

### **Live the Abiding Life**

So, what I believe the Lord is wanting to say to us once again is what He is talking about here, this abiding life. We will see in the Lord Jesus’ life, and this is the only life that you and I are called to live. Anything less than the abiding life does not register in the heavenlies. It does not make a mark, as it did. He is calling you and I to the abiding life, and nothing less than that. That is what He is looking for. That is what delights the Father’s heart.

So, I could ask two questions. One, if I was to ask the question: “Does God love you?” Most everyone in here, I would hope, has come into a relationship, an experience with the Lord that you would say, “Yes, God loves me. I know God loves me.” But I think as we read from Paul: “Do you know how greatly you are loved by God?” You know, I have limited God’s love in my life, not that I limited His love, but I did not understand how greatly I was loved. And that is why I said in the beginning, He is looking to prove His love, and if you examine your life and my life, and I could really be a jerk at times, but despite that, He has loved me. I think one of the greatest revelations I ever received was that day when the Lord showed me that I was as weak today as I was the day before I knew Him. But His life is the life that overcomes, not mine. It is His life that strengthens. I have tried to strength myself to no avail, but He is working in that way. He is our strength; He is that tower of refuge. We can say to Him, “Lord, save me from myself. You know me, Lord. Save me from myself.” He proves His love in that saving power that we can experience every single day. I do not care where you are in the Lord, but I think we need to come to realize that God’s saving power is available every single day, and actually you need it as I need it every single day.

So, this is a definitive statement that I am making, and I have something to back it up. This is the only life that you and I are called to live—the abiding life.

## **What Are We Going to Do to Get the Abiding Life**

The second question I would ask is this. "So now what are you going to do about it? What are you going to do to get the abiding life?" Some people may be right now rushing through their brain thinking, "Well, I want that life; I know that I need to get up earlier in the morning, and I need to start reading some more than I have been reading. I better make sure I do not miss a meeting." You know what? That is just work.

Now all those things can be a part of the abiding life, but that does not get you the abiding life. And what I would say to you is if you want the abiding life there is nothing, nothing that you can do to get it. But if God stirs your heart when you hear of this as we are reading the Word of God, and you say, "I do want that." And if you can cry from your heart to the Lord and say, "Lord, this is what I want, and nothing less. Whatever is necessary, Lord, I want that relationship. That is what I want and nothing less." And then, mark my words, the Lord will begin to draw you into a deeper and deeper relationship with Himself because that is what is in His heart. That is what will delight His heart and the heart of the Father to see sons in His kind of relationship, the same relationship that we see with the Lord Jesus.

Now I have said to people over a period of time, if you want to know anything about this life, all you have to do is look at Jesus because in Him you will find the answer to everything we need to know about living this life.

## **He Desires Hearts That Want An Intimate Relationship**

The Lord wants to give revelation of Himself to every one of us here. He wants to reveal Himself in a deeper and deeper way to everyone here, but I will say this, that revelation without realization is just theory. And we cannot settle, we just cannot settle for studying the Bible, reading the Word, Bible study, we cannot just depend on those things. What He is looking for are hearts that want this intimate relationship with Him. Now why can it make such a definitive statement about that?

John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Verse 4: "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

Verse 14: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

There is a transition here. "In the beginning was the Word." And verse 14 says, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." There is something of that that needs to take place in each of our lives, that the Word becomes flesh and blood in us. It is not just something that we study, as I said before, but it becomes our very life, and this Word is Christ Himself. This is the intimacy He is calling us to, that the Word we hear, that we read, becomes who we are by the Spirit of God. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."

## **People Meet the Living God In Us**

And if you read in the first letter of John 1:1-3: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life— the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us— that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

They were able to touch and hold and have a meal with Him and walk with the Lord Jesus. The Word of God was manifested to them. They were able to communicate with Him, and similarly, through coming into an intimate abiding relationship with Him, people can engage with us. And in that engagement, they could meet the living God because He lives within us. He can manifest Himself through us. This is what the abiding relationship is all about—intimacy.

## **Jesus Lived the Abiding Life with His Father**

John 5:19 it says this: “Then Jesus answered and said to them (His disciples), “Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.”

I find that quite interesting. The Son can do nothing out of Himself. He is speaking of His relationship with the Father, this intimate abiding relationship with His Father. This is what Jesus says: “I can do nothing (out) of Myself.”

John 12:49-50: “For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.””

In this relationship that He had with His Father, the Lord Jesus did not say anything that He did not hear His Father saying, and He did not do anything that He did not see His Father doing. He had this abiding relationship.

John 14:10: “Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.” Abiding life.

This is the Lord Jesus. Do we want to know anything about this life? Look at the Lord Jesus. What we see in Him is what He wants to work in us, and He is calling us to this abiding intimate life. It is the only life that He is calling us to.

## **Allow Him to be Master of Our Life**

Verses 23-24: “Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. (and as we heard earlier today, “I will abide with Him.”) He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.”

Is He the Master of our lives? I think sometimes we have to question that. Is He the Master of our lives?

As you read in Ephesians chapter 2:10 it says, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

So, if we are in an abiding relationship, then we do not have the liberty just to go out and do. If we are in that abiding relationship, and He is directing us, and He is saying, "Go here; go there, speak this, whatever it might be." But we are being guided and led by the Master, and we are not presumptuous as to what He might want. But because of this abiding relationship we become sensitized to the works of God, and in that sensitivity, during your day, your everyday boring life, as it can be sometimes, we hear His voice.

My life is within this circumference right here. And in that circumference, there are joys and there are sorrows, there are trials and tribulations, there is sickness, and there is health, there are good relationships and some that are not so good. But this is the environment, this is where God has made. I do not need to aspire beyond this to glorify God. What I need to do is be obedient to Him in my circumference. Now interestingly enough, as I mentioned earlier, when we come into the atmosphere of Christ, suddenly, we are expanded, and where we were limited before, now it is expanded from where we could not hear God, to where we can hear Him. When we did not know where to go, now in this relationship He gives direction, and we can understand the direction He is moving in as He calls us along. And as He encourages us, we appreciate the encouragement. We understand that it comes from Him, but at the same time, we also receive correction. It all goes on within this intimate abiding relationship that He is calling you and I to.

### **Correlation Between the Abiding Life and the Crucified Life**

Now there is a direct correlation here between the abiding life and the crucified life. And we are called to live the crucified life, but you know, we cannot actually live the crucified life if we are not living the abiding life. Sometimes we can make our own crosses. We can say to God, "Now look what I am doing for You. This burden that I am carrying, oh, goodness, gracious me." But if we are living the abiding life, then mark my words, every day you will see the cross at work because the cross is the instrument in the Holy Spirit's hands in this whole issue of conforming us to the image and likeness of the Lord Jesus.

I am going to tell three little stories here. I am in all the stories, but the stories are not about me. But every one of you has the same kind of stories that I am going to share now.

Matthew 16:24-25: "Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."

### **Death Unto Life**

This is my first little story. My wife, Cindy and I were shopping at Whole Foods Grocery Store, and I am standing on the checkout line. As I was looking across at the other checkout lines, I see this man standing there, with long hair and wearing a long white robe. He had paint on his forehead, which was a couple different colors. As I was looking at him, he picked up his head, and



our eyes met. And the Lord spoke to my heart: "I want you to go and talk with him." I do not know if you have ever had this experience. I am guessing that everyone here has had this kind of experience, but the Lord said, "I want you to go and talk with him."

My heart sank, and I said, "Oh, Lord, I will pray for this guy." He said, "No, I want you to talk with him." I turned to my wife and said, "The Lord just said that He wants me to go and talk to that guy over there." She said, "What! You do not know if he has a knife or something." "Lord, I will pray for him." But He was insistent, so I check out and walk out into the vestibule, but he was still on the checkout line. So I thought, "Okay." I put my cart in the rack, and I was about to walk out and suddenly there he is about the same distance we are from one another. I knew; I did not know what to say. And I said to the Lord, "I do not know what to say." But at this moment I went to him, and I said, "Hi, may I ask what faith you are." He said, "I am a Hindu priest." I said, "Have you ever heard of Jesus Christ?" He said, "I have, and I have a great appreciation of Him." "Do you know that He loves you very much and He died on the cross for your sins and mine." And he just looked at me and said, "Keep preaching the gospel," and he walked away.

When the Lord first said to me, "I want you to talk to him," it was something that had to take place; I had to die. Was I going to choose my life and preserve my life or choose the Lord's life? That is a question from the time you came to the Lord, and I came to the Lord, that will always be there, "your life or Mine?" When that word comes like that, it may come while you are at school or on the job or in the grocery store or wherever it might be. When that word comes, that Rhema Word of God, that living Word of God comes, and there is a decision that must be made. Are you going to look at it as a heavenly evaluation of it or is there a worldly evaluation of it? The worldly evaluation is saying, "This is inconvenient; this is not the right time. What are they going to think of me?" But the heavenly evaluation is above all that, and it is a decision that must be made. The word comes, and then there is that struggle I was having with the Lord: "Oh Lord, please." But once we overcome that and make that decision to heed the Word of God, then life comes from that. And to the degree that we choose His life over our life, to the degree that you choose His life over your life, to that degree we grow in the Lord. Then it becomes more of Him, less of us. There is this process that goes on, death to life, death to life.

### **Choose His Life Over Our Life**

In Luke 14:27: "And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."

There is that "cannot" again. It eliminates everything else. "Whoever does not bear his cross." You could say right there, "Whoever does not deny his life, his own life, cannot be My disciple." The word, "disciple" comes from the word "discipline." So sometimes when we hear that word, "discipline" we think about chastisement. Discipline can be a form of chastisement, but in this case, He is talking about the discipline of a life, the discipline that you follow in your life. If you are a doctor, there are certain disciplines that you will employ in your job. If you are a computer expert, there are certain disciplines that are followed. And that is what He is saying here. If you are not willing to take up your cross, which is essential in the discipline of this life, then you cannot be My disciple. You are not willing to follow the discipline; you are not willing to come and follow this path that I have set before you. You will not be able to go on with Me in this discipline of life.



I am saying all these things because most of us have had these kinds of experiences. On another Occasion, I am in a Dollar General Store with my wife shopping, and as I am walking past this aisle, there was a young lady on her knees, stacking things on the shelf. Suddenly, there was that voice saying, "Go talk with her." Again, the battle begins; there was the word, and the struggle began: "What am I going to do with the Word? If we are going to obey the Word, it is costly. And at this point, it was costly; it will cost me something. Am I going to be embarrassed? Am I going to be rejected? It was all the worldly evaluation, but He would not allow me to get away from it. So, I walked down to the aisle where she was kneeling, and I just leaned over and said, "Hi, could I pray for you?" And with those words she just broke down crying. I did not know what was going on in this lady's life, but something was happening there. God was doing something. And sometimes we do not know what He is doing, but you can say that He is doing something. And I do not need to know. The only thing I needed to know was I going to choose my life over His life?

### **Death Unto Witnessing the Power of Resurrection**

This is my last story. Now I say this is my last story, but these kinds of stories happen every single day to one degree or another. I can give you a definitive statement about that here shortly.

Luke 9:23-24: "Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it."

I think the Lord Jesus is very careful in the words that He uses. And in this verse, He says, "And take up his cross daily and follow Me." I believe that every day, in every believer's life, the cross is presented in all sorts of ways. But whenever we take up the cross, it leads to death. That is what the cross means. When that cross bar was on our Savior's shoulders, death was before Him. And every other person, who had a cross on their shoulders, death was before them. And that is something that happens to each one of us on a regular basis. Sometimes it is in the simplest things; sometimes it is just in holding back a word that you really want to say. You want to give somebody the 'what for.' Sometimes it is in having to forgive someone who for the longest time you thought was unworthy of forgiveness. It comes in so many ways. There is a cross every day because every day the Lord is at work conforming me and conforming you to His image and likeness.

So, this is my last story. I was working at the time at the car dealership, and while I was working there, I had just recovered, or I was in the process of recovering and was just about at the end of sciatica. Now some of you know me when I have had sciatica, and I would be walking around in pain for two weeks; it was terrible. But at the dealership there was a car salesman there, Dan, who had been suffering with sciatica, so we would commiserate about our misery. But Dan was about 6'4", wide, a big guy, and he knew me. As a matter of fact, we used to do a Bible study that I was doing at the car dealership. So, one day, we were standing out in the showroom of the car dealership, and again we were talking about our sciatica, although mine was just about gone. He was still having some pain, but he was there working.

As I was talking with him, the Lord said to me again, "I want you to pray for him." Again, that Word, and I am talking to the Lord, and I said, "Oh Lord, right here in the middle of the showroom

floor with people walking all around?" "I want you to pray for him right now." So, I said to him, "Dan, would it be okay if I prayed for you?" "Yes, sure." Now I know what he was thinking, "Yeah, I'm going to pray for him. I'll see you and I'll pray for you; you know." But no, as soon as he said, "Oh yeah, that would be fine." I took him by the shoulder, and I began to pray. Well, he just broke down in tears. And when I was done praying, he said, "Thanks Lenny," and he walked away wiping his tears. It was one of those times when I never knew what God was doing; I did not know all that was going on in this man's life beside his sciatica. But the important thing for me was that two things were going on here, one with Dan, and the one with me was that by His mercy and grace I chose His life over my life. I chose the Christ-life over Lenny's life; Lenny's life just must die.

So about two weeks later I was at home by myself praying, and the Lord took me back to the showroom floor, and He said to me, "It was not your prayers, but you were a witness of the power of the resurrection." And then He said this, and I have never seen the cross as clearly as I did that day. He said to me, "There always needs to be a death in order to see the power of the resurrection." How do I know that to be true? I must look at Jesus. He had to suffer the death of the cross before the resurrection, but we saw the resurrection. And it is the same thing for you and me. There always needs to be a death if I want to be a witness to the power of the resurrection. And it will be like that from the day that we came to the Lord until we see Him face to face. This process of death to life—to die to self and choose His life.

## Conclusion

II Corinthians 4:7-12: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So, then death is working in us, but life in you."

The Lord is going to present us with these situations every single day, death working in me producing life in you. It says that the Lord Jesus is crucified since the foundation of the world. He lived the crucified life every single day of His life. His life was for the Father; that is what counted. Now when we look at ourselves, we ought to be saying right now, "Oh, boy, woe is me." But you know our Jesus was fully God and fully Man.

Matthew 26: 36-39a: Our Lord Jesus, fully God and fully Man. "Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there." And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed,"

He knew what was coming shortly. He knew the suffering before Him. It says that He was suffering so much in His soul that He sweat drops of blood. He knew what was coming. And He prayed, "Oh Father, if it is possible let this cup pass from Me." There was something of that in His

being fully Man, knowing what was ahead of Him. He cried out to the Father, "If it is at all possible, Father, let this pass before Me."

And that is something of what is going to happen to you and me when these situations arise. We say, "Oh Lord, please not now. If possible, I will pray for them. If it all possible I will be in my room in my closet praying for those. Nevertheless, not my will but yours." Choosing the Father, choosing the heavenly evaluation of what is going to take place, as it were, but that is our Lord. So, if you struggle as I struggled at times in those situations, know that the Lord truly understands. But there is grace, so when the Word comes, that living Word, there is that struggle, but there is grace to make the decision. And the Lord is saying, "Your life or Mine." If you want your life, you can go ahead and choose that, but it leads to death. And so, I think that is what the Lord was wanting to say right from the beginning of this meeting, which I found glorious. You know, it is very difficult sometimes to share some of these things, but that is what the Lord is calling us to, and like I said, right from the beginning of this meeting that through the verses Brother Tak brought, through the songs that were sung, the prayers that were prayed, it has been all about abiding. And that is what the Lord wants for us, and that is what will bring great joy to our hearts as we walk with the Lord in this intimate relationship.

*Father, I trust that You would stir hearts, that we would hear your voice so very clearly, and that we would say, Lord, this and nothing less. This intimate relationship and nothing less are what I want, Lord. Do this work in me, Lord, and I ask this for each one of us, me included. Thank the Lord. Amen.*

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| Speaker | Amato, Lenny                                                                                                                                                        |
| Venue   | Richmond, Virginia, US                                                                                                                                              |
| Date    | August 18 <sup>th</sup> , 2024                                                                                                                                      |
| Link    | <a href="https://christiantestimonyministry.com/item/abide-in-christ-crucified-life">https://christiantestimonyministry.com/item/abide-in-christ-crucified-life</a> |