

## **EXCEPT A CORN OF WHEAT FALL INTO THE GROUND AND DIE**

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If you have your Bibles, open them to John 12:20.

John 12:20, *And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: <sup>21</sup>The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.*

Now, maybe I am reading more into this than what is there, but I really don't think I am. I think it is setting the platform of what it was that these Greeks wanted to see. These people were considered outside of the "elect". They were 'outside' of Israel, but there was something they had heard concerning Jesus that prompted them to go and ask to see Him. I think that this situation correlates with the parable of the olive tree and that which is grafted in. You take the wild olive and graft it into the olive tree.

We are looking for a manifestation of Jesus Christ. We talk about the second coming of Jesus Christ. We talk about "Christ within." We talk about "Jesus in me." We talk about all of those things that talk about a particular, peculiar manifestation. I think what has dropped upon us all in this Word, in one fashion or another, is that we want to have God in us. I believe that is true with regard to most of us.

You know, I was raised up in the Baptist church and there is not much "God in you" proclaimed in that realm of religion. They talk about getting to heaven. They talk about sanctification. They talk about salvation, but the most you can hope for in the Baptist church is, no matter what your righteousness is in God, at the end of time you have the ability to go to heaven.

Well, that isn't enough for most Baptists in this hour, because most Baptists, not all Baptists, find themselves in a place of compromise. And it is not just the Baptists, (I am not picking on the Baptists, it is just that I was a Baptist at one time, so I can talk about them), but all of Christendom has really slid into a position of compromise. As Brother Willie was reading of the vision, there was a message of salvation that was being preached. There was a measure of sanctification that was being preached. That line of sanctification is not something that is held to so rigorously in this day and age as it was when I was a child growing up in the Baptist Church.

But in this passage of scripture, there was something that these men had heard that prompted them to come. First of all, you know that it was a time of feast and they had come to worship, but they wanted a fuller revelation, a fuller understanding, a personal interview with Jesus Christ. They wanted a more concise manifestation of God. I kind of look at my journey into God as wanting a face-to-face encounter with Jesus Christ. Why? Because it says that when I see Him, I will be changed (I John 3:2).

Hallelujah. But there is a particular process that is required regarding the apprehension of that desire.

I believe I see this by the Spirit, but I see something in the church that is kind of perplexing to me. We are a people who say that we don't believe in *rapture*. Yet we seem to have an escape theory, but we have spiritualized it in some way or another. To some degree, it has eliminated our desire to suffer. You are put into a certain position or environment that is uncomfortable or that you really don't like, or you think that you should have better and you begin to either complain about it, or to look for an escape.

Let's say, for instance, that I find myself in a financial bind. I don't know about you, but whenever I find myself in a financial bind, I begin to cry out to God to deliver me. Now, to be delivered financially means that I don't want to have to scrape and scrimp and I don't want to have to endure it for very long. Maybe a day or two, or a week, or a month, but longer than that and it becomes something very vexing to my soul and all of a sudden I find myself accusing God of forsaking me. Of course, it is probably different with you. I don't know, but I really don't think it is.

We do not look at our position in light of what we have asked God to do, not only for us, but also to us. We think that, in God's sight, we are fine, that what we have is good enough. But when God puts us in a situation or circumstance and begins to highlight what we need to change and that there is something about our thinking that needs to be re-orchestrated, we do not like that.

Now, I am not one that likes to have change all the time. I am adjusting. Praise the Lord. I'm getting better. But nevertheless, I am not one that likes to have change all the time. Do you understand? God has been merciful to put me in situations (I wish they were more to my liking), where change isn't coming so rapidly or evidently. But you know, I really asked God to be in this position, so I guess I am getting what I asked for. I just didn't expect it to be quite so hot or quite so prickly or quite so vexing or quite so miserable. Of course, your situations are probably different.

We have a theory that we need to be pampered. That is why the prosperity doctrine in the outer court realm of Christianity is so popular. They have been infected with the "you gotta have" disease. You "gotta have" a good car. You "gotta have" a good house. You "gotta have" good clothes. You "gotta go" to the right schools. You "gotta have" the right job and you have to know the right people. You want all of those things, and you feel that you are entitled to them because you consider them blessings from God and you feel that you are one of God's "honeys." Somehow we have carried that doctrine over into our private lives and it has been brought into the "sonship message." It is a problem that developed when God came down and confused the languages of the people.

Now, God didn't just change language. He created a diversity of cultures. Over time those cultures developed certain traits, traditions, and attributes, all of which were as different from one another as the language that each spoke. So it was that nations were birthed and no one could understand what anybody else was saying or why they would do something the way they did it. In the midst of that environment God came down and picked one man out of a particular culture and created an entire nation that was just as different and peculiar as any other nation was from another, except that this nation had

the stamp of God's approval upon it. Now, why did God do that? Because God is not a God of confusion. God is not a God that is disoriented, out of sync, or out of order. God is a God of divine order. There are two basic thoughts that we have to mention and keep in mind. The first is that every nationality and all of its people were born out of rebellion against God-constituted authority. So, every nation and its people are born in the sin of disobedience. Psalm 14:3, *They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.* Romans 3:10, *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: <sup>11</sup>There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. <sup>12</sup>They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.* The second thought that comes is that any nation that is created by God is a nation that will only exist on the principle of absolute obedience and divine order. Deuteronomy 11:26, *Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; <sup>27</sup>A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: <sup>28</sup>And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.* Divine order exists only where the principle of obedience is employed in a perfect manner.

We talk about divine order, but we really do not understand what that is. It is one of the aspects of God's character that is interwoven throughout His whole nature, a principle that overshadows His every thought and action. He created a specific nation and people as a means by which all might understand what He expects of a people, regardless of the culture, time and space in which they are born. In many aspects, God maintains the integrity of that culture from the Old Testament to the New Testament, so as to validate His original intent and that we might understand, on a natural plane, how different God's ways are from our ways. Do you understand what I am saying? Well, we don't want to think that way. We don't want to think this way, because it conflicts with who we are and it amplifies our need for change.

When I was growing up in the Lord, I came across a man called T. Austin Sparks and I began to read a lot of his literature. He was way up there, but wherever he was, I wanted to be there. I could sense the attitude that this man had about God and the reality that he was grasping hold of. Now, I had no big revelation of the "sons of God," because the knowledge that is now available was not available then. I was a fairly new Christian, out there by myself, looking to the Lord, and He began to bring books into my environment and I began to read them. One of the things that I got a hold of was The Disciplines of Christ.

There was a principle that the book made me aware of and it set a pattern for me and it made me aware of the measure of discipline that God was going to require of me. It was a way that was going to be alien to my nature and my environment, but it was something that God was going to expect me to conform to. Now, Sparks had this expression that he called "the otherness of Christ." I didn't understand it then and I don't know that I fully understand it yet, except that there is something in that 'otherness' nature that I desire to know in its entirety, even as these Greeks were coming to the disciples and inquiring to see Jesus. Isn't that what we want to do? Isn't that the place that we want to be in? How are we going to be like Christ unless we see Christ?

Let's go back to the scripture. So, here these Gentiles, these Greeks, come to the feast. They go to Philip and state their request

John 12:22, *Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.*

He needed a little help there. He had to get some support to go up there.

Verse 23, *And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.*

I think that is a very important statement because there is a glorification of Jesus Christ in the natural and in the spiritual, as well as a coming to a position of glorification in the fullness.

Is it that we think that the coming of the Son of man is going to be any different than it was in the beginning? Or that the position of glorification will be so different for us than it was for Him? How was He glorified? Was He not taken? Was He not accused? Was He not tribulated? Was He not examined and scourged? Was He not brought to a place of humiliation? Did He not have to walk the road up to Golgotha, did He not have to be crucified?

Have you ever considered what God calls glorification? There is a manifestation of God in every phase of the persecution, torment, and suffering that the man Jesus suffered. There was a glorification. It says that *when he was reviled, reviled not again* (I Peter 2:23). That was a glorification. There was something that was beyond human understanding. It says that Pilate was amazed (Mark 15:5b). He said, "Don't you hear what these men are saying?" It says that He answered him not a word (Matthew 27:13-14). There was a glorification in that. When He was standing in the vestibule of the high priest and they were mocking Him and hitting Him, He showed no anger (Matthew 27:41-44). He showed no resentment. He yielded himself completely. That was a manifestation of God.

I don't know how you take that and bring it into your personal environment, or if you do it at all. But I am telling you that the circumstances are the same. Our response to the tribulation that you or I find ourselves in determines, at the end of the day, where we are and what mark in God we attained unto.

I was coming out of a meeting somewhere in Europe a few years ago and I was very distressed because of the lack of interest, the lack of hunger, the lack of respect concerning the ministry and the Word of God. I'm not talking about me, you understand. I am talking about what the Lord is, what the Lord says and how the Lord says it. I believe that God has called me and has put an anointing on me. I am not puffing myself up, because let me tell you, I am as human as anybody, but I do believe that when God says that He chose the foolish things to confound the wise, or the wisdom of this world, I am one of those foolish things (I Corinthians 1:20-21). Praise the Lord. I can say "amen" to it and not in a high minded sense. Anyway, I was walking out of a meeting and I was so very distressed and God said to me, "You are at the drinking of the water." This was within the last five years. He said, "You are at the drinking of the water." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "It is not what you *know*, it is what you *do* with what you know."

It is not what you know, but we think that knowing what needs to be done and what it will take to do it is sufficient, and it isn't. What needs to be done and what we know will not give us the strength to get it done unless it is implemented. What we have to do is **do** with what we have now and manifest the quality of that which we are hoping to achieve, which is Christ in all aspects of our life. Matthew 5:16, *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

They cometh unto Jesus and Jesus saith, "*The hour is come.*" It would seem that there should have been some knowledge of a forthcoming event, an expectation or anticipation of that event and an outworking of that reality being demonstrated. Well, if we believe that the hour is come or even that it is coming, there certainly should be some sort of manifestation – not out there but here, in our personal, cultural, and national environment. But to the contrary - what is demonstrated is that we have some sort of magical, mystical theology that we can live our lives as we want and in the end there is going to be some miraculous event that will alleviate the pain, suffering, tribulation, or any discomfort that is derived from the place of confinement.

You know, confinement is not necessarily being locked in a room with bars on it. You are confined, but it is the environment that you are in that confines you. Do you know that there are environments that God consigns you to that are designed to confine you even though they do not have literal bars on them? It is up to your spiritual integrity to maintain the position of your confinement. I am not talking about something that you like to do, someplace that you like to be, or something that gives you some pleasure. I am talking about something that vexes you down to your toenails. I am talking about situations that go right down and make your toenails curl and you have the liberty to do whatever you want to do, but if you know that God has put you there, then your release is dependent upon whether or not God gives you the liberty to go. Now, it doesn't mean that you don't pray. It doesn't mean that you don't fast. It doesn't mean that you don't inquire of the Lord. But what I do know and what it does mean is that there is something in the midst of that type of situation that should begin to demonstrate the reality of Jesus Christ within you. There should be something of a reality that comes forth that God calls glory. There should be something of a manifestation that those around you become aware that something besides humanity is working in this situation. And if, in that situation, there is not that recognition, but you are aware of the presence of God, then that in itself is a type of suffering.

We don't want to suffer. We really don't want to suffer. **We do not want to change!** We don't. Hallelujah. I got a real revelation of this many years ago. We were visiting someplace and we were having a meeting and the Spirit of God fell. Oh, my goodness, it fell. It came down and began to minister and I think we sang one song for 3½ hours. Hallelujah. We sing one song for 5 minutes and we are looking for another tune. You know, we need to catch the breath of God and when the breath of God begins to breathe on us, we need to inhale it. We need to take a great big breath.

Have you ever gone down on the seacoast when the breeze is coming in and it is nice and fresh, crisp and clear, not profaned by all the smog and stuff floating around out there, but nice and clear and you just breathe it in? That is what we need to do with God. As the breath of God comes into the midst of us and we catch that wind, we need to just

inhale it into our beings. We need to maintain our spiritual position of equilibrium with God and allow God to move in the midst of the service.

We were in this meeting and the breath of God came in and they began to sing this song. It was an old church hymn and we began to sing it and the Spirit of God came down. The ministry began to prophesy and to pray for people and deliverance began to flow. My God! The people were hungry. They were **hungry**. I don't know that we are hungry any more. I don't know, we seem to think that what we have as far as the knowledge of sonship is concerned is sufficient, when it is **not** the knowledge. You know, the law was a taskmaster to bring us to Christ (Galatians 3:24). Don't you understand? It was an instructor. It was a tutor. It was to bring us into a place where we begin not just to hunger after righteousness, but we begin to hunger after Him who is righteous and we want Him more than we want anything else in this world.

But that lack of hunger is not the problem, it is only a symptom. We want God, but the problem is that we want the world. Let me finish the story. We were in this meeting and they brought this man up for prayer. As we began to pray for him we gathered around him and laid hands on him and there was a vision that came forth. In the vision, there was a plug in the man's chest and it went down and plugged into the earth. It is not just that it was peculiar to him. God gave me a revelation. I began to think, "What am I plugged into? Where am I drawing my source of strength from? From where am I drawing my understanding? Where are my wants and my desires being generated from? Are they being generated from that which is plugged into the earth?"

But I saw a hand come down. Praise God for the hand of God! Praise God for the arm of God! I saw it pull the plug out, but it didn't come out clean. It came out with things attached to it, because it was like it was part of the earth itself. The hand pulled it out and plugged it into heaven. My God. Hallelujah.

We want to be multi-voltage. We want to be plugged into heaven and plugged into earth and it doesn't work, not if you want the reality of what the Word proclaims. There is a scripture in Ecclesiastes 3:11 that says, ***He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.*** He hath set the world in their hearts, why? That they might not find out the works of God. Hallelujah. I like to read the Bible in the converse. Do you understand what I mean? I like to turn it around. That means that if I get rid of the world that is in my heart, then what am I going to do? I am going to find the works of God. Hallelujah.

You know, I don't know why it is that we think that when we go back into the garden of Eden that we can go through some door without going through those flaming swords (Genesis 3:24). Hebrews 4:12, ***For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*** Cutting down to the quick and separating what? The marrow and the bones and the joints and the aspects of the body. My God. We are talking about suffering, tribulation and trouble. Hallelujah.

We say we believe God and then we go to the doctor. Let me say that I am not against doctors. They have done many beneficial things for me. But there is a place I am

coming to in my relationship with Him that I am beginning to understand that if there is something that God says He will do, I am either going to have to believe it, or I am going to miss out on something that God has for me in the experience. You can't go in on my faith. You can't go in on my basis of understanding. But you can be in a relationship with God that you can come to the same thought. You can come to that same level of understanding. My God. Hallelujah.

It seems like it is always easier to believe for someone else than it is for yourself. I don't know, maybe it is because we are so self-centered. Have you ever heard this? Oh yeah, "You have to toughen up, brother. You have to walk the straight and narrow. You have to believe. You have to have faith." Oh, that is all well and good until the devil comes knocking on *your* door. Then it is an entirely different story. Of course, that is not how you are, right?

But there is an opportunity that is presenting itself, just like these men who wanted to see Jesus. Hallelujah. These men wanted to see Christ, to see the deliverer, the man that would say that he is the Son of God. Are you saying "I want to be" or are you saying "I shall be" or are you saying, "I am"? What is it going to take, a bunch of wishy-washy, namby-pamby sons of God walking around, sometimes on and sometimes off? What is it going to take? Major tribulation, yes. But what is your position, your understanding? Where is your integrity in the midst of that tribulation? What is it that you are manifesting to the world at large, or even to your own family?

He says one of the qualifications for seeing the Son of man very well. I was told that whenever God says "*verily, verily,*" you had better prick up your ears and perk up your mind because He is really saying something very important. He says, "*Verily, verily, I say unto you,*" "WHAT? What has this got to do with seeing the Son of man? What has this got to do with seeing the Son of God?" "*Verily, verily.*" Come on, give me a break, Jesus. I want to see you heal somebody. I want to see you *do* something. I want some miraculous thing to happen to prove to me the reality of who you are." He said, John 12:24, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*

"What does that have to do with you, Jesus?" I suppose we could turn around and say, "Oh yes, that was Him because He had to die for the whole world." Well, yes it is. If it hadn't, then I would not be a candidate, if I am even in that category? I would not be in a place to receive what He was demonstrating in the reality. He said that He was not alone, but that He was the firstborn (Romans 8:29). Firstborn! That means that there is a second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth. The Bible says that He was cut off in the midst of His generation (Isaiah 53:8b). Who will declare His seed? (Acts 8:33). Well, it is the ever-perpetrating spirit of life that was in Him that needed to be released to the world that would impregnate every soul, every life and bring them to the position where they had the potential and the capability to be like Him.

I don't know where our thinking is. Is it our intelligence that is giving us such a problem? Is it our intellect? What is it that gives us such a problem understanding that tribulation is the road on which the son of God walks. "For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" (Luke 23:31). Weep not for me mothers, but weep for your what? Weep for your sons (Luke 23:28). Weep for your sons, for if they

do it unto me, a tree that is green, what shall they do to the tree when it is dry? Oh, they will just throw it in the fire and burn it. That is what you do with dry wood. That is what I do with dry wood. The drier it is, the better it burns.

**We don't want to change.** We want to maintain our heritage and avoid anything that would put us in an environment that makes a demand on us to change. "God, I don't want to be here. There is nothing about this that I like. God, I don't want to be here doing this. I don't know why I should be doing this when I could be doing that! That is the place that you called me to and you've got me over here doing this. God, what in the world do You think it is that You are doing?"

Sometimes God comes back, and sometimes He doesn't come back at all. He just lets me throw my temper tantrum. Other times He will come back and just say softly (and other times a little more roughly), "I am making you a son." You know, that is what I asked for. I asked for all of it. Maybe me more vocally and publicly than you. But we have all asked for it in one way or another. It doesn't matter if you are short, tall, squat, or what. What makes the difference is what you have spoken with your heart and has been proclaimed by your mouth, to bring it to a place of culmination that you might be glorified and that He might be glorified. He knows that in your glorification, He is glorified, because what your glorification is going to require is beyond your ability to endure. It is only by His grace, and His presence within you!

John 12:24, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.* Dying bringeth forth much fruit. Do you know that I can take one 50-pound bag of corn and plant it in an acre of ground and get 150 bags at harvest time if my land is cooperating? But as long as I keep it in the bag, it is nothing. It is just one bag of corn. How far do you think one bag of corn is going to go in comparison to 150 bags of corn? 150 bags is going to go a whole lot farther, but I am thinking that the one bag that I am holding on to is essential to life and liberty and it is mine. I want to hold on to it. God, I want to do what I want to do. I want to be where I want to be. I want to be what I am. Well, you can be what you are **or** you can be what you will be, but if you want to be a son of God, then the sack will have to be ripped and the seed must be sown, because there is a requirement that you die.

You can't die – well, I suppose we can wish that we could die in bed. You know, nice, sweet music, air conditioner, everybody gathered around you, loving you and you just peacefully, serenely slip off into never-never land. That is probably what it would be, never-never land. It bothers me. It really does. This doesn't bother me about me, it bothers me about the church. It bothers me and I am not saying that I don't have to deal with some of the same tendency. Let death come knocking on my door and see how I behave.

I'm going to tell you, when I was a very young man, I had a collapsed lung. It felt like a heart attack. I was in this Word and I was saying, "Oh, God, I am ready to go. I am ready to do what You want me to do. If You want to take my life in the business of God, that is all well and good. I want to do it. I am ready, ready, ready." I found out I **wasn't** ready. Death came knocking on my door in what I thought was a heart attack. It was a collapsed lung and if it had not been taken care of, I suppose that I could have died.

With a collapsed lung, you can't get enough breath, because the lung just isn't working and the old air isn't going in. You are huffing and puffing and doing everything you can to keep breathing and it isn't enough. I was saying, "Oh, God, I am too young to die!"

Brother Peter was talking about that situation in Lagos when that guy jacked that shell into the chamber of his gun. My goodness. I said, "God, my time can't be here yet, can it?" Saying you are ready to die and facing death are two different things. When you face death, how are you going to face it? Are you going to face it in an attitude of integrity before the Lord, in accordance to the Word that you are professing? Or are you going to be some denominational, nominal Christian? Do you know what Jesus said? Jesus said, "No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down (John 10:18). No man taketh! We want to be like Jesus, don't we? Do you think that there is coming a time when you are going to stand up before somebody with a gun or knife or whatever it may be and say, "Go ahead and shoot me. No man takes my life from me." Oh no, you're not. You are not going to say anything, unless you have the reality of the Holy Ghost. Not unless you have the reality of what it means to be a son! "Jesus, if I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16). Give me a break! "If I perish, I perish, I am going to see the king." **How much of a reality is eternity to you?** Let eternity stare you in the face and you will find out how much of a reality it really is. Do you really believe the Word? Now, there are some people who have a reality and death doesn't frighten them, but most of us are scared to death of it. We do anything and everything to preserve our life. Hallelujah. Get into a situation that is a little uncomfortable, that makes you out of sorts. Is one of the first things that comes into your mind and out of your mouth a praise to the Lord? Is it a hallelujah that comes from the very depths of your being? Or is it an, "Oh my, Oh me?" Do we look at it as an opportunity to demonstrate the reality of the Word that we are preaching?

We have so many preachers! There are so many people that can preach better than me. My goodness. We have preachers here, preachers there, preachers all over the world, but I have yet to see one walking, talking Christ!

Do you know that Brother Ravenhill said that a mere handful of people turned the world upside down? Do you know how many people in the world today profess to have the Holy Ghost compared to the handful of people that were back then in the New Testament? How in the name of heaven is it that the world is in a worse condition and we are in captivity to our own nature and our own thoughts, in the way that we are? With the word that we have? I can't understand it, except for the fact of my own humanity.

John 12:24, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.* Except there are no conditions here. There is only one position, one qualification, and one resolution to the situation. Now, brethren, when tribulation comes knocking on your door, you can't get up and act like it. You have to have the reality of the thought impregnated within your soul. It is not something that you can do because, "He said that God said that you could do this or you could do that." You have to have the reality of what it is that is being spoken concerning the issue, and the issue that we are talking about, the deliverance that we desire is **not** a rapture. Is it? Well, we say no, but do we really believe it? I have heard it ministered that it is "sackcloth and ashes" (Revelation 11:3). That is what I heard. That means trouble, tribulation, persecution and suffering.

Can you imagine? You have all this power inside of you. You have the power of the creative spoken Word. You could deliver yourself out of your problem, out of your trouble, and you do not use it. Isn't that what Jesus did? Come on? He said, "I could call a legion of angels. I could ask of My Father even now, and He would bring Me a legion of angels to deliver Me out of your hand" (Matthew 26:53). It is not a supposition, a command that wouldn't have been obeyed. He said, "I could ask of My Father **now**." But He knew that the Father's will was not that He be delivered. Hallelujah. Do you know what the will of the Father is in your set of circumstances? Do you know what it is supposed to produce as far as He is concerned?

My goodness. We really should be weeping between the porch and the altar (Joel 2:17). They killed one of the prophets right there in the temple, you know that, don't you? He was talking about the blood of the prophets being on the hands of those that were contending with him. Even of the blood of the prophet that they killed in the midst of his service (Luke 11:50-51). They were so presumptuous and arrogant in their position of knowledge and revelation that they felt like they had the right and the liberty to put the servant of God to death. My God. You don't know what we are in for. Hallelujah.

***He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal*** (John 12:25). What all this is still saying is, "We want to see Jesus. We want to see Yeshua. We want to see the reality of this God/man. We want to see the demonstration, the power, the glory that is called Christ." What did He say in John 17:5? ***And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*** Then He goes on in verse 22, ***And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.***

Do you know that not one of the apostles died of natural causes? I don't know that we really know what happened to John, but the rest of them we know. There is natural history as well as biblical history. It says that Peter said that he wasn't worthy to die the death of Christ, so he asked them to crucify him upside down. Can you imagine that? Being crucified right side up would be bad enough. I can't even imagine being crucified upside down. My God. He asked for it, if it is indeed a true fact. Hallelujah.

They said that they couldn't kill John. Historically, they say that they did a number of things to try to kill him, so they just did the next best thing. Out of sight, out of mind. They segregated him, isolated him on a little island out there, but God had other plans. He took him out of that rough rock in the coral sea and lifted him up into a realm of heaven, which we are now looking into in regard to our day, and the word that he was hearing is about us.

How are we ever going to measure up? Have you ever thought about it? How can you and I ever measure up concerning those that have gone on before us? Read Hebrews 11. How many of you have been living in a cave lately? Somebody said it the other night, "sawn asunder". Yet it says that "they without us will not be made perfect." My God, what are You talking about? "They without us." Who am I? Where am I? What am I doing with what I have? What is working in my life? What is bringing me to a position of revelation? "Oh, I want it up here, God. I want it up here. I don't want it in

here. I don't want it in here. I want to be clothed and fed. It doesn't have to be a lot, Lord, just enough to keep the belly from rumbling." That is not what I really want. Give me a place where my belly rumbles and I start looking for food.

I don't know what concept we have about being a son of God. I think it is what James and John had. The sons of Thunder, wasn't that them? I think that is our mentality. "Oh, yes, Lord, I want to be on your right." "And I want to be on your left." Well, He qualified the position. **Where do you want to be?** Well, I could say, "Lord, I really don't want to be that close. I just want to be somewhere in line." Some of us are saying, "I just want to be somewhere in line and I don't want to be that close." Well, unfortunately, a son is a son. There is no half-way son. Did you know that there is no half-way son? **It is either son or no son.** Hallelujah. My goodness. He said to them, "It is not mine to give you." First He said to them, "Can you drink from the cup that I am going to drink of?" to which they said, "Oh, yes, Lord, I can drink of it!" (Matthew 20:22-23b). "Oh, yes, Lord, I can drink of it!" That is us! That is right there where we are. Oh, that is not you, that is just me. That is where I am. Right there. "Oh, yes, Lord, I can drink of it! I can drink of it! I can really drink of it!" It wasn't more than a couple of days later, a week later, a month later, that they were all in the garden. When the crowd came they all split, all the **want-to-be-sons**. That is what they were, want-to-be's. They hadn't found the reality of it. "Could you not wait with me one hour? Could you not tarry with me one hour? Could you not pray with me one hour?" (Matthew 26:40b). "Could ye not intercede and move into that place with me for one hour? That in the time of tribulation you would not fall, fail, or cut and run?"

We sing a song, "Say not unto me, 'Sleep on!'" Well, the Word of God is coming and saying, "WAKE UP!" The alarm clock is going off! Things are starting to happen! "WAKE UP!" Get into that place of travail, that place of meditation, that place of service before the Lord. I didn't say service *unto* the Lord, going out here, doing this and doing that. I mean, if that is what you are called to do, go fulfill your calling. But if it doesn't work for you and you find yourself outside at the day appointed – don't complain.

"Can you not wait with me? Can you not tarry with me one hour?" Gethsemane is a place that all of us are going to have to face in one form or fashion or another. Do you understand the confrontation of righteousness and wickedness coming together head-on? My goodness. We are supposed to be prosperous happy Christians, living comfortable lives, being able to have good jobs, so that we can give the church more money, when the true and undefiled offering is the widow's mite, the thing that is given out of the utmost desparateness of her need.

How about the widow and the prophet in the Old Testament? We give God ten, we give God twenty, we give God thirty, and we will even give God fifty percent. God does not want thirty. God does not want fifty. God does not want sixty. God does not want seventy. God wants 100%. 100%! We're not there. You know, I have read about men that gave everything to God except for 10%. Praise the Lord for the 90% man. He set an example. He set a benchmark. But that isn't good enough to get you or me into Sonship. **GOD WANTS IT ALL!**

There is a school of discipline and we have taken it and made it a doctrine. "You follow me and be as I am, so that one day you may be as I am." I don't want anybody to

be as I am. I want to be as Christ is. I want anybody who is around me to see Christ, that **Christ** may be exemplified and that they might hunger and thirst after Him, not after me. I don't want that position. God forbid that I should ever come to that place. Hallelujah. But it is, nevertheless, a road of discipline.

You know, I am very glad for my Army experience. At the time it didn't make much sense to me and I felt like I was being mistreated. But I thank God for it. It taught me a valuable lesson: you are not your own. Can you imagine that? A young man going into the service (I wasn't serving the Lord either) and being submitted to the regimen that was in force. I was told when to get up, what to eat, what to wear, how to act, when not to talk. Hallelujah. I also had to do other things that I did not want to do, such as being woken up in the middle of the night and being told to put on my backpack in full dress, and getting out there in the cold, rainy, windy weather. We were over there on the coast by Monterey. Sometimes in Monterey it can get pretty cold, especially when the wind is blowing. Being told to dig a hole and just about the time you finished digging it, they tell you to fill it back up again. You are not your own.

You know, there were a couple of guys in our battalion that had gone off to the beach on one of the few weekend furloughs that they gave us. They went out on the beach and got very sunburned and wound up in the infirmary. Do you know what the Army did? They court-martialed them for destroying government property. You are not your own. You are the property of the U.S.A. You belong to them. You are stamped, sealed, and delivered. You can forget about your rights. The only right that you have is to do what you are told. They court-martialed them and found them guilty. I don't know what the penalty was, but it was something. They don't do that for nothing. It taught the rest of us not to go to the beach.

You are not your own. You think because they give you a little furlough that you can do what you want to. I thought that my time was to do with it as I pleased. We have the same attitude. We can get under a certain discipline, into a certain environment and we think, "Oh, my. I have the liberty to do this. I have the liberty to do that," when a son does nothing except for what the Father tells him to do. We are doing a whole lot of things that the Father never even thought about. If we were doing what the Father would have us do, we wouldn't have the visual as well as the actual evidence around us that we are *not* doing what God told us to do.

I don't understand it. I think it is very simple, very plain. In the aspect of what He is talking about He said, "He that loveth his life shall lose it" (John 12:25a). Don't you hear it? If you are preserving your way of life, you are preserving something that is already lost. It is already gone, finished. That is it, but He says, "He that loses his life for my sake shall find it" (Matthew 10:39b). In this place it says, "...he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal" (John 12:25b). This world – this world means all of the attributes, culture and personality that are in you.

You know, I always said that God never sent me out on the mission field to deliver the ones that I was ministering to as much as He wanted to deliver the missionary. I thank God for all of the experience, because every experience has highlighted who I am and how far and how low I am in the aspect of obtaining the reality of Christ. Paul said it a different way. He said, "Christ in you" (Colossians 1:26b). Does that mean Christ in

Burt, or Burt that has Christ in him? John said, ***He must increase, but I must decrease*** (John 3:30). That means that what there is of me is diminishing, evaporating, disappearing in some fashion, so that what is of Him is becoming more and more predominant. At least I hope so. Well, we know that Paul was doing all right. At least, it seems like he was doing all right. But he also said, “I am a man that knoweth what lieth within me and I must bring myself in subjection to the revelation that I have” (I Corinthians 9:26-27). I must bring myself into subjection to that authority.

You know, that authority is going to tell me to do just exactly what I don't want to do, because what I want to do is of the world. If I am shy and easily intimidated, He is going to tell me to be extroverted and aggressive. If I am aggressive and an intimidator, He is going to tell me to “shut-up,” sit down and get myself someplace in a corner. He is going to tell me the exact opposite of that which I am accustomed to doing. If I am an organizer, He is going to put me in mass confusion. If I am in mass confusion, He is going to put me with an organizer. We are going to be like “iron sharpening iron” (Proverbs 27:17). But you know, I always think I am right. “Well, if they would only.” “Well, if he could do this,” or, “If they could do that.” “If this would happen.” “If that would happen.” “God, it is all their fault.” We are always willing to blame the other guy. Of course, you are not. Sometimes it seems that we are so without understanding. “Well, I don't understand.” “What don't you understand?” It really is not for me to understand. Some things are not for me to understand. Number one, I don't have the brain for it. Thank God! I just do not have the brain for it. I can trust Him to work all things out “after the council of His own will” (Ephesians 1:11b). Sometimes I think it is really nice to be dumb.

It says it is impossible for a rich man to inherit the kingdom of God (Matthew 19:24-26, Mark 10:25-27, Luke 18:25-27). I wonder how much more it is for an intelligent man when he has everything up there figured out, if he has this I.Q. always up there working? “Click – Click – Click – Click – Click”, “Click – Click - Click – Click – Click.” You know, everything like a computer, spitting it out. Oh, my goodness.

Ministry is always related to the ox. Do you know that? How many of you think of an ox as a brilliant type of fellow or smart? Have you ever looked at an ox? An ox is a slow plodding thing, sometimes stubborn. They use the pointed stick to drive an ox. “OUCH!” And we all want to be in some sort of ministry! But we have to have the ox nature, or at least the ox nature that has been transformed to be an obedient ox. Do you know that an obedient ox has learned to do what the master says by reason of what he has suffered? If you think that they take that little stick and just tickle his behind, you've got another thing coming. They take that stick and jab it in there and you know, sometimes blood comes out. That old ox kicks back and what happens when he does that? He gets it again but only deeper!

He said, “Paul, why kickest thou against the pricks?” (Acts 9:5b). Some of us kick ourselves bloody and all the time we are rebuking the devil. My goodness. Hallelujah. John 12:25, ***He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.*** “...God has set the world in their (my) heart...” but it is something that I want to divest myself of (Ecclesiastes 3:11). I want to disseminate it; it is something I want to see evaporated, burned in the midst of the fire that is going to take care of it, because it is fire. Don't you understand, it is fire that is

required? No offering is accepted of God that isn't accepted by reason of what? FIRE! When Solomon dedicated the temple, what came? Fire! My God.

I look back on my conversion and the beginning of my walk with God. It was nothing but fire. Fire to me personally, emotionally, and mentally! In my family, fire! My God. When I got through that and I got into the baptism of the Holy Ghost, it was **fire!** Nothing but **fire!** The walk into God has been tribulation after tribulation. Maybe your story is different. You just floated from one cloud of glory to the next, always on that spiritual high, always on those spiritual mountains, with the breath of God always cooling your brow.

My experience has not been that way. It has been head down into the wind, trudging along, trying to maintain some sort of equilibrium and all the time trying to grasp the reality of Christ within me. Hallelujah. Sometimes it doesn't go very well. Hallelujah. My God. That is one of the reasons that I have the wife that I have. My goodness, is she an encouragement to me. She lays it out and doesn't pull any punches. She comes right around and tells me like it is. Hallelujah. Thank God for the truth. Sometimes it hurts, you understand. Sometimes I don't react just the right way, but that doesn't stop her from moving in the Spirit of God and bringing me the word that I need, that I might be encouraged to rise up and to go on. I could get mad, arrogant, or biblical. "Woman, you are supposed to reverence me and give me some sort of encouragement. Why are you getting on top of me with your spurs?"

My God. Thank God. He knew just exactly what I needed. He knew exactly where I needed it and when I needed it. Thank God I got it! Hallelujah. She is no namby-pamby. Let me tell you, she is tough! You have got to be tough to live with me in my circumstances. Everything about my situation is tough, tough, tough, tough and I don't think your situation is any different than mine. Why? Because you have a word, a hope, and a desire. You have heard something with your ear that pricked your heart. Either that or you would be somewhere else. You wouldn't be sitting here in this place. You would be down on the beach somewhere.

We need to think about what it is that we are pursuing. We need to think about the demands that are going to be made upon us. Hallelujah. It says that no man goes to build a house unless he first sits down and what? Considers the cost thereof and makes sure that he has the funds in place in order to finish the thing that he started. No man goes to war without figuring out what he is coming up against and arming himself as is necessary, so that he won't find himself having to make peace or surrender his authority (Luke 14:28-32). What position is greater than this place that we are in as far as God is concerned regarding His Word called sonship?

We want to believe that it is another church word, that we have the liberty of another organization and that we have the religious right to life. What right of life did Jesus Christ have? Peter rose up and said, "Jesus, it will not be so, Lord. It cannot be that way" (Matthew 16:22). He wasn't thinking about Jesus. He was thinking about himself. "What is going to happen to me if they do that to Him? I've been associated with this fellow for 3½ years. I am a marked man. I've got this throne that He promised me. I've got this position of authority that is mine." He wasn't thinking about Jesus. He was thinking about his own skin and it is demonstrated down the road. One little moment

of bravado and then he drops the sword and runs. He had just said, "Lord, I'll die! I'm a one-man army! You don't need anyone else but me!" My goodness.

We want the revelation and the knowledge, but we don't want the lifestyle. "The Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matthew 8:20b, Luke 9:58a). I'll bet you all have pillows and beds. It says the Son of man, who is the Son of God, has no place to lay His head. When are we going to recognize and accept the calling and election? Hallelujah. Quite frankly, some of us may find ourselves in that position, not voluntarily, but because external circumstances forced us. Hallelujah. Can you say, "Amen!"? Or is it too much?

John 12:25, *He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.* Lord, I don't want to love my life. If I love my life, Lord, show me where that love is and let's take care of it! Now I am not talking about you. I am talking about me. Lord God, I want to know how it is, what it is and who it is that I love more than you. Boy, God give us the strength! God give me the strength to walk it out when it comes.

John 12:26, *If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.* They wanted to see the Son. Isn't it marvelous? The guy could have just gone out and said, "Well, here He is. How do you do? This is Jesus. This is so and so." "Oh hi, hi, how are you doing?" Immediately He walks up and starts talking all of this stuff about losing your life and following Him and doing this that. **We are talking about the Son of God. We are talking about BEING A SON.**

Do you know that there is a difference between being a hireling and a son? There are three categories that you can be in. The first is that of a hireling and the last is that of a son. Most of us are not yet qualifying for the position of the son. Most of us are still in the position of the hireling looking for some reward or compensation for all of our service and suffering. Do you know that the hireling is always looking for the reward of his work? Isn't that what we do most of the time? "Well, God, I am building up this treasure in heaven. Oh yes, I am laying up these crowns in heaven." Do you know that Paul wasn't thinking about the crown when he was doing it? I don't believe that Paul would say, "Oh, that is another jewel in my crown." NO! I don't think he had that mentality. I think he was hearing the Father. When the Father spoke of the men in Macedonia that He would stretch forth His hand to, he wasn't thinking about jewels. He was thinking about obeying that Father (Acts 16:9-10).

We are not thinking about obeying the Father. We are thinking about the jewels and being rewarded. "Oh, if I give, I will get back! If I give 10%, I will get back 100-fold." What are you going to do with the 100-fold? Are you going to give it all back again? Probably not. There is probably some dire need that you have to meet. Do you know something? God has treated me so absolutely marvelously. I have been in places and done things that I would not have been able to do had I not been doing the will of the Father. It was beyond my economic ability. It was beyond my position of personality to be found in certain places and doing certain things. Yet God chose by some miraculous aspect and by virtue of my willingness to do what He told me. Yet He brought me into a place and blessed me. It wasn't something that you could put in the bank, but I could put

it in my spiritual bank as an experience of the care and love of the Father that He has towards me. It shows that He will give me a place to rest that is outside of my position to attain in the beginning. Hallelujah.

John 12:26, ***If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.***

We are still talking about seeing the Son. There is a position of service that is recommended with regard to Jesus Christ. He says, "Follow me." Well, we can't follow Him in the actuality of Him walking out there and we are walking behind Him. But we can certainly follow the acts, the deeds and the mentality. We can certainly find ourselves in a mental, emotional environment that will bring us to a point where someday, somehow, God says, "Well done, good and faithful servant..." (Matthew 25:21a, 23a). Well, maybe I want to hear, "Well done, good and faithful SON." I have to be a servant in order to be a son. It was Jesus Christ who was the Son who demonstrated the position of servitude when He took off His garment, bent down, took the bowl and began to wash the disciples' feet (John 13:5). Even Judas'! He didn't leave Judas out. My goodness. There could be no recrimination. The devil could not come and bring reproach against Him. He had to have the right attitude, the right heart, the right place and the right desires. His feelings toward the man had to be the same as they were toward the other eleven! My God! What a mentality! "If you like me, I will like you," had nothing to do with it. It was in the Father's heart for Judas that there would be some sort of reconciliation, or restitution worked out in his behalf with regard to his position of rebellion, stubbornness and the sin that was in his heart. It was not in the desire of the Father's heart that the man should go to hell, in spite of the fact of who he was and what he was and what he was doing.

Most of us have "Pilate-itis disease". We want to wash our hands of this or that and figure that we are clean of all that we can do. "My hands are clean of the blood of this innocent man" (Matthew 27:24b). They tell me that Pilate died a horrible, miserable death. I don't know if it is true. He had the Truth standing before him and there was something that was pricking the man's heart. Do you hear me? He said, "I find no wrong in this man." Yet he condemned Him to die. You know, because of the love of the Father, it might have been that he might have even turned Him loose. I don't know. But Jesus gave him the liberty. Do you know that? It was Jesus Christ that gave him the liberty.

***Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin*** (John 19:11). He said that the burden of the sin lies greater upon those that have brought Me to you, than it does on you. Who knows, it may have been by the strength of that word that Pilate had the strength to turn Him over to the Jews. Of His life He says, ***No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father*** (John 10:18).

"I lay it down and I can pick it up again." That is so marvelous. There is a revelation in that. What does it say? ***If I don't lay it down, I am not going to pick it up again. The laying down gives me the authority to pick it up.*** Yet I don't pick it up on my terms. I pick it up on the terms of the Father. There was an hour, there was a day,

there was an appointed time for the fullness of God to come forth, not only in death, but also in resurrection. It says that the bodies of the two witness company lay in the street for 3½ days (Revelation 11:8-9). There is an appointed time. Those bodies that resurrected and walked those streets at that time were not bodies that were coerced or forced (Matthew 27:52-53). They were bodies of individuals that had come to a place of recognition that no man takes their life from them. They had walked obedient unto the Father and it was by the decree of the Father that they will have the ability to again pick it up. How are we going to do that if we are not doing it now? Miracles 101. The abracadabra branch.

That is what we believe. We think that we can fight, kick and squeal. We will work whatever we can to keep our integrity and ourselves, as far as our humanity is concerned. Then in the last hour, some how, some olive branch is going to be waved over our being and we are going to be changed. There was once a man that told me that if you want to give an offering and you dig in your pocket and it is empty, dig deeper and you will find something to give that will cost you something. How much is your salvation costing you? What is the price that you are paying in light of the price that has been paid? I think it is a serious question. You can go out of here and hear another conference, another word, and other tapes and never accomplish anything. You will find yourself in the same place when the bomb goes off. Then you will be running around in some kind of dilemma as to why God doesn't do something. What are you going to do between now and then? Where are you going to focus your attention between now and then? What are you going to do with what you have between now and then?

I think it is very serious. I know my situation is very serious. I need the wisdom of God concerning my circumstances. But I also know that I want the revelation of Christ in the midst of all of it. I don't want out of one little piece or part of it until I have the assurance that that is what I am going to end up with at the end of the day. God bless you!

**Audience:** You were talking about fearing dying. Does that mean that we don't believe in what we are hearing?

**Brother Burt:** The degree that we fear death is the degree that we do not believe God. He is more of a theoretical or a religious concept than He is a reality in our lives. The Bible says that the devil has held us in bondage through the fear of death. So anytime that we find ourselves in a death situation, and we find ourselves scrambling for life and frantically looking for life in some measure – that means that we are not believing, or do not have the concept of belief that is in God. Or at least that is how I see it.