

## LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Please open your Bibles to Psalms chapter eighty-four and verse ten. I would like to preach a message entitled "Let's Hear it for the Christian Life."

In Psalms 84:10, the Psalmist said, "...I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Listen folks! I have decided it is better to be in God's camp on the worst day than it is to be in the devil's camp on the best of days. Many of God's people don't project that image at all. They say it is so hard to be a Christian. It is so hard to live the Christian life. You have got to go to church. You have got to listen to hours of sermons. You have got to endure. You can't watch this. You can't wear that. You can't say this. You can't do that. And you complain about the Christian life. And you come up to somebody and say, "Would you like to be a Christian?"

What are you trying to say, Preacher? I am simply saying this! Stop your complaining. In Philippians 2:14, the Bible says, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings."

Let's hear it for the Christian life. I submit to you that the Christian life, when lived honestly and biblically, is ten thousand times better than the best life lived by an unsaved man.

There are folks in this room who have already received Christ, and some of you have lost sight of what a wonderful thing it is to be a Christian. You have no joy. You are not a very good representation of Jesus Christ or the Christian life. And there is not much that would attract others to Jesus Christ in you. You need to get a hold of what I am preaching today and say, "By God's grace everybody around me is going to find out it is better to be a Christian than it is to be an unsaved person."

There are folks in this building today who have never received Christ. If something doesn't happen to you in your life before you die, you are going to go to hell. It is that simple.

You say, Preacher! I don't believe in that. I don't believe in an awful place called hell.

Listen! You ought to get saved today because the Christian life is superior. Even if all the spiritual things of heaven and hell were not true, I would still say the Christian life is a better life. I would still say I had rather be a Christian

Let's hear it for the Christian life. I want to talk to you about the difference between an unsaved man and a saved man.

We are going to notice three things: Number one, there is the difference between heaven and hell; number two, there is the difference between what's hard and what's easy; and then number three, there is the difference between forgiveness and guilt.

Please notice, number one: there is the difference between heaven and hell. The Bible is plain on this! If a person dies without having accepted the work of Christ done on Calvary's cross on his behalf, that individual is going to go to hell. There are no exceptions. In II Thessalonians 1:8-9, the Bible says, "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

I don't know about you; but, if those were the only two verses in all the Word of God on judgment and hell, and if I were lost, I would flee to Christ.

What is the Bible saying? The Bible is simply saying this! If you do not obey the gospel, if you do not take heed to the gospel (and the gospel is repent and believe), if you do not receive Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, you are going to go to hell.

You might be the nicest guy to be with. You might be the finest of neighbors. You might be the best of citizens; but, if you do not receive Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, you are going to go to hell and suffer eternally.

The Bible is telling you that you are going to go to hell and be punished with everlasting destruction, eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord, and that simply means out of the presence of the Lord—no God in hell, no friends in hell, no fellowship with family members in hell.

You will be in that awful place forever, and ever, and ever, utterly alone. You are not going to be with God. You are not going to be with family and friends that knew Jesus Christ.

I say to you that the Christian life is better because there is a difference between heaven and hell.

My friend! Hell is an awful place. Hell is described in the Bible as a place of unquenchable fire. In Mark 9:43-44, the Bible says, "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

What is the Bible saying? The Bible is simply saying this. It is a fire, the flames of which never go out. A hundred thousand years from today, the fires of hell shall burn as they burn now. A hundred million years, a hundred billion years, throughout the endless eons of eternity, the fires of hell shall burn as they burn now. They shall never be quenched. There will be no relief from the flames of hell, no quenching of the flames of hell. Hell shall burn forever and ever, and all those in that awful place shall endure hell forever.

The Bible defines hell not only as a place of unquenchable fire, but also as a place of no rest. In Revelation 14:11, the Bible says, "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever: and they have no rest day nor night..."

The Bible defines hell not only as a place of unquenchable fire, not only as a place of no rest, but also as a place of that burneth with fire and brimstone. In Revelation 21:8, the Bible says, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

But you say, Preacher! I am not so bad. What do you mean you are not so bad? You are a sinner just like I am. The Bible is very plain on that. In Romans 3:23, the Bible says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

I am a sinner by birth. I am a sinner by choice. I have by my nature and by my deeds offended a holy God. And so have you.

It makes no difference if I haven't done something you've done or you haven't done something I've done. It's not whether I've offended you or whether you've offended me. You are bad because you have offended God. You have violated His will. You are a sinner abiding under the curse of damnation. But Jesus Christ, God's Son, died on Calvary's cross for you and suffered your damnation. He received your torment. He received your pain. And all you have to do is accept what Jesus Christ did for you, and you can go free.

In John 3:18, the Bible says, "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Listen folks! I am simply saying this! If you have not personally received Jesus Christ, you are not facing judgment some day. You are already under the judgment of God.

Right now, there is hovering over your head the sword of God's judgment; and it is held simply by the thin thread of God's mercy. And at any moment God could cut that thin thread and damn you to eternal hell where you would suffer for ever and ever and ever and ever.

I say to you the Christian life is better because there is a difference between heaven and hell.

We have noticed number one, that there is the difference between heaven and hell. But notice number two: there is the difference between what's hard and what's easy.

You say, Preacher! It is hard to live for God, but it is easy to live in sin. No, it's just the other way around. In Matthew 11:30, Jesus said, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

You say, Preacher! What are you talking about? Everybody has hardships.

If you are not a Christian, and you came forward and received Jesus Christ as your Saviour, I would not look you in the face and say you are home free now; sickness is never going to bother your household; you will never face financial problems again.

To say that, if you get saved today, you will be healthy and wealthy all the rest of your life is a bunch of junk; and it is not in the Bible.

Let me ask you something. How many in here are saved, but you have experienced tragedies – the sudden death of a loved one, the incurable illness of a loved one? How many of you are saved, but you have experienced tragedies in your life? Raise your hands.

All right! Look around the room! The room is full of folks who have experienced tragedies. In other words! Being saved does not exempt you of tragedy, does it? How many of you would say, "Preacher! I am saved but I surely know what it is to be tempted to do wrong"? Raise your hands. You mean to tell me that being a Christian doesn't exempt you from temptation? No, sir!

In I Corinthians 10:13, the Bible says, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Listen! Being saved will not exempt you from tragedy, hardship, sorrow, difficulty, and tough decisions. I am not telling you to get saved and you are home free, that it's a bed of roses until you die and go to heaven. That's not true!

But I've got news for you. Do unsaved people have tragedies? Yes! Do unsaved people have death? Yes! Do unsaved people have sorrows? Yes! Do unsaved people have marital problems? Yes! Do unsaved people have kids break their hearts? Yes! Do unsaved people have tough decisions? Yes! In fact, I don't know of a single tragedy that occurs in unsaved families that doesn't occur in saved families.

However, there is a big difference. In the Christian life, we have the Lord. And an unsaved man doesn't.

I know what it is to have pain. I know what it is to have sorrow. I know what it is to have temptation. I know what it is to suffer defeat. I know what it is personally, and I have observed in the lives of others what it is to have all kinds of problems. But the difference between being saved and being lost is, when you are saved, you have God you can turn to. An unsaved man has no God to turn to. Not only are you without God in the next world; but, my dear friend, if you don't know Jesus Christ, you are without God in this world.

How in the world can you face a day without Jesus Christ? How in the world can you face a doctor's report of possible cancer and termination of life without Jesus Christ? How can you possibly bury a loved one beneath the sod without the knowledge of Jesus Christ? How can you possibly endure the temptation to be dishonest, or to be immoral in the wicked society in which we live? How in the world can you face that and have no God to turn to?

I mean on the worst day for a Christian, he can turn to God. On the worst day for a Christian, he has a Bible to direct him. In II Timothy 3:16-17 says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine (the Bible tells you what to believe—it is profitable) for reproof (the Bible tells you when you are wrong—it is profitable) for correction (it tells you how to get right—it is profitable) for instruction in righteousness: (it tells the child of God how to stay right so) that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." He has the Holy Spirit within to guide him. In Zechariah 4:6, the Bible says. "...Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." He has the promises of God to rely upon. In II Peter 1:3, the Bible says, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness..." He has the grace of God to support him.

I say to you, I would rather be a Christian than an unsaved man! Hardship! Tough to be a Christian! Sure, there is discipline. Sure, it's hard. You are not going to be exempt from hard work and difficult times in the Christian life by being a Christian.

I am simply saying this! You have the Lord to turn to. You can get direction from God. In Proverbs 3:5-6, the Bible says, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." You have the supply of omnipotence. You have the wisdom of omniscience. You have the guidance of omnipresence. You have God. You can turn to the Lord.

I say to you, our worst day is better than an unsaved man's best day.

My dear friend, if you do not know Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, the only way you can face each day is to kind of hope it will turn out okay. You don't have any promise.

Some of God's people forget what it is to get up every day with promises. You can walk through the day with promises. You can go to bed at night with promises. An unsaved man gets up with not one single promise. God doesn't promise to bless his labors. He doesn't promise to bless his wisdom. He doesn't promise to guide him. He doesn't promise to help him. He doesn't promise to meet his needs. He doesn't promise to sustain him. When he tries to rear his kids, he has no promise. When he tries to have a decent marriage, he has no promise. I mean he is stripped of all things before God. He has nothing.

The child of God has everything. He has the promises of God. He has the privilege of walking with God. He has the privilege of calling upon God, and praying, and seeking God's face. In Jeremiah 33:3, the Bible says, "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not." He has the promise that God will supply his need. He has the promise that God will bless his marriage and bless the rearing of his children.

I submit to you that the Christian's worst day, if he is right with God, is better than the best day an unsaved man has.

I am not going to hang my head. I am not going to apologize to my unsaved friend when I beg him to come to Christ. I am asking him to unshackle hopelessness and take on hope. I am asking him to swap out hell for heaven. How is that bad news?

We have noticed number one, that there is the difference between heaven and hell. We have noticed number two, that there is the difference between what's easy and what's hard. But notice number three, there is the difference between forgiveness and guilt.

My dear friend! If you are unsaved you are this day shackled with the guilt of your sin. You say, Preacher! Wait just a minute. You said you were a sinner too. Yes I am a sinner just like you; but the difference is, my guilt is gone. You say, Preacher! That's just religious talk. No, sir, it is the real thing! Jesus Christ died for me on Calvary's cross just like He died for you. In Romans 5:8, the Bible says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." And that is what makes the rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ all the more worthy of judgment, all the more worthy of punishment in an awful place called hell.

I am a sinner just like you are; but the difference is, because I have accepted what Jesus Christ did for me, I have no guilt. In John 1:12, the Bible says, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

You say, Preacher! He is just over looking your sins. No, sir! He has dealt with my sins. I have been judged. I have been punished in a substitute. In II Corinthians 5:21, the Bible says, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Listen! Jesus Christ took all of the sins of this preacher on Himself; and then God fastened His eyes upon Jesus Christ and poured upon the Son of God all of His wrath and anger, and justifiable hatred for my sins; He poured it out on His Son.

I have been judged. It's not that I am getting off without anything being paid for. It's been paid for. Jesus has paid it all. In the eyes of God, I have been declared innocent. In fact, I am as righteous in the eyes of God as Jesus Christ Himself because, when He took my sins upon Him, I received Him. He transferred to me His very righteousness.

You say, Preacher! What did you have to do to get it? Did you have to promise to tithe from now on out? No! Did you have to promise to join the church? No! Did you have to find all the fun things and stop doing them? No!

It is so simple! All I had to do is accept what Jesus did. That's it! Jesus did it all. Listen to the Bible! In Ephesians 2:8-9, the Bible says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." In Titus 3:5, the Bible says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us..." In Romans 4:5, the Bible says, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." In John 6:47, Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." In John 6:47, Jesus says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." In Romans 10:9-10, the Bible says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Romans 10:13 says, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

My unsaved friend! Let me ask you something. Why in the world would you turn down the Lord Jesus Christ? Why would you rather have hell than heaven? Why would you rather have the hard life than the easy life? Why would you rather have guilt than forgiveness?

Listen! You are going to die just like me. You have got to live today just like me. Not a whole lot of difference between you and me except what Jesus Christ has done. And that thing has made all the difference in the world.

Let's hear it for the Christian life. I submit to you that a child of God who is walking with God, who lives for God, and who is serving God, is ten thousand times better off on his lowest day than an unsaved man is on his best day.

Let's hear it for the Christian life. Everybody around you ought to know it is better to be a Christian than it is to be an unsaved person.

### How is a Person Saved?

Salvation is all of God. God does the saving. Just take God at His Word and claim His salvation by faith. You will never be able to work your way into heaven. God does not have a scale in heaven whereby He weighs your good and bad works. That is a lie of the Devil – Romans 3:24; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; I Peter 1:18; Romans 5:8.

Salvation is as simple as believing on Christ as the one who bore your sin, who died in your place, who was buried, and whom God resurrected from the dead – John 1:12, 3:16, 6:47; Acts 16:31; II Corinthians 5:21; Romans 10:9-10; Romans 10:13.

Simply admit that you are a sinner and believe on Christ as your crucified, buried, and risen Saviour. You will receive forgiveness for all of your sins. You will receive His free gift of eternal life by faith – Romans 3:10, 23; I Corinthians 15:3-4.

Jesus did a wonderful thing for you some 2,000 years ago on Calvary's cross. He died for you. He was buried for you. He rose again the third day for you, and nothing would thrill Him more than to save you today.

Won't you go to Him right now in prayer and tell Him in your own words that you will trust Him as your Saviour? Or pray this simple prayer: Dear Lord, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died for me and that He arose from the grave. Here and now I ask You to forgive me of my sin and save me. In Jesus's name. Amen.

If you prayed that simple prayer, I would like to hear from you. Please contact me by e-mail or phone (813) 760-4028.

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