

The secret of power is death

Part 1

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[00:00:01] Ecclesiastes, verse chapter 7, the first verse, a good name is better anoint than precious ointment, and the day of death and the day of one's birth. I'd like you to turn to the New Testament, to Galatians 2, Galatians 2, verse 20, for I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. 2 Corinthians 4, verse 8, we are troubled [00:01:02] on every side, yet not distressed, we are perplexed, not in despair, persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live, are always delivered unto death, or Jesus saved, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then, death worketh in us, but life in you. We have in the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believe, and therefore have I spoken, we also believe, and therefore speak. I read the one little verse, from Ecclesiastes chapter 7, because I [00:02:17] could use it, would like to use it as a caption, so to speak, to what is before one's mind at this moment. The latter half of the verse, particularly, the day of one's death, says the wise man, is better than the day of one's birth. Now I'm aware, and you are all aware, that this is addressed to people under the sun. You know as well as I, he's referring, I would think, to all physical death. What I'd like to do tonight, with your kind permission, is to give an interpretation of all the New Testament. Because I'd like you to see that the secret of Father's death, this is [00:03:06] perhaps not a very topical subject, probably you might have got a very happy subject, but the Holy Saints have called this a fundamental subject. This lies at the very root of Christian living. And so I've taken the measure of reading of the Old Testament, something perhaps which doesn't really directly apply to one's subject, but seeking to give it an interpretation in the spiritual sense, in order to impress our hearts with the precious truth that death is really the secret of Father. And if you wanted an Old Testament illustration of this, I would turn you very regularly to the burial of Elisha, and remind you when they put the corpse of the man to Elisha's tomb, it immediately came to light. Directly comes into contact with death, beloved. With death, that is, the dead body of Elisha, the body that was put in, hurriedly, you may recall, [00:04:04] it immediately sprang to life. There was power there. There was equal power there. It took the great Elijah up to heaven, you may remember, the horseman of Israel, the chariot of Israel. Power was there for beloved saints of God. Power was in the mantle, so to speak, that draped this whole of Elisha when he went back and crossed over Jordan again. But power too was seen, ultimately we might say, in the grave. Death was there. And immediately death was touched. Then life came into emergence. Power was there for beloved. And it

sprang, though I may so say, I'm referring now very practically, of course, to the Christian walk of life. It has this wonderful effect that if we are sensible of what death really means, then life will, and power will spring out of it. I'm turning you then to Galatians 2. Have a look at Paul. I might not [00:05:02] be able to explain to you what it means when he, what he means when he says, I am crucified with Christ, because I don't pretend to be a teacher. But I can draw your attention to Paul and say to you here's the example of a man who knew what he was talking about when he said, I am crucified with Christ. May I remind you, beloved, here that there was only two men crucified with, were crucified actually with Christ. That was the two themes, you remember.

One on the left and one on the right. Of all the nations of this earth, beloved, there was only two men who could say, of whom it could be said, they were crucified with Christ. You notice then that Paul, directed by God the Holy Spirit, says, I am crucified, not I was crucified. The man, [00:06:01] the precious Jesus, the impeccable Christ who is in the glory, was not on the cross. He couldn't say I was crucified with him. He said, I am crucified with him. You see then, I am crucified with him. If you looked at the original, you'd discover there's only one word there. It's co-crucified, together with Christ, says Paul. So if I can't teach you what it means, I am crucified, I can point you to this great example, and show you a man who knew what he was talking about when he says, I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, he says, I'm not dead, in this sense. He says it, I, but in order that Christ might live in me. In other words, beloved, the less there was of Paul, the more there was of Christ. Do you see that? And that's what death does. That's what the application of the cross of the precious Jesus does. It keeps in bay that spirit that wouldn't live at ease in this sea. The spirit of go on with that which is in the world. [00:07:05] It puts to death, it blots out, it obliterates the man. And as he goes out, so to speak, Christ comes in. So we can say from Corinthians, he says, well I die, but you live. I used to wonder what that meant. It just means this, the less you see of Paul, the more you see of Christ. And he's to say to his beloved Philippians, I don't mind going out of sight, obliterate me if you will, I don't mind as long as I see Christ living in you. That's the point. That's every son's desire. To see Christ living in the saints of God. And this is exactly what was before Paul here. When he talks about being crucified. Paul he says, as far as he's concerned, Paul he says doesn't live. Who lives now is Christ. And he says, I take him to have a look at my life. To prove to you that what I'm saying, in words, I put into effect. So you see, what one has to understand at the very outset, I'm dealing with doctrine for a moment. [00:08:12] Not very capably perhaps, but doctrine is essential of course. And the teaching is that this Christ, he says I'm crucified, co-crucified with Christ. This Christ, beloved saints of God, went out of this scene by way of the cross. You see then, Christ has died out of this scene. So the question for your heart and mine is, do I go on living in a scene where Christ has died out of, from which Christ has died? No. The doctrine, beloved, is that if Christ has died, then you are dead. If you want what God says about it, he says, God says, he are dead. If you want to know what faith says about intergalactic sex, faith says, reckon yourself dead. And if you want to know what it means practically to be dead, we will look at Corinthians 4 in a minute and see exactly what it means practically to be dead. [00:09:10] So in the sight of God, you are dead. Faith reckons, counts, counts himself, I reckon myself dead. In practice, now beloved saints of God, this comes very close to the bone, doesn't it?

In practice, what do we know about this dying to that which would claim liberties in the atmosphere, in the scene in which we live.

However, just to finish our little verse, he says, the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith. Actually, what he says is this, the life I now live, he says, I live by faith, the faith of the Son of God.

[00:10:02] You would know perhaps as well as I that you get the, you are kept right objectively by verse 20 that we are now reading on chapter 2. You are kept right subjectively by chapter 5, I think it is, where it says that he walked in the spirit. Objectively, it is a Christ in the glory. Subjectively, it is that message man's candoristics worked out in the hearts, the affections and consciences of the saints of God down here. Walk in the spirit and you are kept right subjectively. Have your eye on the purest Christ as Paul had, do you remember? Paul says there's a mark out there, he says I'm after it. Nothing that you and I could do, beloved, or anybody could do, would hold back Paul for a moment. He's running a race and he's aiming for the mark. And he says there it is and I'm going to obtain the mark. What is the mark? Christ in glory. When the same blessed apostle speaks to Timothy, you may remember, he says to Timothy, remember Jesus Christ risen from the dead. Not that he rose on Easter Sunday morning, nothing of the kind. He says, Timothy, I want you always to remember, day in and day out of your Christian life, I want you to remember that Christ Jesus is a risen man in the glory. [00:11:26] Beloved saints of God, there's tremendous power in knowing this purest Christ in the glory. He is living, one who has conquered death and gone back to the place from which he came. And let us not, beloved brethren, think that he died just to save us from our sins. That's perfectly true, blessed be his holy name. But beloved saints of God, there's far, far more in the death of Jesus than your sins and mine. He died, beloved, to bring glory to the blessed God. And because God was satisfied, he's put him where he is tonight on his throne. [00:12:02] Oh, beloved saints, if only your eyes and mine could look up to where he is and see him adorning the Father's throne as the evidence, not only that your sins are gone forever, but that God is satisfied with Jesus. And if our God is satisfied with Jesus, doesn't him say, well then, I'm satisfied as well. Is that so? Are you satisfied with this precious Jesus? Does he fill your heart, beloved saints of God? Did your heart go out to him as Mary's heart went out to him? Have you ever noticed what devotion to Jesus does? Have you ever realized that affection in the heart is ten thousand times better than knowledge in the head? Have you ever understood this, beloved saints of God? Do you want a proof? Jesus said, she's anointed me for my faith. What about all the others? Those who knew and loved Jesus, they said, oh, we'll go along. They spent a lot of money, they bought a lot of ointment, they took it to the door, and where was it? They were too late, beloved, they were too late. [00:13:08] You see what your intellect will do? It will lead you away. You won't be there at the moment, the psychological moment, Mary was. Mary said in her heart, that man, that man is too good to live. He'll soon be dead. I'll anoint him now before it's too late. This was affection, God. Oh, beloved saints of God, don't boast in the school you've been to. Don't boast if you've earned your diploma or even letters after your name. Boast in this, beloved, that your heart has been affected by the precious Jesus who adorns the throne of God. And this is far better than being intellectual. I tell you this, beloved, God never works through the intellect. God will have nothing to do with the man in the flesh. And that's what we are and why we're on the subject of this. It's got to go, beloved. Jesus is gone. He's died out of it. And the flesh has got to go. That man has to go. And another man has to come in. So, here's the simple doctrine. I've spent enough time on it in this chapter.

[00:14:12] But I think, before just leaving it, I'd like us to understand that he died. Because this outdraws the crux of the whole matter, that Jesus died. But he died, and this is the aspect of his death that one would like to press tonight, perhaps quoting Victor Woodhull. I think it is Victor Woodhull who says, he died to deliver us from this present evil age. O beloved saints of God, how many roots have we got in this present evil age? Shall I tell you why we have one solitary root in this evil age? Because we've forgotten that Jesus died to deliver us from it. No one's coming to me and giving all kinds of excuses why a brother or a sister has this or has that or does this or does that. Beloved saints of God, the simple truth is this, the truth of the death of Christ has never gone home to the conscious. That's it. [00:15:09] Otherwise they'd realize that Christ has gone out of this world. And if

he's gone out, why not emulate the Ethiopian? He says, that man has gone out, I'll go out too. This is what's on one's heart, very simply. That you should go out with him as he went out. Because if we understand what death means, we shall understand that there is power that springs out of it. May I turn you back to Corinthians? These are lessons, of course, that are taught not primarily but pictorially.

If I were to take you back to Egypt, look at the people of Israel as they come out of Egypt, we would understand that the waters are there, you remember. When you come to Jordan, there's no water visible. But when you're in the Red Sea, the waters are there visible. [00:16:07] But beloved, Jesus has made a path through, that's the point. And these children of God, they go through the path that he has made. Although the tarry waters are there, there's safety there. And they go through and then they sing. But what I'm coming to is this, they don't go far before they come to a place called Naba. And when they sang, beloved, and joy rejoiced, and I doubt that their hearts were full of joy at the thought the taskmaster's whip was left behind, the awful slavery on which they had laboured for so many years was gone. They were free, beloved. Liberty was theirs. Their hearts must be full of thanksgiving and joy. Then all of a sudden, what happens? Death comes. Why? Because God insists on this. You can't take these things so easily and say, oh well that's alright, thank God I'm saved and nothing else matters. God says, something else does matter. [00:17:05] I want you to understand that he suffered for sins. You see that? Jesus suffered for sins. Do you realise that? And when they got to Marlowe they had to discover that the waters that had dealt with their enemy were bitter waters. And they had to enter into the good of that. Typically, the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Where we go to Corinthians for, you know the chapters of Weldon? There used to be a saying, I think it was a motto of the 16th masses if I remember rightly, and this is going back a good number of years. On their banner was, death or glory. Death or glory.

I don't suppose any men here were in armour. They were the death or glory boys. When you come to Christianity, beloved, it's death and glory. You see that? Death and glory. All a man can do, beloved, is to say death or glory. What the precious God, what the precious Christ can say is death and glory. Death and glory. [00:18:21] Chapter 4, 2 Corinthians. Glory to life first. Based on death. So we come to the practical exposition of the doctrine that we have looked at in the one verse from 2 Colossians. Verses 8 and onward I read to you, remember. May I remind you.

That this, what we call it here, is in burden, vestments and treasure. This treasure, he says, this treasure is in burden, vestments. This always reminds me of Gideon, you remember, how he descends on the great camp and he says to these people, now you do what I do.

[00:19:17] Now have you ever wondered what this meant or have you ever turned it over to your mind? Have you ever met a Christian who could say to you, you do what I do? You say, no I haven't. Well, beloved, there's a man in the glory who could say that. And there's a Paul here, I believe, who could say that. Usually, you do, he says, what I do. He said, what I teach, I practice. It's a grand principle for Christianity, isn't it? Well, the earth vessel is, the treasure rather, is in earth's vestments. I don't know if I finished Gideon, but do you remember what happened? Gideon smashed the vessel, the light shone, the victory was his. Now you have a treasure, we have a treasure, beloved saints of God, it's in an earthen vessel. You might say it's a kind of lantern, you've got to keep the sides of the lantern clean. And this is what is happening in this practical verse or two in the book of chapter 4. [00:20:19] From verses 8 to 11, it tells you how Paul kept the lantern clean so that the light shone up. The light had shone in, I'm not dwelling upon that, but the light shone in, you remember, in order that it might shine out. Now, if the lamp is smoking, of course it couldn't shine out, so you need to have

the lamp kept clean. And how is it kept clean so that the light shines out? It tells us here in verses 8 to 11. He says, we are troubled on every side. This is the way God works. Beloved saints of God, has it ever occurred to you that all these things that happen in your life, the sorrow, the misery, the temptations and the difficulties, that God is bringing them in, beloved, because he is concerned about seeing the characteristics, the features of the risen Christ coming out even in your life and mine. [00:21:14] There's a wonderful testimony to the care of the blessed God, that he should be so interested in people like you and me, that he puts you and me through all kinds of difficulties and problems. He brings sorrow into our lives. He pours problems into our lives as well, we can't solve. And why? Paul is telling us why. To keep the lantern clean, beloved. He knows what he's doing. I know there are terrible things happening, but behind all these things that happen in the life of a Christian, there's always the certain, the assured knowledge, that the hand that is bringing the discipline is the hand of the unloving Father. So, what Paul is doing, verses 8, 9, 10, 11, he's putting Romans 6, 11 into practice. The trouble he says, it's all persecuted, that's all. But, verse 10, you notice, there's no make up in this war, as he said, no make up in this war.

[00:22:18] You notice the little word, Paul opens verse 10 with, always, always, not sometimes. Beloved, this is the secret, you see, of the light shining out. It is because always, there was a moment when this was not so in Paul's case. He says, always praying about and about the dying of Jesus.

You say, well, how is this possible in the life that we have to live down here? Well, Paul found it possible. Paul found it possible. As far as I know, beloved, the only way you and I will understand how it is possible, by being practically held in mind and thought, and assurance, in consistency with the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. [00:23:10] That is, the thoughts have to be consistent, or going alongside with the actual death and crucifying our Lord Jesus. So, it's always, he says, bearing about the body, in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus. Somebody has told me that what it really means is that, as you're going along in life, you're actually carrying death with you. Not a very impressive subject, perhaps, you might think. But, you know, one day it occurred to me, when I was somewhere in the Midlands, that Joseph's coffin, he made of that, went all the way through the wilderness with him for 40 years. Did you ever think of that? Did you ever think of that? Did it ever occur to you that every morning somebody had to pick up the corpse of Joseph? Every day, every time they moved at least, up comes the dead body of Joseph on somebody's shoulders, and it has to be carried through the wilderness. They never got away from death, beloved. [00:24:11] Paul says here, he says, carrying about, always, always, the dying of the Lord Jesus. Always bearing about the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, to what end? He says, that the life, that the life of Joseph Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

So, again, we come to the truth, which we saw in the doctrine, that the less you see of Paul, the more you see of Christ. You see that? The less, beloved saints of God, there is visible of yourself, the more it is subjugated to this great theme of the death of Jesus, the more the life of Jesus will come out in your life. [00:25:04] There's tremendous amount of activity in the world today. Tremendous amount of activity. And I was telling somebody on Thursday night, I was saying there that I used to read John 4, as you've all read, I suppose, probably hundreds and thousands of times. You know everything about John 4, don't you? I probably thought I did. Do you know what it says in John 4? It says, do you know this? Of course. It says, the Father seeketh worshipers. Do you know what suddenly occurred to me? He doesn't say the Father is seeking workers, he's saying the Father is seeking worshipers. I sometimes wonder, perhaps we get too busy as workers that we haven't got time to be worshipers. Do you know the simple truth is, beloved saints of God, that the ABC of Christianity is that the Father has secured you to be a worshiper. Not a worker. Oh, you work, all right, because you belong to him.

But he secured you, beloved, to be a worshiper. What do you know about the worshipping part? Oh, you sound very angry. Yes, I'm quite prepared to believe you. [00:26:13] But that's not why the Father brought me to himself, beloved. When I was a boy of 14, I think it was, and I was recently converted, I was sent away and got a badge. You know, it said on it, it said, saved to serve. I hadn't learned the truth of John 4. I didn't learn it till I was nearly 75. I suppose, in that sense, anyway. Mark was thinking of you and I, beloved, secured by the precious death of Jesus, in order that the Father might have us before he was worshippers. And he's equipped us, and he's made us so that we can go into that place in Christ. Do you know why? He could never stop on these lines without thinking of Luke 15, can he? The Father comes up, reconciliation is effective, the boy goes in, the boy goes in. And he goes in, beloved, and there isn't any reluctance in his heart at all. He goes in because he knows he's welcome. And not only is he welcome there, but he looks down and he says, I'm fit to go in. [00:27:18] Marvellous truth, beloved saints of God, that you and I are fit to go in to the Holy of Holies. Isn't it? Isn't it so? I read the Bible reading not long ago. I shouldn't have said this, I feel somehow, but I read the Bible reading a few months ago, and the brother says, this is holy ground, he says, you must take your shoes off.

And I remember saying spontaneously, oh my dear brother, if you take your shoes off, you won't go in. You see, the Father had the shoes put on, and if you take them off, you can't go in. You can't go in unless you have a son, and the shoes depict sonship. [00:28:03] They put it all away beloved saints of God in order to go in. It's all a casually truth, I know what a dear brother meant, of course I do. But you know the truth of the matter is, beloved, if you take your shoes off, you won't go in. You won't go in with your shoes on. There are shoes of such, they take you into the Fathers house, and there's no reluctance. And when you get there, what do you discover? You find that there's something there. Just as they found when they crossed Jordan, you remember? On the same day it says they ate the manna and they had the old corn of the land. They discovered that that which had served them all through the wilderness was still there, but they also discovered there's something new there. They discovered something about the heart of the blessed God. That he had been there before them, and he had secured something for them, and he had a risen ascended glorified Christ before his heart, and he fed them on the parts corn of the land. Marvellous, isn't it? Wonderful the way your God acts and works. Well, we must get on. Now, we've been, first, he left. For we which live are always to live an undertale.

[00:29:13] This is practical, this is real. He was always to live an undertale. You know this. We were talking about John in Patmos the other night, and wondered how it was in Patmos, of all places John should get such a vision of heavenly things, and get an invitation to come up. Beloved, you've all heard the gospel invitation, haven't you? And you've all responded to it. You all belong to Jesus here tonight, I mean. Come unto me, all ye that labour, that's what I mean. Come unto me, all ye that labour, that I will give you rest. That's the one, that's the gospel come. But have you ever listened to the come in the book of Revelation? There's another come. Or you come to Jesus and wonder again. You say, I've got blessing, of course you do. Well, now you listen to the same man. He is the glory come. And this is what he says, he says come. [00:30:05] Are you going to listen to his second come? You listened to his first come and you've got blessing. Will you listen to his second come? Beloved saints of God, have you listened to the second come? What do we know about coming up? Jesus says come up. Why? Christianity, beloved, is learned up there where we live. It's not learned down here in the city. You know what I mean by that. It's modern. It's seen around us. There was nothing about it. But he would have you up there. He says come up here, you know. And the same principle comes out, you remember, in the great apostle. There he is in the stinking dungeon of Philippi. What does he say? He says rejoice. All beloved saints of God, if he had said rejoice when he was up in the

third heaven, you could have believed it and understood it, couldn't you? But he didn't. He said rejoice when he was in, during the Philippi dungeon. What can you do with a man who sings when he's changed of course? You tell me, what can you do with a man who sings when he's changed of course? [00:31:13] Well, we've had them stranded in our vessels as we're learning. I hope they're all put into prison. Out of the way, saints probably thought. Got him, got him security. He's in chains. He's out of the way now. But do you know, beloved saints of God, the most sublime ministry that's ever come from a mortal man came out of the prison cell. Do you know that? Of course you know. Has it ever moved your heart, beloved? Has it ever given you to say, well I, my God knows what he's doing? Or do you sometimes think that you know better than he does? Young people are prone to do this. I'm not blaming them. I used to be young. We're prone to do this. We want it all the way. Of course we do. All will. It takes a long time, beloved, before we discover that God knows best. God knows best. [00:32:07] And all beloved young brother or sister, take it to heart that God does know best. It'll save you a tremendous amount of anxiety and sorrow in the years to come if you learn the life of submission when you're young. However, he said in verse 11, or verse 10, there's what we call the practice part. You remember, we said God says, you are dead. Then we saw faith says, reckon yourself dead. Now we come to the practice. There's the man who knew when he was to be dead, verse 10.

He said always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in all. That's why he's carrying about this dying of the Lord Jesus.

[00:33:03] He's supporting the death of Jesus. He's carrying about with him all the time in order that he might subdue and subjugate the person poor in order that the life of Christ, the life of Jesus might come. If you want to be a monk, if anybody here would like to be a monk, I had a brother who suffered his heliastical, ecclesiastical life by going into a monastery and learning to be a monk. He had to come out. But nevertheless, if you want to be a monk, you can do it on verse 10. But you see, you've got to leave the other verses with it. It'll save you from it all. God saved you today. That's what a monk never understands. Faith says, I can recognize someone dead. There's something else a monk never understands. See, you take these two verse, and you add verse 10 to it, and you find a man walking about down here, applying the cross of Christ, the death of Jesus, all the time to his life down here. [00:34:04] Less beloved saints of God, he should give way to a life of ease and plenty. Not so very long ago, a brother said to me, oh, he said, Sidney, God has blessed me in my business. Oh, I said, has he? I said, it's a bit Jewish to me.

That's rather Jewish to me. I'll tell you what, dear beloved brother. Gradually, you begin to get on in the world, look out for trouble. You're in a desperate plight. Satan will trip you up as easily as anything, but you keep very close to the Lord. There's nothing more likely to trip up a saint of God than to make progress in this world. You don't belong here after all, do you? The citizenship, at least you tell me it, you quote to me, you say, my citizenship is in heaven. Well, let's see something practical about this then. [00:35:07] Many dear saints of God, while quoting the truth, the accuracy of the truth, of course, it is their right that they are citizens of a heavenly city, yet practically beloved saints of God. Now, put the simple issue in, what do we know about being citizens of another city altogether? Well, in verse 10, or let's go on to verse 11 now.

It's a very possible care to see that the glass is kept clean in order that the glory might shine out, the light might shine out. And this is how he does it. [00:36:09] Oh, it's not very pleasant, you say. Well, well, beloved saints of God, this is a short life, isn't it? We're so going to be with this fearless, impeccable Jesus. You and I are going to be with him at length and forever, very, very shortly. Mark

you, we make a lot of this. Well, I think it's right that we should, but I pointed out often enough, there's only one place in all the Bible which talks about the rapture, and all the rest of the Bible is full of the kingdom. And, beloved saints of God, we're so intentionally selfish, we're always talking about the rapture, because it means we're going to be caught up out on the floor. But, beloved saints of God, there's something far more important than this, that is that the impeccable, precious Jesus that is despised, rejected, Nazarene should one day sit upon his throne down here where he was rejected. Isn't that more important than your message and mine? Of course it is. God reckons it is anyway. And he talks far, far more about the kingdom than he does about the rapture. [00:37:03] Verse 12 then. I call this verse the verse of the two arms. It's only a short verse, the verse of the two arms I call it, because I see in verse 12, so then death worketh in us, I see, beloved, reduction there being reduced.

And then, the end of the verse, with verse 12, I see death worketh in us, but life in you. That's it. Paul didn't mind a little bit, if he was refused, providing there was recovery in college.

Notice the word, beloved. I said recovery, not reconstruction. You and I are very busy in our days about reconstructing things. There's no modern scripture for reconstruction. [00:38:06] Recovery, beloved, is what matters. Recovery to what? Recovery to the truth. The truth doesn't have to be recovered, it's there. But your soul and mine also need recovery to the truth. Reconstruction is man's work. Recovery is the spirit's work. Reconstruction reminds me a little of the little baby rhyme I used to know when I was a child, about little Johnny Horner. Do you ever hear it?

He sat in a corner eating his Christmas pie. He put in his thumb and pulled out a glove and he said, what a good boy am I? Reconstruction will give us such an impression of the importance of ourselves that we need to be cut down to size. That's how we're cut down to size in verse 12. So then death, work in us, and life.

[00:39:07] Verse 13. I want to give the word, of course, because what I've just read. The word of the saint is, to you, beloved saints of God, in love and affection, he says, I believe.

And then after he said, we also believe. Because we believe these things, beloved, we speak these things. I've got to leave it now, because I want to turn to you very, very briefly indeed, to the Old Testament. I want you to see how this thing was carried out, practically in the light of, it just depends on the time, not many moments left. At least we can look first at Abraham, if you would kindly turn to Genesis. It's Genesis 22. Genesis 22. I'm not reading by any means all the verses, only just one here and there. And it says in verse 2, chapter 22, it's very, very worthwhile looking at this, beloved saints of God.

[00:40:25] It's chapter 22, verse 2. It says, take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest. I wonder why, I've often wondered why, and I expect you have. Why is it that God, so to speak, twists the knife in the wound?

Isn't it enough to say, Abraham, take thy son? Wasn't it a dreadful thing to ask Abraham to give up the one who was the recipient of the promises? Everything depends upon this boy. God says, take your son. But he's not satisfied with this. The Spirit of God says, thine only son. He's rubbing it in, so to speak. [00:41:12] You would have thought that's enough, wouldn't you? But you see, God has something else in mind. He has his own son in mind. The son whom thou lovest. Beloved saints of God, Jesus suffered for sin. Not only died, he suffered for sin. God gave his son, his only son. The

son of his love, the son of his bosom. Well, he says, take your son, Isaac, into the land of Riah, offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains, which I will tell you of. Now, verse four. On the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. Why did God send him on a journey? Why didn't God send offer Isaac outside your tent door? Why did God make him walk three long days, knowing all the time that at the end of the journey, the night had got him plunged into Isaac? [00:42:13] The son upon whom everything depended. I ask you, brethren, why did God insist on three days' journey? May I tell you this? Sin is such a dreadful thing in the sight of God. Death, you know, is a very real thing. Death means the end of every hope. It means the end of all things for the man. He wanted Abraham to have time to meditate, to think upon what it means to be dead, or death, really. And so for three long days, Abraham takes his son towards the place of execution.

And all the time, whatever was in the heart of this beloved man, and side by side with his son, both of them together, went to the mountain, to the altar.

[00:43:10] The same truth, beloved, is brought before us in numbers. The red heifer, you remember? It was only on the third day that the man got cleared. Why? You see, those life things that you and I think so little of, they cost the precious Jesus his life. He died because of these things, beloved. And God doesn't intend you to be frivolous about it. He wants you to think about it. Hold it, and turn it over in your mind. For three long days, Abraham takes his son. Verse 7. Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father, he said, hear of mine, my son. And he said, behold the fire, and the wood, where is the lamp? Abraham said, My son.

[00:44:01] Do you know what he said then? If you would read Hebrew, you would find he said, Jehovah Jireh. It comes out a few verses down. He called the place Jehovah Jireh. Do you know what that means? God was surprised. God was surprised. Now, beloved, this is all a lesson I'd like to take home to our own hearts tonight. It's a dark tunnel that poor old Abraham entered into with Isaac. But the end of the tunnel what? The end of the tunnel brought him out into the light, beloved. He discovered that God could mean everything. He discovered that God would supply what was necessary. Was it worthwhile, do you think, three days' journey through the dark tunnel, with the light every step of the way getting brighter and brighter, and suddenly you're out into the end of the tunnel, precious atmosphere, and discover Jehovah Jireh. God will provide. This is what death does, beloved. This is what acquaintance with dying does. You see, you must have it there, and then after this, bring all these precious truths. This is only one of them, that God is competent and able to meet every need, and will supply everything that is necessary in regard of these matters. [00:45:22] He learned it, beloved. He learned it, one might say, by his acquaintance with dying, as he trod the pathway with his beloved Isaac. There's only one verse more in this chapter I want to bring before you. We can talk about the fire and the wood, and what God is, and the manhood of Jesus, but we're passing over all this, and as long as you remember we speak of the strength of the devotion and the strength of the energy of the Lamb. But I want to show you the text in just one other verse, that's verse 19, where it says, So Abraham returned unto his young men. Where's Isaac? Where's Isaac, beloved saints of God? Abraham returned unto his young men.

[00:46:11] You know, that's a wonderful thing. I noticed this in the book of Revelation. Did you notice, when John opens the book of Revelation, he says, I, John, your brother. Have you ever noticed that? I, John, your brother. Why brother? Why, because brother is the heavenly idea, and he's going to talk about heavenly ideas throughout the whole book. And so, the brother is John, your brother. Brother John. John, your brother, he says. You know what Satan does about the brother, don't you? The very first brother born into this world was murdered. Satan hates the idea of the brother. He hates the very

thought of the brother. I don't mean Clement, brother. He hates his in-laws. He hates the heavenly idea. So what does he do? Drink as a brother born, he murders him. [00:47:03] It's the Spirit of God opening the book, beloved. No, no, no human mind would have thought of this. The Spirit of God never makes any mistakes. And so here, why does the Spirit of God say, Abraham and Isaac return? Isaac is not there, beloved. Do you know why? He's risen from the dead. Typically, I mean, Jesus is not here. He's died out of this scene that we face from the beginning. Are you living in it? Am I living in it? Beloved, your Lord and Savior died out of this scene. Are you going to be happy in it while he's there? J. N. Darwin once said he didn't think that God ever intended men to be happy in a sinful world like this. What do you think of that? Making the best of the world, are we? Getting out of it all we can, are we? Forgetting that Jesus died out of it and died to save us out of it. Well, Isaac, beloved, there's a wonderful story. He's gone terrified. Caught it up there, least of all. Typically, I mean. That's why the Spirit of God says Abraham returns. He returns alone. The risen man has gone back to God. I'll turn you to Kings, just very briefly indeed. [00:48:17] One king said to Jesus, the story shall well know to you. The woman who said, I'm going to eat and die. Do you remember that? I'm just going to have one little cake when my son's in and I'm going to die. So, delight comes on the scene, and the barrel of beer, you remember, never wasted. It had eaten many dead. As a matter of fact, spring, summer, fall, and winter rolled over their heads. All the provision was there for them.

The woman who said, I'm going to eat and die, discovered there was relief in having her company, the prophet. I'll turn you over, though, quite quickly to verse 17. [00:49:09] The king passed off, and he, seeing the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick. His sickness was so sore, there was no breath left in him. Death comes in, beloved. Everything's going beautifully, isn't it? Everything is lovely. The meal never fails. There it is, day after day, all three of them feeding together, and all of a sudden, death strikes. Death comes in. What, to bring an end to all of it? Not a bit of it. Not a bit of it. To teach a wonderful lesson to them. The power springs out of death. Knowledge comes out of death. You see the result of all this, isn't it? Verse 24. I want to remind you Elijah identifies himself with the death of the child. He stretches on in humour. Now I pass on quickly. He brings the truth of this to the widow herself. And this is what the apostle always does. The apostle is the one who comes out of God's presence, and he brings the truth down to where we are. And this is what is coming out here. [00:50:11] What does death produce? Another thing that comes out of death is this, the knowledge of the apostasy of Christ. The one that has the word of God. It says in verse 24, the woman said to Elijah, by this I know that thou art a man of God. By this what? By death coming in, and the dead one being raised to life. She said, I know by this thou art a man of God. The word of God has come to me, and the word of the Lord is in my mouth, in truth. I wish beloved saints of God there is time to take you on, take you back, or take you on to Exodus, back to Exodus, and show there just how Moses the apostle went up into the mountain and disappeared, do you remember? And while he was up, did you notice what the priest does while Moses is out of sight? While the apostle is gone, beloved, the leadership is handed over to the priest. And immediately idolatry comes in. [00:51:10] And you and I are surrounded by it tonight. Priestcraft has brought in idolatry. Therein they say, you be leader. All right, you're therein, I'll be leader. Here are your gods that brought you out of Egypt, a golden calf. That's the priesthood. That's the apostle absent. Where is he? He's up in the glory. Moses is out of sight. But how about you and I are left down here with the apostle out of sight? But not to descend to idolatry such as they did in their day. They sat down and sat and prayed and ate. Nothing worried them. They got a leader. They got a leader of their own choice. There wasn't here a priest. Let's be careful, beloved. There's no leader down here that you and I can safely trust. There's only one leader, beloved, the saints of God. He is out of sight, it's true, but he's God's real apostle. He's the apostle and high priest of our confession. [00:52:10] Well, our confession, may I say, is bringing the knowledge to this woman of the presence of the servant of God, the one who has

the word of God. And she wouldn't have known this had death not come. I'll just find him because I know the time has passed. I'm just going to pass turn you over to Luke 7. One more book only. And this time on the New Testament. He said in Luke 7, verse 11, and he came to pass the day after. He went into a city called Nain.

Now, if I give you chapter 2 of this gospel, it says that he is the light unto the Gentiles. That is, he brings the Gentiles to life. He does that just before this incident with the man, the first miracle in the chapter. [00:53:06] Then he goes on to say he's the glory of his people Israel. That's what we now see. Here's the man who is the glory of his people Israel. What's he going to do? He's stopping a widow who's coming out of Nain. The last thing, beloved, is broken. Death has come in. Everything down here, as far as she's concerned, is settled. I don't miss her. It's gone. He's gone. They're bringing him out of the gate. They're carrying him on a bear. Oh, if there were more young men and women here tonight. What a lesson, beloved, that is here for you. Being carried out. You know, there are an enormous number of people willing to carry you out and bury you spiritually, I mean. You've got to be careful. You've got to watch this. These bearers, they'll bury you away from Christ. They'll bury you out, and I say again, they'll bury you spiritually. The Lord stops them. Death is to go no further, he said. [00:54:07] When the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said, weep not. He came and touched the bed. He identified himself with this death, beloved saints of God, just as Elijah had done in one kingdom.

Oh, he touched the bed, it says, and they should stop. And then, out of death comes what? Well, the teaching in Luke 7 is, out of death comes not only life, but out of death comes the secret of testimony.

He sat up, as life was, but he said he'd stop. You know, beloved saints of God, if you and I are here, are going to be here in any manner at all as an effective witness of Jesus, we have to learn the path that Abraham trod.

[00:55:13] We have to learn the path that Paul trod. Death must come. And out of death comes not only life, but there out of death comes power, power of testimony. And this is what death produces in Luke 7. It produces the power to speak, the power to say effective things of Christ. I know only too well, and I've been very conscious of it, that I can take nobody, neither can you, you can take nobody a single step further than you've gone yourself spiritually. But here's a man, here's another man who's dead. He's brought to life, he's given the power to speak. The tunnel indeed was a dark tunnel for the poor widow, wasn't it? When she'd come out with the cortege, so to speak, to bury her son.

[00:56:10] But you know, there was a man there who was compassionate. He had compassion for her. Oh, this precious Jesus, I wish one could speak well of him, but there he had it in the Holy Word. He was compassionate. He had compassion for her. And he stopped her there. He didn't want to see the body taken out in vain. This is the last thing in the world he wants, either physically, in this case, or spiritually, nor case in mind. So he stopped her. And out of death springs life, and not only life. Out of death, beloved, springs the power and the ability to testify to the glory and the greatness and the uniqueness of the person of compassionate Jesus. But would you say, beloved saints of God, that the lessons that the Spirit of God teaches in his Word regarding death are lessons that we need to learn? [00:57:05] Would you say that it is far more important to be impressed by what the Spirit of God would bring before us by way of testimony and experience than it is to have the head filled with the accurate knowledge of doctrine? Or to just soak the brain before you release the pictures?