

TRIUMPHANT LIVING

Taught by Bishop John Rodgers

Session: February 8, 2013

We praise you, Lord, for your grace, your mercy, and your truths. We come to sit at your feet, speak to us through your Word for we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

As Sig was talking about falling over this, I was reminded that several years back when I was the Dean and President at Trinity, we held our commencement address down at the Cathedral in Pittsburgh and they had rearranged things so that right behind me there was a ledge about so tall. So here we are in the middle of all this and I stepped back and fell flat on my butt, right. {LAUGHTER} It was a dramatic moment. I will try to avoid a repeat this morning.

When you see Bruce come at you, you kind of want to hide but he caught me and he gave me an assignment. He was afraid that somehow last week he had given the impression that the Christian life was purely passive. So he asked me to address the issue of the active side of the Christian life. I have given myself...I have tried to do that, at least in some respects this morning. Since I'm afraid we might not make it through all of the points this morning, I think if I could just read what is underlined in your sheets...did we get sheets out yet? Good.

Point 1. To live in Christ by faith, one must first be in Christ by faith. You cannot live out what you have not received. In that reception we are receptive; we are not doing works, we are receiving. It is because of this first point that you can...some people draw the false conclusion we are passive as Christians.

Point 2. To live in Christ is an active life and we will look at text for that.

Point 3. Living through faith in Christ is to live in confidence that God our Father is in sovereign control and is leading us according to His wise and good plan.

Lastly, I wanted to say something about the fact that the Christian conscience is shaped for action; living in faith in Christ involves our making decisions by an informed conscience aided by the Holy Spirit and the body of Christ issuing an active life, a life of deeds. Let's go through the text bit by bit.

First, is Ephesians, Chapter 2, verses 8, and 9. Actually, I never read 2, 8, and 9 without including 10. So we will follow the next point with 10, but let's start with Ephesians 2, 8, 9. It is a classic text that underlines both our receptive side and our active side. So we will read 2, 8, and 9.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith--and this is not your doing, it is a gift of God--not a result of works, so that no one may boast." By grace...may not deserve. Grace in the Scriptures is getting exactly what you do not deserve; we deserve condemnation, but we get restoration to a right relationship with God.

"Have been saved." In the Greek, that is *eros* and it means it has been done. It is a discreet act done once with consequences abiding forever. Done.

That is to say, just to faith, just to occasions that accomplished, sanctification, or as Bill would prefer to say it...growing in maturity in Christ has begun, and glorification is assured. Have been saved. Done. Already beginning, certain where we are headed. Certain where we are headed.

Through faith, that is not by works. There are two paths [UNCLEAR] standing with God in Scripture, perfect obedience to God, or faith in Christ alone. Only one path is open to mankind. Through faith in Christ alone, the other path is lost to us.

In case we didn't get it the first time, he says it again. "Not your own doing." Different words but it says the same thing; "Not by our works of any kind, it is not by our doing." Not by your doing, it is a gift of God. "It" refers to salvation. First, to having been saved, a gift that includes the faith that receives it. A genuine gift is not earned, otherwise, it is a kind of payment. We sometimes talk about gifts but it is really a kind of exchange for services rendered, affection given, and it is really more of a kind of payment. A true gift can only just be received. It is undeserved, often surprising. This is particularly true of a life-saving gift; it can only be humbly and gratefully received.

If you are being rescued from drowning in a stormy sea by a coastguard helicopter that drops a coastguardsman next to you, and he hooks you up and wrenches you up, you do not take credit for that. You receive that gratefully. And so it is with Christ in us. Salvation in all of its parts is a gift of God, and not deserved. In such we are simply receiving, we are simply receptive. "No one may boast," He says, so that no one may boast or glory. The same word [UNCLEAR] either way.

Paul goes on in Galatians to say, "I glory in Christ." You may glory in Christ, but not in your doing. Now since life in Christ begins and is sustained by the grace of Christ, some have falsely concluded that our Christian life is purely passive. And that is an error. There is even a fear on the part of some, not entirely unwarranted, that if we speak about our works in any sense we will soon fall into the conception that we are earning our salvation.

I remember one time I was in a dialogue with the Lutherans [UNCLEAR] I had Anglican and Lutheran dialogue. And I came to the meeting early and I was the only one there. They wondered why there were no Anglicans present and I said, "I am an Anglican." And they said, "Yes, but you think too much like a Lutheran." {LAUGHTER} I said, "No I don't, you guys are scared to death that one day we Anglicans will slip up and do a good work." {LAUGHTER}.

But, St. Paul has no fear about speaking about our doing good works. It is right here in the Good Book itself.

We want to look at our second point: To live in Christ by faith is an active life. Verse 10 follows 8 and 9 with these words, "For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works." Right? "That we should walk in them." [UNCLEAR] "God prepared me before hand that we should walk in them." We are His workmanship. We are not self-made men. We are not self-

made men...we are His workmanship. We are not our own. In fact, we are created in Christ Jesus. Now, that is kind of a bold statement. Created in Christ Jesus means something has happened to us in our being. We have been re-created in the most radical sense. We are a new creation. We are new men in Christ. We are no longer what or who we once were. That is what he is telling us now. We are actually different. We are no longer the spiritually walking dead; dead in our trespasses and sins. We are now alive in Christ and so we are now different than we once were.

We have been united with Christ in His death, and we are united with Him in His resurrection—hence, we are made alive in Him. Sometimes Paul has said in terms of the Holy Spirit, in the Spirit. So we have this new life and the new life is active, it bears the developing marks of the Holy Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit and the character of Christ.

This active life of Christ in us is inevitable just as the fact that a healthy tree will produce healthy fruit. A good healthy tree will automatically, of its nature, produce good fruit. And so it is with us. Because of indwelling sin and because we are not just trees but persons, ours is a little more complicated than a tree; this union involves a radical change in us, which develops slowly or at least [UNCLEAR] and starts. But it is inevitable, it comes because a change has been made.

Paul puts this in the most radical language about himself. Listen, we could apply it to all of us. “I have been crucified in Christ, united with Christ’s crucifixion.” God has done in me by a union with Him, something that can only be described as participating in that. “I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me.” He is so related to Christ now that in a way Christ has taken over his life. Christ who lives in me. But then he goes onto say, “but the life that I now live,” so he is still there, he has not been absorbed, but changed. “The life that I now live I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

Now that is radical language. That means he understands his identity now in a new way, and so must we. That is what I want to say. We are to understand that we are now new creatures in Christ and something different now and is real to us in our life. Notice, we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus. But notice, we are created for a purpose. And the apostle points out what that purpose is, “Created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared before hand that we should walk in them.”

Now these good works can refer to specific callings in life, which, for the most part you and I discover not knowing before hand, but as we go faithfully and live day-by-day in accordance with God’s commands; and failing to some extent, relying on His mercy and grace, for indwelling sin is ever with us. But we discover these good works in the midst of our daily responsibilities of life as He moves us providentially through our life, under His great plan.

I had no clue that I was going to end up a clergyman. I was going to be the next commandant of the Marine Corp. They did not know that yet and I was a 2nd Lieutenant {LAUGHTER}. But that was where I

was headed. The clergy certainly was not part of my plan. So we find these things...we just go about our business being responsible Christians day by day and God points out to us...gets us into these good works that He has prepared before hand. We are actually always filling out His great purpose...sharing in it.

The phrase “good work” can refer to that side of life or it can also just refer to the good works in the sense of the ethical guidelines that we are to live by. What is a good work? It is one in accordance with His character, nature and His instructions to us.

I think Bruce is warning not to be so preoccupied with what is God’s will that we forget to be in God’s will. Just be obedient, there is nothing esoteric about that; you can read the Bible and you don’t have to puzzle and say, “I wonder if it is OK to have a little adultery today.” {LAUGHTER}. What is it you are having difficulty with in this text? {LAUGHTER}. No, you can’t Tom. Give up the thought. {LAUGHTER}

“That we should walk in them.” That we should walk in them, walking is an active verb. What it means essentially, is to do them. To actually do them. God’s purpose for us...God has things to do that includes a Godly lifestyle which we do them, and His grace is given in Christ and the Holy Spirit, is given to us to help us actually walk in them. Always imperfectly, but walk in them.

Yes, Sig.

SIG: *There is always this assumption...I hear you speak, Bishop, but is Paul speaking in somehow, someway... if he says, “I do this,” then I assume that I can do it too? Is there is an assumption that it is that way for all of us, it is not just Paul talking about his experience but being in Christ?*

Generally, that’s true; there may be some things that I would have to know...you know, that I would have to recall to my mind--more than my mind can recall--but there may be places in the Scriptures where he is just speaking about himself. I mean, I do not have to have forty lashes and all that kind of thing that He went through, but generally, he holds himself up and says, “Just do as I do because I’m following Christ.” That’s the general tenor.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPANT: *Everything he is talking about is from experience and also corresponds exactly with the basic teaching of the thing as well. He’s not saying that I’m experiencing this and that is a contradiction to [UNCLEAR] of the whole understanding of what it means to be in Christ.*

No, that’s right. Yes.

OK, so the bottom line, it seems to me, is that we are created in Christ for good works, not for no works but for good works. For an active life in Christ. God cares about that enough to enable us to do them... imperfectly...but to actually do them.

That brings us to point 3. Since we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, since God is our Father and Christ, and since He is in charge of all that happens, leading us...He’s the one who is leading us. We are not uptight or anxious as we seek to live an active life in Christ through faith.

So the 3rd point...I’ve tried to phrase it this way: living life through faith in Christ is to live in confidence that God is our Father, that He is in sovereign control and is leading us in fruitful witness according to His wise and good plan.

It seems to me that was the point that Bruce was making to us last week. 2nd Corinthians 2, verse 14. “But thanks be to God who, in Christ, always leads us in triumphal procession and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Him everywhere.” Here our lives are in motion, we are being led, and we are in procession in such a way that we are being enabled despite our indwelling sin to make Him known to those who have been given the eyes to see.” I can’t think of any greater encouragement to take our life in Christ seriously. Your life, my life, is actually by the grace of God being used effectively as we go about being Christians, being made new in Christ. Imperfect as we are aware of it, still being led effectively that those who have been given the eyes to see can take encouragement, are actually being led to Christian faith through our lives and witness. I don’t know what better encouragement that you can get from God to take yourself seriously in this regard.

There are three other well-known texts that make something of the same point, each one a little bit differently. Romans 8, verse 28. “And we know for those who love God, all things work together for good for those who are called according to His purpose.” It seems to me that this particular passage is helpful when times are really rough. What we are really saying, is even in these rough times, painful times, somehow God will...it hasn’t fallen out of His hands but it is part of His great providential and salvific work, and He will make good come out of this. Not necessarily make it pleasant but He will bring good out of it. Even terrible things. And the paradigm in the new testament primarily of this is the crucifixion of our Lord. You cannot get any worse than that and you cannot get any better. So when times are tough, this is the passage, it seems to me, to hang onto. This is in my Father’s hands and He will bless it and make good of it. It will not be wasted.

The same kind of point is made in Ephesians 1, verse 11, “In Him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will.” Nothing is outside of His will, but we are not entirely aware of the full mystery of His purpose as it is working out, often times I’m just kind of plodding along. We are not moving aimlessly through life, but we are participating in God’s great purpose and He knows what we are doing and it is part of what He is doing. And for this, we can be thankful. We are His children and the band of brothers that is really caught up in what He is doing...making our small but real contribution.

Now one important part of this is confidence in God’s sovereign control is, that as our Father, we can trust Him for our physical needs so that we are free to focus our attention on serving His Kingdom and not be absolutely focused and preoccupied all the time with meeting our own needs.

The passage of course is Matthew 6, verse 25 through 34. “Therefore, I tell you do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and a body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap, or gather into barns, and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Were you not made in the image of God? Have you not been re-created in Christ Jesus? Are you not of

more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?" It reminds me of that one line where the guy says, "I have been through many terrible things in my life; some of which happened." {MUCH LAUGHTER}

"And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life. Why are you anxious about clothing, consider the lilies of the field and how they grow; they neither toil nor spin." They don't really do a dog-gone thing, they just bloom. "Yet I tell you even Solomon in all his glory was not arraigned like one of these. But if God clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more cloth you, O ye of little faith? Therefore, do not be anxious saying, What shall we eat, what shall we drink, what shall we wear? For the Gentiles"... meaning the non-believers..."seek after all these things, and your Heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

Now let me expound this text by telling you of a call to come help start the Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry and something of the shape that we gave that school under the leadership of Bishop Alfred Stanway, a Missionary Bishop from Australia, who in his retirement came over to help start the school. Because it was in that situation that I became aware of this text in terms of its real meaning.

I was teaching at the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia. I was the Tenure Professor of Systematic Theology, so I was secure and not only that, but the Seminary was our wealthiest seminary, so we had plenty of bucks in the bank. And many seminaries operate right on the edge, but I knew we were not getting the job done. Our graduates were not profoundly shaped by Christ. They were pleasant, they were kind, slightly psychologically trained, relatively ignorant of Scripture [LAUGHTER]. At least we had...

AUDIENCE PARTICIPANT: *Does that include Ted Wood?* {MUCH LAUGHTER}. [UNCLEAR]

Out of our faculty, we had probably three of us who were orthodox. I was...my first course there was in Biblical Theology and they introduced me to Rudolph Bultmann, who told me Jesus did not rise from the dead. I'm coming out of the Marine Corps where death is a reality and I was thinking, "I did not sign up for this." Not only that but I said, "That is not what the prayer book says, and it certainly is not what the Bible says. Actually, that is not an interpretation, that is a replacement." So we...what we did with the Bible was a little bit like going to the Louve in Paris and going up to take a look at the Mona Liza, and you take it off the wall and you weigh it.

Now you can get a right answer about that...it does weigh a certain amount of weight; but it is totally irrelevant to what it's about—it is to be looked at—to be touched by. The Scriptures are meant to be read in such a way that God's Word claims your heart and life and changes you, not just information about it. It's kind of like dealing with a dead cadaver. We never got around to the really important reasons in many of our courses. As you pointed out, Dick Reed did, Fritz Allison did, and I ran a Bible study group every week and out of about 120 students, we had about 40 that would come, and they would say things like, "It is this Bible study group that is getting me through." So we were not getting it done. We were just not getting it done, and the culture was getting more and more radical, leaving the roots of our culture in the Christian faith.

I knew that we needed a seminary that would produce leaders that would be radical enough to preach the gospel and shape a congregation that could be strong enough and radical enough to stand and to have an impact in this culture.

You know, if you want to follow up a church wherever you go, you start with the seminary and confuse everybody there. Pretty soon that flows down hill and affects every parish. So, the devil has been at it for a long time, and succeeding in large measure. Most of our seminaries in those days were totally beside the point—they were just too wealthy for God to close down.

But anyway, I'm there and I have a wife and four kids; I have no money except what we earn, and I get this call and I'm praying for this new seminary that was going to be [UNCLEAR] John Guest. They started to get the board together and I'm praying for them from a safe distance. {MUCH LAUGHTER}. Frustrated, no doubt, but still...you know...I'm getting paid—not only that I am going to be getting paid. {LAUGHTER}. And the new seminary did not have any money. It had a quarter of a million dollars to start; we were spending two million dollars on the operating budget. They had to pay faculty, they had to get buildings to be in, they had all this to do, and a quarter of a million bucks only lasts about three months.

So I get this phone call, "Can we come up, we want to talk to you about coming to help start this new seminary? We want you to be the Academic Dean." I was teaching and was to be the teacher of Christian Doctrine, Systematic Theology. Well, what are you going to say when a bishop calls you and says, "Can we come to talk to you about it?" "No?" {LAUGHTER} So I said, "Sure."

Meanwhile my wife, who [UNCLEAR] the most catatonic...she didn't want to go. {LAUGHTER} She had absolutely no interest in moving. She said, "Nester, we have four kids." We were getting by, you know, but we were living right about to what we were being paid. We were not putting much in the bank. How we ever got these four kids through college, I'll never know...[UNCLEAR]...the multiplication of the loaves, for sure.

Anyway, they come, the Bishop and his wife, whom I had never met before, and they want to talk about this. My wife really...the day they chose to come...my wife really did have a very busy schedule, so she put us into my study and then excused herself to do all the things she had to do, which were legitimate...she had not made it up.

About an hour or so into her schedule, there was a delay and she had an extra half-hour in there, and she didn't want to come back to the house because we were all there talking about this forbidden subject. {LAUGHTER} So she thought she would just get a cup of coffee, and in those days she smoked...she didn't smoke very much...but she did smoke; how anybody can smoke six cigarettes a day I'll never understand because when I smoked it was two packs a day. So, she went to the Roy Rogers...she had never been to the Roy Rogers near to where we lived. As she walked in, there was the Bishop and his wife, and myself. We were there having {MUCH LAUGHTER} and so she joined us, recognizing that maybe something was going on here that we were not in charge of. {LAUGHTER}

We finally went back to the house and we are all sitting there and I thought, well I really better just get the thing out clear. I said, "Bishop, we have four kids and you do not have much money. We are too expensive. You should call some single person." He said, "John, it's alright, you don't have to worry

about that. We have prayed and the Lord has told us to call you.” {LAUGHTER} Well, he did not quite get my message, {LAUGHTER}. Because he did not realize how spiritually immature I was in this area of God’s sovereign provision under which we live our active life.

So, I said to him, “Well, Bishop, let me just put it this way. How can I, as a responsible father of four and a husband of one, take my family on such a shaky financial venture as this?” Then the light went on in his eyes, he did not realize where I was; [UNCLEAR] probably reconsidering the call at this point, no not really. He said, “Well, John, let me ask you a question.” I said, “Certainly.” He said, “Do you think God loves your wife and children?” I said, “Yes,” but thinking what in the world does this have to do with this financial discussion we’re having. {LAUGHTER} And then he said this, “Well, if God is calling you...we only want you to come if God is calling you, calling you according to His purpose, not ours, not yours, but His. We only want you to come if God is calling you and, if He is, is He not committing Himself to care for your wife and your children?”

All I could think of is that we have been going around and singing, “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you. Alleluia, Alleluia.” Alleluia means praise God.” Yes, Bishop, that is what Jesus teaches. {MUCH LAUGHTER} I probably had even preached on this text {MUCH LAUGHTER} Living it, however, is different. So I said, “That is what Jesus teaches, but we never lived that way.” {LAUGHTER} Of course, we had always lived that way, but we did not know it. We had always lived that way, but we just did not know it. He said, “Well, John, maybe it’s time to start.”

And then he was a pastoral man of great depth, he had been a missionary bishop for fifty years in Tunisia, Africa. Under him, the Diocese had developed from one Diocese to twelve, just an explosion. He was the first to actually have a Tunisian become his successor. God was at work and he knew it. He said, “I want to just share with you what life is like living by prayer and the provision of God.” And he went on for at least a half-hour just talking about how God had supplied their needs, across the ocean from England and Australia. It was like being in the Book of Acts. If you knew Bishop Stanway, he was a Victorian figure. He did not exaggerate in the slightest and you knew that. You knew that everything he said was absolutely true. Then he looked me in the eye and said, “Well, John, if God is calling you and we want you to come if He is, but only if He is, if He calls you, will you come?” What are you going to say, “No?” I said, “Well, if He is calling us we will come.” Then he smiled, took his wife and went back to Pittsburgh, leaving me with a wife who would not talk to me. {LAUGHTER}

So we added up the pros and cons on one side and the other, my wife and I. I was reminded of another thing the Bishop said, “Before you pray for what is the will of God, pray first for the will to do the will of God. About 90% of the time, your confusion about what the will of God is, is that you don’t want to do that which He is asking you to do.” So, we just could not quite figure it out. We decided we would come down to Sewickley, because he was living next to John Guest; at that time John Guest was the Rector of St. Stephens and he was living near that entire library of the school was in his basement. It was just getting started.

So we decided to come down and he met us at the airport. You don’t want to drive with an Australian who has learned to drive on the other side of the road. That also helps you to kind of pray. {LAUGHTER} He put us up with Nanky Chalfant. I did not know it at the time but she had given the quarter of a million dollars to start the school. She gave the quarter of a million dollars because John Guest had presented

the gospel to her daughter, who I take it was in some kind of alienation or at least lost at that point; and God changed her life. Nanky said to John, "I now understand why you think we need a new seminary." Other people were not doing that sort of thing. This is what God wants to have happen through the gospel.

So she gave the money and we were staying there, and we got up in the morning and Nanky had left the room at breakfast, and the daughter who comes from out of town came in. She looked at us and said, "What are you doing here?" And I told her, "We are trying to figure out about whether to come help start the school and so forth. And look for a possible place to live and talk about the schools...all about the things...just kind of get the lay of the land." She asked where we wanted to live and I thought that was a strange question. "Well, probably down in Sewickley near the schools so I wouldn't have to drive the kids to school all the time, they could walk." She said, "Oh, when might you want to come?" I said, "Sometime in June, if we are to come." She said, "I have a house and it is right kind of where you want to live, and the people in it are about to leave," one being Reed Carpenter, "and if that's OK, you can look at it. If you like it, I'll give it to the school for you to live in, free of charge for just as long as you want to be there." {LAUGHTER} And I said, "Thanks, Lord." {MUCH LAUGHTER}...so we both came to the conclusion that we [UNCLEAR] being shown around, and that we were to come.

And this school is now....thirty-eight years later...it is still there and it still has no visible means of support. Actually, what we did...we made a decision about the school; there were four principles that Bishop Stanley brought from CMS and we put these principles to work. These are the principles that shaped the way we developed the school and it still is. Start small while intending great things for God. Americans tend to want to start big. God always starts small if you look at the Scriptures. Start small but intending great things for God. That's the first principle. Don't despise days of small beginnings.

Principle 2. Pray often and follow the leadings of God.

Principle 3. And this is the one that keys into this text. Depending on God, put money in a subordinate place. If you are on a vestry this is important. [UNCLEAR] about your own finances. The first question is not can we afford it. The first question is, what is God asking us to do? Because if He is asking you to do it and if He gives you the vision for it, then He will provide for it.

And so we did that as a school. As a matter of fact, we made a rule that we would not finance the operating budget of the school on endowment money. We wanted God to be able to close us down if we ever got as pathetic as the other seminaries. We didn't want to be so wealthy that it would be difficult for Him to clean us off the board. Not only that, but that kept us close to God. If you have to pray in your money, which is what we all have to do, if you are aware of that and are on your knees praying about it, the students are praying about, then you have a very different feeling about life itself. You know you are under His provision.

The last point is: All other things being equal, everything depends on getting the right people in the right position. Better to have nobody in a position than the wrong person. You know, if you've got somebody in the driver's seat who will drive but wants to go in the wrong direction, the whole bus is in trouble. So, be careful, pray your way, and think carefully before you call somebody. Those are the...they all illustrate this principle that I'm trying to say. If you live under the sovereign care of God and our first [UNCLEAR]

is: seek ye first His Kingdom, His righteousness, be about that business; the other things come along and are added unto us.

Well, we're out of time but I just wanted to say that the last thing is the whole question of the Christian conscience, which is the last section of this. The Christian conscience has a particular shape and it is shaped for action. If we had time, we could develop it. First of all, it is a matter of love: love the Lord, your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and your neighbor as yourself. It is not just about deeds, it is about the source of those deeds coming out of your heart. Love is both the source, the motive that we live with, and the goal...we are to do that which is most loving to the other person, the most helpful to the other person.

But love needs to be informed. You know love is a word that means many things in our culture. It means: I like...I love chocolate ice cream...I like it. It means amour, sweetheart will you marry me. It means family...I love my family, I love my friends. But in the Bible, love is much more...the only place where it is always clear...love...in our language is in tennis and it means nothing. {LAUGHTER} So you need a picture of what love does. You need to be instructed.

That instruction comes through the principles, the biblical moral principles that we are taught in Scriptures. The Ten Commandments; Jesus' example and teaching; the prophets; all that shape our conscience so that when we are making a decision these are some of the principles. These principles are expressing or meant to express in any given situation...the love that we have for God and for our neighbors. We receive and give imperfectly always, but there it is.

Finally, the conscience is keyed to be applied in the ambiguities and clarities of life. Love is a verb. Love is a verb.

Yes.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPANT: *This [UNCLEAR] is directly involved in [UNCLEAR] seminaries. Explain how a seminary can justify teaching things to seminary students, such as Jesus was a good guy, not necessarily the Son of God, but a good guy...I mean if we are as blatant as that, and if that is, in fact, true, what process would they go through or what change would they go through to get to be doing that kind of thing, which is totally opposite of the teaching of the inherent Word of God. I don't understand that.*

I think they were just born in this country, they were shaped by the enlightenment, by the exultation of the human scholarship and scholarship in all of...some of these guys...you think you could not get a clear message of any kind out of Scriptures.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPANT: *Well, that is your interpretation. You can make the Bible say just anything.*

Not if you are a responsible scholar. It is written pretty plainly. "He who can run..." They make it so complicated, so abstract, and so concerned to meet the standards of the world's academic community. They send them off to get educated in doctoral programs that are skeptical and so they buy into the skepticism of the culture. For the same reason that the country itself...our country now is a cut flower civilization, our [UNCLEAR]. We have cut the roots in the Biblical faith. You cannot...you cut some flowers in a garden and you bring them in and in two or three weeks, they're dead and they drop their leaves. Well, we're watching the leaves fall right now, all around us. The gay agenda, for instance. We

would not be...my grandmother would have been embarrassed if you brought the subject up, much less agreed with it. It is clear in scripture. We know what marriage is from Scripture. We know what our responsibilities are.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPANT: [UNCLEAR]...*was it clear, but it is clear.*

It is clear in Scripture, but Scripture itself is no longer a [UNCLEAR]. So, I would say in Virginia the increasingly psychological disciplines became...we became counselors of a kind...you know...warm hearted...the Bible was a comic book version of Freud or whatever. You just buy into the culture slowly and seek to be excellent in that regard.

Our scholarship was pretty serious, we worked hard, but it was totally confused. The few professors that were really changed in their heart taught faithfully. But that's how it happens. People say this when you go to an ordination service, people will say, "How can that person be ordained and take that service and yet preach the way they preach." They think they are just being modern, updating all this ancient stuff. I find it very difficult. I think they ought to resign and get an honest job, you know...whatever it is [UNCLEAR] {LAUGHTER} because it is...it misleads the people of God. It is very terrible. Remember, in Scripture it says, "Do not seek to be a teacher for you are held doubly accountable."

AUDIENCE PARTICIPANT: *The bottom line is...what you are saying, Bishop, is they forgot the passage that says, "Be in the world, not of the world." In my own Bible study that I had the opportunity to teach... one example that comes to mind is that a pillar for a bridge in the river—it is in the river but it is not part of the river and it separates that; and we are to be vessels and instruments in God's hands and let the Holy Spirit separate the river from the world.*

When I was just starting,...I've got to stop...but when I was starting in seminary, I pretty much believed that we were to change the culture and it was called Christ Transforming Culture. That is certainly part of our witness, that is to have an affect on the culture. They say, but now I'm aware that we must also be very much counter-cultural, we must be different and not ashamed to be different. But that doesn't come easily to us, that is a super natural thing. As Bruce would say, "These come of it by the grace of God." That you are willing to stand up and stand out, and stand differently than your peers, at work, and in my case, in church. I have been fighting this battle for forty years in the Episcopal Church and finally we had to leave, or to put it another way, to stop being a church and it became some kind of a vague religious thing, because to be a church according to the Articles of Religion you have to teach the faith, teach the Scriptures as they are written. We long since have given that up, generally. And the seminaries were very much a part of that. So, you are right, it is a terrible thing.

However, we cannot really deal with that, we have to deal with ourselves as being new creatures in Christ Jesus, imperfect, but genuinely created in Christ Jesus for good works. Amen.

Let's pray. Lord, we know that we are saved by grace alone. Nothing that we think, say, or do can bring us right with you. You alone are our salvation, but do not let us use that as an excuse to just give up. Help us to be the kind of men that you have called us to be and that you have prepared us to be, and are willing to enable us to be. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

AUDIENCE APPLAUSE.