

GALATIANS 2:20

THE LIFE I LIVE

“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”¹

Zealous Christians sometimes say they are trying to live the “crucified life.” Actually, I don’t know anyone who is living the crucified life, though each Christian can say with conviction that he or she has been crucified with Christ. The reason you can’t live the crucified life is that it is impossible to crucify yourself. There are many ways to kill oneself, but crucifixion requires that another perform the crucifixion.

When we were buried in baptism, we testified that “our old self was crucified with [Christ] in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin” [ROMANS 6:6]. However, we did not baptise ourselves, nor did we crucify the old nature. God, by the power of His Spirit performed that action. Paul’s justly famous affirmation looks back to what God has done for him, and to his present response to the divine initiative revealed through his own life that was being lived out in response to what the Master had done.

CRUCIFIED — Six out of ten people living in the Roman Empire were slaves. With such a massive slave population, the Romans feared rebellion against their rule. Therefore, they felt compelled to find a way to control the restive population. They chose to control the unruly slave population through intimidation and fear. Accordingly, the Romans adopted the Persian invention of the cross as a means of capital punishment.

Crucifixion was one of the most horrifying ways of execution that man has ever invented. It was thought to be so horrible a means of death that by law Roman citizen could be executed by hanging on a cross only under exceptional circumstances. Not only did the one executed die a slow, agonising death, but the condemned person was humiliated beyond anything we might imagine. Stripped naked, they would hang suspended between earth and heaven, fighting for days to draw one more breath as gravity inexorably exerted its power over their pinioned body.

The Romans had become experts in extending life for those affixed to a cross, ensuring that they experienced the most painful death imaginable. Those witnessing these executions would hear the gasps and the groans of the condemned individuals as they struggled to draw one more breath. The torture that dying criminals endured made an indelible impression on those thinking of rebellion, dissuading them from attempting to overthrow Roman rule.

The cultured world of Rome did not even want to hear about crucifixion. It was a subject that was not discussed in polite society. Cicero, defending a Roman senator named Rabirius against a murder charge, warned against the runaway prosecutor who was suggesting crucifixion as the penalty for the senator. Cicero endeavoured to sway the jury with the following plea, “The very word ‘cross’ should be far removed not only from the person of a Roman citizen, but from his thoughts, his eyes, his ears.”²

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from **The Holy Bible, English Standard Version**, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

² Cicero, “The Speech In Defence of Gaius Rabirius,” sec. 16, in **The Speeches of Cicero**, translated by H. Grose Hodge, The Loeb Classical Library (G. P. Putnam’s Sons, New York 1927) 467

The deep contempt of the Romans for those who were crucified is seen in several instances. A graffito scratched on a stone in a guardroom on Palatine Hill near the Circus Maximus in Rome shows the figure of a man with the head of an ass hanging on a cross. Just below the cross, another man is shown raising his hand in a gesture of adoration. The inscription reads, “Alexamenos worships his god.”³

Justin Martyr summarises the view of enemies of the Faith providing an example of the ancient distaste for crucifixion. He wrote, “They proclaim our madness to consist in this, that we give to a crucified man a place second to the unchangeable and eternal God, the Creator of all.”⁴ Origen (A.D. 185-254) quoted Celsus as mocking the Christian Faith, “In all their writings (is mention made) of the tree of life, and a resurrection of the flesh by means of the ‘tree,’ because, I imagine, their teacher was nailed to a cross, and was a carpenter by craft; so that if he had chanced to have been cast from a precipice, or thrust into a pit, or suffocated by hanging, or had been a leather-cutter, or stone-cutter, or worker in iron, there would have been (invented) a precipice of life beyond the heavens, or a pit of resurrection, or a cord of immortality, or a blessed stone, or an iron of love, or a sacred leather! Now what old woman would not be ashamed to utter such things in a whisper, even when making stories to lull an infant to sleep?”⁵

Crucifixion was degrading in Jewish thought. Moses warned in the Law, “If a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance” [DEUTERONOMY 21:22, 23]. The warning is echoed by the Apostle in the letter before us this day when he writes, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree’” [GALATIANS 3:13].

At the time Paul wrote, the Jews had witnessed multiple horrific examples of crucifixion. These horrifying executions had undoubtedly made an indelible impression in the Jewish mind. During the Hasmonean era, Alexander Janneus (102-76 B.C.) crucified eight hundred Pharisees while at their feet their wives and children had their throats slit.⁶ This brutal action ensured tranquility for the remainder of Alexander’s reign. After the Romans assumed power over Palestine, Varus crucified two thousand men after putting down a revolt in Judea, just before the turn of the century.⁷ An unspecified number of Jews were crucified following a quarrel between Jews and Samaritans,⁸ and several prisoners of war were crucified in Caesarea.⁹ Felix, procurator of Judea from A.D. 52-58, crucified many robbers—“a multitude not to be enumerated”—during his reign.¹⁰ As is well known from the writings of Tacitus, Nero crucified Christians in his garden following the burning of Rome in A.D. 64.^{11, 12}

³ http://www.religionfacts.com/jesus/image_gallery/200_alexamenos_graffito.htm

⁴ “The First Apology of Justin Martyr,” XIII, “Christians Serve God Rationally,” in Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson and A. Cleveland Coxe, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. I: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325 (Logos Research Systems, Oak Harbor, WA 1997)

⁵ Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson and A. Cleveland Coxe, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. IV: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325 (Logos Research Systems, Oak Harbor, WA 1997) 588

⁶ Flavius Josephus, translated by William Whiston, **The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged, Antiquities of the Jews** (Hendrickson, Peabody, MA 1987, 1996) XIII, xiv, 2

⁷ *Ibid.*, XVII, x, 10

⁸ *Ibid.*, XX, v, 2

⁹ Flavius Josephus, translated by William Whiston, **The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged, Wars of the Jews** (Hendrickson, Peabody, MA 1987, 1996) II, xii, 6

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, II, xiii, 2

¹¹ Tacitus, **Annals**, 15.44

It is apparent that we have no modern equivalent of execution that generates the disgust, the revulsion, the sense of loathing that crucifixion generated in the ancient world. The Gentiles saw it as a means of showing contempt for criminals, or for rebels, or for vanquished foes. The Jews saw it as a sign that the one crucified was accursed by Heaven. All alike saw crucifixion as a sign that the one crucified was rejected by God. Perhaps, with this brief background, we can begin to appreciate Paul's assessment of the Christian message: "We preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles" [1 CORINTHIANS 1:23].

Perhaps this knowledge helps explain why modern preaching has endeavoured to remove "the offence of the cross" [GALATIANS 5:11]. Perhaps there is a lingering revulsion of crucifixion. Not only is death by crucifixion repugnant, but the very idea of a Saviour who willingly permits Himself to experience such pain is odious to the modern mind. We don't like to think that we are responsible for such a shocking death. We are willing to say that we are sinners, but we want to qualify that statement by saying that we are not really *that* bad. Thus, the thought that the Son of God would need to offer His life as a sacrifice by means of a cross repels the modern mind.

Whenever we contemporary Christians speak of crucifixion, we seem somewhat cavalier. The shame of the cross has been removed; the cross has been reduced to an ornament in contemporary life. A cross is frequently worn on a chain around the neck as adornment; but it seems to have little meaning. It is no longer an instrument of shame—a symbol of that which is repulsive; now, it is merely decorative or ornamental. Today, even among many who profess Christ as Master of life, the cross is worn as adornment—an object of beauty and nothing more. I cannot imagine the Apostle Paul, or Peter, or John, wearing a cross as an ornament. Ministers often wear a large cross around their neck as a symbol of their office; but what is worn is seldom a crude, rugged instrument of death. It is almost always made of polished wood—perhaps olive wood or another wood with supposed symbolic importance; the cross is, therefore, an attractive accoutrement or badge of office to mark the individual as a professional.

We know from history, and from reading the Word of God, that when one was condemned to die, they were flogged—beaten mercilessly and after a sign detailing the crime for which he was being crucified was affixed around his neck, he was compelled to carry the cross member to the place of their execution. There, he would be stripped naked, laid on the wooden pieces that would form the cross, and spikes be have driven through each wrist and through the ankles. The cross would then be hoisted to the sky and dropped into the hole prepared for it, and the condemned individual would be left to die.

The cross on which the condemned person would die was not a thing of beauty. The Romans did not take care to ensure that the cross was polished and attractive; it was an instrument to kill the condemned individual in a most horrifying manner. If there was symbolism, it was symbolism of governmental might—a warning against rebellion.

I don't deny that our view of the cross has been transformed, if only superficially, by the sacrifice of the Master; I simply caution that too often we miss the horror that attended the death of the Master. When Paul writes those words honouring the sacrifice of our Master, few of us can connect with the shock that gripped those first readers in Philippi. "Though He was in the form of God, [Christ Jesus our Lord] did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, *even death on a cross*" [PHILIPPIANS 2:6-8].

¹² Information concerning Crucifixion was adapted from Donald E. Green, "The Folly of the Cross," The Masters Seminary Journal, 15:1, Spring, 2004 pp. 59-69

CRUCIFIED FOR ME — The Master suffered an agonising death. Though the Word indicates that He shrank from the torment [**HEBREWS 5:7**], He did not shrink from the sacrifice. None of us can fully understand the agonies the Master suffered; but each of us can adore Him for His love. Jesus is indeed, “the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.” And it is that divine love that shall now be the focus of our inquiry for a brief moment.

Modern theories to the contrary, the death of the Master was not an accident. Jesus did not yield Himself up on a whim; neither was His death the result of an exercise that got out of hand. Though recent writings again raise the thought that Judas was duped, Jesus was betrayed, just as the Word says. The account of Jesus’ betrayal by Judas was not an afterthought by disingenuous or cunning disciples attempting to deceive unwary individuals by explaining away His death. Jesus was betrayed; but through Judas’ the Word of God has been fulfilled.

Those are such powerful words that Isaiah wrote centuries before the Master’s sacrifice. They expose each of us as sinners straying from the Shepherd of our souls. They powerfully reveal the depth of God’s love for each of us.

“All we like sheep have gone astray;
 we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
 the iniquity of us all.

“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
 yet he opened not his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
 and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
 so he opened not his mouth.
By oppression and judgment he was taken away;
 and as for his generation, who considered
that he was cut off out of the land of the living,
 stricken for the transgression of my people?
And they made his grave with the wicked
 and with a rich man in his death,
although he had done no violence,
 and there was no deceit in his mouth.

“Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him;
 he has put him to grief;
when his soul makes an offering for guilt,
 he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;
the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.
Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;
 by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
make many to be accounted righteous,
 and he shall bear their iniquities.”

[**ISAIAH 53:6-11**]

Though we read Isaiah's words, we have no better comprehension of what was entailed in His sacrifice than did those ancient people who first read them. We can, however, look back to the account provided in the Gospels and see the fulfilment of all that Isaiah wrote. Though we may not fully understand what He did, we know that He gave His life out of love for us. Though we are unable to explain how the death of Jesus secured salvation for all who believe, we who believe have experienced His love and the salvation which He secured for us through His death.

Jesus spoke repeatedly of His death, consistently testifying that He was offering His life as a sacrifice. Jesus boldly stated that "the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, *and to give His life as a ransom for many*" [MARK 10:45]. Testifying before the Jews that He was the Good Shepherd, the Master fearlessly asserted, "*I lay down my life for the sheep*" [JOHN 10:15]. Then, as an added emphasis, He again testified, "*No one takes [My life] from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord*. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from My Father" [JOHN 10:18].

It is vital that we understand that Jesus gave His life out of love for His helpless people. John wrote, "God so loved the world, that He gave His Only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life" [JOHN 3:16]. Paul appeals to this same evidence of love when he writes to Roman Christians, "While we were still weak, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly" [ROMANS 5:6]. It was not mere compassion that God demonstrated through this sacrifice, however—it was divine love. The Apostle makes this clear when he continues by writing, "God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" [ROMANS 5:8]. John also speaks of the sacrifice of Jesus as a demonstration of the love of God when he writes, "In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" [1 JOHN 4:9, 10].

The sacrifice of the Son of God, however inspiring and however noble it might be, would be of no practical benefit if His death concluded the story. His lifeless body was taken from the cross and loving hands tenderly prepared it for the grave. He was buried, and the tomb was sealed. A Roman guard was posted to ensure that His body would lie undisturbed. However, on the third day, He broke the bonds of death and came out of the tomb. Therefore, He was "declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by His resurrection from the dead" [ROMANS 1:4]. Indeed, He is Jesus Christ our Lord.

With the Apostles, we testify that "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" [ACTS 4:12]. The Apostle has rightly written, "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved" [ROMANS 10:9, 10].

The Risen Son of God has promised His weary people that He will not only love them, but that those who seek to harm them will be compelled to acknowledge that He loves His own. To the missionary church of Philadelphia, the Living Son of God promises, "Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet and they will learn that I have loved you" [REVELATION 3:9].

Be faithful, child of God. Serve Him, and not your own interests. Indeed, He is the One "who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood" [REVELATION 1:5]. Therefore, we have received His command, "Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" [EPHESIANS 5:2]. This brings us to the final point in this message.

CRUCIFIED FOR ME THAT I MIGHT LIVE FOR HIM — The Apostle wrote, “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God.” The crucifixion of the old nature occurred in the past. The appropriate response is to live as one who is new, risen with the Master and living for Him. Though I will live a new life reflecting my relationship to the Living Son of God, there will be marks on my life to reveal the death of the old nature. It is not proper to speak of this as the “crucified life,” but it is nevertheless a life that will bear the marks of the death of the old nature.

When the condemned man lifted the cross member, he knew that *he would never return*. There was no escape from the sentence imposed. The condemned man would lift the cross member and trudge to the place of execution. Exiting the city, the condemned man knew that the process of dying had already begun, and that he would never return. Similarly, the one who bears the marks of having been crucified with Christ does not constantly yearn for the life of death that once marked him. Unlike so many who imagine they can receive life in the Beloved Son and then return to the old life, a crucified man can never return.

This is the message of the Apostle to believers in the church planted at Colossae. “If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you too once walked, when you were living in them” [COLOSSIANS 3:1-7].

It is tragic whenever believers are confused concerning those who “used to be” Christians. These are people who once seemed to follow Christ, but they ceased serving Him and like a dog returning to its vomit [see 2 PETER 2:22], these individuals turn again to what is familiar and comfortable. We should not be surprised at such people, for the Master said they would briefly affiliate with us, and then drift away as He explained in the Parable of the Sower [see the explanation in MATTHEW 13:13-23]. These individuals “went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us” [1 JOHN 2:19].

Likewise, one condemned to be crucified *could look in only one direction*. Affixed to the cross, the one who was crucified could only look forward; he was unable to look back. Christians are called to look to what will be, and not what has been. They are always to be “looking to Jesus, the Founder and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God” [HEBREWS 12:2]. If I will exhibit the life of one who has been crucified with Christ, I will remain focused on following the Saviour, rather than constantly looking back to the place from whence I came. There is no longing for what was death, but only a desire to enter into an ever-fuller life.

Paul spoke for all conscientious Christians when he wrote, “I do not consider that I have made [perfection and maturity] my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” [PHILIPPIANS 3:13, 14]. Modern congregations may be often compared to the Pecos River of West Texas at floodtide—a half-mile wide and ankle deep. It has been well said of much of modern Christendom that we are many, but we are not much. This should never be said of us as a congregation; we must determine to so live that such is demonstrably false.

Luke relates an incident when Jesus was either approached by erstwhile disciples or He personally called such potential disciples to follow Him. Though excuses were provided for why these individuals could not then follow, no real reason for failure to follow was ever offered. “As they were going along the road, someone said to him, ‘I will follow you wherever you go.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.’ To another he said, ‘Follow me.’ But he said, ‘Lord, let me first go and bury my father.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.’ Yet another said, ‘I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home.’ Jesus said to him, ‘No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God’” [LUKE 9:57-62]

The one who was crucified *had empty hands*. Similarly, a mark of one who has been crucified is that he or she does not cling to the things of this life. That one has died to the things of this life; he now lives for the joy of pleasing the Master. He is not overly concerned with accumulating the tawdry baubles of this dying world; He is laying up treasures in heaven. Such a one has taken seriously the words of the Master. The Master warned us, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” [MATTHEW 6:19-21].

Jesus also cautioned against becoming overly attached even to the sweet relationships of this present world when He warned, “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it” [MATTHEW 10:37-39]. These are indeed hard words, but they mark the life of one who pursues heaven’s reward with singleness of heart.

Perhaps you recall a time when Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul” [MATTHEW 16:24-26]?

I know that *the cross imposed its will* on the one who was crucified. In a similar manner, we who have been crucified with Christ find that our will is to do God’s will. We do not *try* to do God’s will; we *do* God’s will. Perhaps you will recall a particular teaching of Jesus, “My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. If anyone’s will is to do God’s will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority” [JOHN 7:16, 17].

These words are comparable to the Master’s teaching that “Whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother” [MARK 3:35]. On yet another occasion, Jesus said, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven [MATTHEW 7:21]. Clearly, doing the will of God is important to the Saviour. We do the will of the Master, not in order to be accepted by the Lord; however, because we have been accepted by the Master, we will do His will. This is the reason John wrote, “The world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever” [1 JOHN 2:17]. I know that when we do the will of God, our joy will be complete, just as John said, “The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete” [JOHN 3:29].

One who is crucified must *die alone*. We are not saved by proxy; I cannot believe for you, nor can you believe for me. Our children must come to this Faith for themselves. An Irish proverb says, “You’ve got to do your own growing, no matter how tall your grandfather is.” Likewise, you must do your own believing, no matter how spiritual your grandfather was.

While we should anticipate, and do all we can to strengthen fellowship with other believers, we must not permit ourselves to be swayed by the opinions of others. Rather, we make a commitment to the Master, committing ourselves to do what He has revealed through His Word. We know that ultimately, we must not only believe for ourselves, but we must implement the Word as individuals. Should we surrender integrity, we cannot blame the pastor or our deacons—we are responsible for our own decisions. Should we defer to popular opinion within the church, we bear responsibility. It is glorious when we align ourselves with the Word and discover that we are not really alone; however, we must be prepared to stand alone if need be. Martin Luther was correct when he averred, “Unless I am convinced by proofs from Scriptures or by plain and clear reasons and arguments, I can and will not retract, for it is neither safe nor wise to do anything against conscience. Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen.”

We are provided with an example of courageous commitment in the life of Moses. We read in the Letter to Hebrew Christians, “By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible” [HEBREWS 11:24-27].

Without question, living with radical abandon as a committed Christian is scandalous in the estimate of many individuals to day. The siren voices of timid people who wish to be Christians but without commitment to the cause of Christ will endeavour to dissuade us from avidly following the Master. However, if we will indeed follow Him, we will need to go outside the camp. The Letter to Hebrew Christians encourages us in this commitment to Christ when it says, “We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured” [HEBREWS 13:10-13].

My prayer for each one listening to this message today will say with the Apostle, “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.” These words of the Apostle will become our own when we receive the Risen, Living Son of God as Saviour of our lives.

The Word of God clearly promises, “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.” That promise concludes by stating, “Everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord will be saved” [ROMANS 10:9, 10, 13]. Submit to His mastery today. Commit yourself to serving the Saviour who has conquered death. Then serve Him with radical abandon.

May God encourage each of us to live as those who have been crucified with Christ. May He be seen to be living in us as we serve Him and do His will. Amen.