

A life of daily surrender.

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Preacher: Jon Hochstetler

[0 : 00] Good morning and greetings to each one. It's a blessing to be here. Appreciate the thoughts that were shared in some of the, especially the songs too that were sung, one at least.

And just that Aaron alluded to as far as on the cross. I felt like this morning God wanted me to share again, maybe in a little bit different way, but is it possible to actually live a surrendered life?

I know we talk about it, we preach about the cross, and why is it that we do? But is it possible for me, is it possible for you to actually live a surrendered life?

Not just surrender once, but to live a life of surrender to God. A life of the cross. And, you know, I don't know either what the percentages are of the 32% that would, I think that's the number you gave, approximately of people that believe in Jesus, or that would say they do.

But what percentage, and you can't really come up with this one hardly, that actually believe in a death to self or a crucified life.

[1 : 44] Jesus said unless we deny ourselves and take up our cross, we can't be his disciple. And so I wonder what his percentage would be of that number.

Right here even. And I wasn't quite following. What was this about? Giving? Service?

Okay. Giving to the Lord, or taking up our cross, and being what God wants us to be. Yeah.

So I believe that the Lord wants to just talk to us again about a deeper surrender. Some things and maybe some more practical ways of surrender.

We all know what the word means, right? We know what surrender means. We know what taking up our cross is, at least to a degree. But can I actually live like that daily?

[2 : 49] That becomes the challenge for me. You know, we face circumstances every day. Can I surrender those to the Lord?

Or am I in charge? You know, the saying, you got this. Do I got this? Or am I able to surrender and say, no, I don't have it, but the Lord does.

And I'm His. That's how we can move forward. So anyway, that's just this morning. Spent some time just with these thoughts, with the Lord.

And He certainly spoke to me. Corinthians, Paul, in 1 Corinthians 1, Paul said, The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God.

So many people in the past, and maybe even in our past, our background, have also preached the cross to a degree, but they missed part of it.

[4 : 09] They missed the part where Jesus said, except a seed or a kernel of seed fall into the ground and die, there can't be new life. And the life, or this, Paul called it the power of God, that the preaching of the cross, how can preaching of death be power?

How can it be life? That's what Paul's talking about. And that life was often missing, in my past at least, and in some of yours I believe, right?

That the life part was missing. It was just the preaching of the cross. Denying yourself. Just deny yourself. Just push yourself in a corner and don't allow your flesh to have anything.

And that's the cross. It's not the cross that Paul was talking about. In Luke chapter 14, I'm going to just read a few verses.

You don't have to turn to these. You can if you want, but there's about three or four verses here in the New Testament. Here's what Jesus said in Luke 14, verse 25.

[5 : 28] Or is it 27 here? I'm missing a few. But I just want to read this one verse. And it says, And whosoever does not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

And then Matthew says, And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me. I mean, Jesus said it, but in Matthew.

Here Jesus said that if we don't do it, we're not worthy of him. And in Luke he said, You can't be my disciple. Then again in Matthew 16, Jesus said unto his disciples, If any man come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

Deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. And then in Luke again in chapter 9, and if you want to turn to that, you can.

It's chapter 9, verse 23. We'll read a few verses there. And he said unto them, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

[6 : 46] I had to think of the one time when as far as following Jesus, Jesus asked his disciples one time whether or not they will also leave him.

Will you also leave me? And then they said, Well, to who should we go? You have the words of eternal life. The next verse there, in verse 24, is, For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

For what is it a man advantaged if he gain the whole world and lose himself or be cast away? This might be a slightly different version. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

And I had to think of that song, I'd Rather Have Jesus. How is that? Versus being a king of a vast domain.

You know, I'd rather have Jesus than all the silver and gold. But that's what Jesus is saying. If you will save your life, you'll lose it.

[8 : 03] But if you lose it, you'll save it. You know, it may be possible for a Christian to surrender to God, but maybe not surrender quite everything.

And I'm saying this carefully, but if that weren't true, then probably none of us would be Christians. Unless, I mean, have we always surrendered everything since we're Christians?

I think there's a choice in this matter. Like, like our brother said, you know, God gives us the valve. You know, He lets us decide many of these things that we have to decide in.

And whether, you know, we're going to give ourself a little more than we should or whether we're going to say, Lord, I want your way.

I want your will. But it is very dangerous to not surrender everything to God. I will add that. It's possible maybe that there's some areas of your life that you haven't been completely surrendered yet, but you had been saved.

[9 : 17] That's what I'm saying. But it is dangerous and it will limit God greatly in how He can use us. He is greatly limited if we're just self-centered too much.

and it's also dangerous for a Christian. One thing for sure, we cannot serve Him without taking up our cross.

Jesus said that. Those are His words. We don't doubt that. We don't question that. That without taking up our cross, we cannot be His follower, His disciple.

And I believe that God is inviting us and requiring of us to be more surrendered to Him.

Jesus took up His cross. We can think about that. I'll just read maybe a couple verses about His cross. In Philippians 2, chapter 8, sorry, chapter 2, verse 8, and being found in like fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

[10 : 32] You know, He was our example of taking up His cross, His humility. Another place, I believe in Hebrews, it says, He endured the cross, despising the shame, but He is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

I think Brother Aaron shared about the rich young ruler coming to Jesus. And He came and it says, Jesus beholding Him loved Him.

And it says, He said unto Him, One thing thou lackest, go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. And come, take up the cross, and follow Me.

You know, we can read into this so many different ways, so many different things of what Jesus was saying. You know, is He literally telling everybody that ever becomes a Christian that you have to sell your farm, you have to sell your business, and your house, and everything.

physically sell it. Is that what He's saying? I mean, I think that's what He was saying to this young man. He had great riches. He went away sorrowful because he had great wealth.

[11 : 58] And he was like, I can't do this. But I believe that Jesus is calling every Christian to sell everything. to sell out, to surrender everything, to give it all into God's hands, say, God, it's all yours.

It belongs to you. In other words, it's not mine anymore. As a Christian, as a man that, and a woman that has surrendered their life fully to Him, you will sell everything.

And it becomes, He becomes your master. He becomes the owner of you. In fact, He has purchased us. And in that way, we sell everything.

Now, does that mean we don't ever have to sell anything literally? No, it doesn't mean that. It means that maybe we need to to sell more than we do and give to the poor.

But it is a walking with God, with Christ, knowing His will. Again, that verse about the power of the cross preaching of the cross to them that perish is foolishness, but unto us that are saved it is the power of God.

[13 : 32] There's a verse in Philippians that speaks about the enemies of the cross. Paul, I believe, wrote this.

For many walk of whom I have told you often and now tell you even weeping that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. So there are enemies of the cross.

People that don't take up their cross and die to themselves and to the world are enemies of the cross. Paul also said in Galatians, and I think maybe I've rather read this verse, but he said in Galatians 6, verse 14, but God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.

And this is kind of more the, a little more of the meat of what I want to share today is about what the cross does in our life and why we need it.

What it, how does, how it affects the relationship between God's people and the world. What is the world?

[14 : 54] If I'm supposed to be crucified to the world, I need to know what it is. What is the world? In 1 John, I believe it's John 2, 15, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

We know this verse, it's nothing new. And it says, If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. That is the world.

And Paul said that the world is crucified unto him and he is crucified unto the world. Can we live that way in America?

Is it possible that we walk through our life, our remaining days, and we're crucified to the world? In Romans 12, 2, And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

[16 : 19] I believe this is the key for a Christian to not be worldly, is to have our minds renewed, to be transformed by the Spirit of God, having a renewed mind.

In fact, without that, we're all worldly. It doesn't matter what we do outwardly, we're worldly. Without a renewed mind, a transformed mind, a new way of thinking, there's more verses.

I'm going to just pick out a few more here about the world. Excuse me. For some reason, my throat is scratchy today. In Colossians 3, verse 2, Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth.

James says, Yea, adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is an enemy of God.

These are amazing words. They don't leave room for a lot of, they don't leave us a lot of wiggle room. If you're a friend of the world, then you're an enemy of God.

[17 : 46] John 15, verse 9 says, If ye were of the world, the world would love his own. But because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

Timothy says, No man that worth entangle, or maybe Paul said this in Timothy, No man that worth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

And Peter, it says, Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.

And yes, we are at war. Our souls, we are at war for our souls. And when I ask the question, what is the world?

You know, the enemies of the cross have painted what was black and white or is black and white in the Bible.

[18 : 58] The enemy of the cross will paint everything gray for us. Where we don't know sometimes what is right or wrong. I mean, sure, we know what right and wrong is, but you know what I mean, I think.

Like, the gray areas of life. Like, is it really wrong to do this or to have this or, you know, and people argue about it all day, whether it's right or whether it's okay or whether it's wrong.

And we all have our opinions about things. And I'm not going to give you a list of those things, because I don't want you to argue about it, but one thing we do know, and that is that we're supposed to be crucified to the world.

And the world is crucified to us, meaning put to death. Do we embrace the cross? Do we know and do we experience and do we experience the life that God gives us when we're willing to die to self?

Does that mean something to us? Is it precious to us? Being crucified means being dead. So what Paul was really saying is that the world is dead to him.

[20 : 26] In other words, all those things that are so attractive and so glorious in this life, in the world, and attractive and splendid, they're dead to him.

They have no appeal. There's no draw there. There's no, I want that. No, it doesn't mean anything to him. And he's dead to those things.

No servant can serve two masters for he will either hate the one or love the other or else he'll hold to the one and despise the other. He cannot serve God and mammon.

You know, if we truly take up our cross, these things won't do much to excite us. If anything, you know, dead people don't get excited about dead things.

Think about it. They don't care what other dead people are doing. And in baptism, we make the statement of death or, yeah, death to self and all that the world has to offer.

[21 : 47] We deny those things. We make that statement in baptism. And we are saying yes to Jesus. Yes to the new life in Christ.

You know, taking up our cross is not a boring life. It's not a life of drudgery or death. It's a new life in Christ.

It is truly the power of God. and that what I mentioned about a seed falling into the ground and dying. Do we need, this is a question for us, for me, for you, do we need a fresh anointing at the cross?

do we need a, is that what we need this week? Just a new and a fresh surrender where we just give everything to God.

I don't know about you, but that's what I'm sensing for myself. That, and I want to look at a few of the things that I think need to be surrendered.

[22 : 57] You remember how the Lord, I believe, spoke to us just last week when he gave Brother Dan a dream about a surrendered image of a man.

Remember, Dan showed us what he saw in his dream. There's a reason for that for us. dead to the world.

You know, this world is so full of vanity. It promotes things that are vain, things that exalt us, things we should buy or do or, you know, to make us be what is exalted instead of Christ.

The world tries to make us look good instead of Christ Jesus. And, you know, we should take care of our physical bodies because it is, our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost.

That's what Paul said. He asked, don't you know? Your body is the temple. Like, we should know this. So, it's important to take care of ourselves.

[24 : 20] ourselves. But the world advertises everything to bring glory to yourself, to take the attention and put it on you instead of who you're serving.

I remember preachers used to preach against that, but somehow we kind of get away from it sometimes and we don't want to offend anybody.

but when we try to exalt ourselves and decorate ourselves, things that draw attention, it is certainly vain and it is not the Holy Spirit because Paul said, I'm dead to the world and the world is dead to me.

It has no attraction. And as brother, our brother was sharing about this, it's so interesting to me how if the world was a hundred people, I mean, it's hard for us to imagine that out of eight billion people, but it's very interesting.

And he asked the question, if we were all together in one little community, one neighborhood, how that would influence us, how we think.

[25 : 42] and then I just had to think about, okay, but we're not like that. We are in that five percent bracket and of course we're influenced by where we live, by our culture.

We are. We're influenced by that. I mean, you know, I'm not a wealthy man by what I'm influenced by, but if I was in that, I'd be like, yeah, they'd probably be at my door.

They'd be at all our doors if we were in that culture. So we're influenced by what's around us and we can't help that as far as, how do I want to word that?

We're influenced by it, but we don't have to be controlled by it. If God and if the Holy Spirit is truly working in our lives and we have been crucified to the world and we are alive unto God, then He will control us.

And that's what He wants. He wants to be controlling our lives. And so many times, I'm afraid we're just influenced.

[27 : 05] The thoughts just come by everybody else in the culture we're in that we don't wait, we don't stop, we're not in prayer, we're not fasting, we're not seeking, and then we just do what everybody else does and think it's okay because that's how humanity works.

And yet we're supposed to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. can the things of this world actually attract you?

And I'm asking myself the same question. Am I dead to the world? You younger ones might think, just in case you do, that us older ones that you, okay, you're old, so of course you're not attracted like we are.

But you know, that's not how it works. The attractions might change, but they're there. And the only answer is the cross, not age.

You don't outgrow the world. Things do change, I get it. There's things that, you know, I just, yeah, couldn't care less about as far as the world, but it's maybe attractive to a younger person still.

[28 : 27] So I get that, but the world is still the world and flesh is always the flesh. And unless it's crucified, it will have its effect. And I'm afraid that one of the reasons that that number, that 32% keeps ringing my ear, it's just unbelievable if that's how many people, do you know how many people that would equate to actually being Christian if it was true?

Out of 8 billion people? It's a huge number. And we know it's not true. But I wonder if it's, if it could be more true if we would actually believe in the cross, if preachers would actually preach the cross, would it be a higher number?

I believe it would be if we would actually believe it. If churches would actually preach and live the cross, they would have power.

There's no power over sin, no discernment even on what sin is anymore, no direction in people's lives, no death to the world.

But God wants the power of God to be real in his people, in us. He doesn't want us to just settle for what's ordinary or what's accepted in the culture for what is a Christian.

[30 : 07] One of the things that lately has been pressed on me is how much I need wisdom. And I'll just say how much we need wisdom.

We need, yes, we need knowledge, but we need wisdom. There's so many things and areas in our lives, pressures of life, things we have to decide, right?

I mean, just our everyday life, whether it's our business or where to live or what house to buy or what, you know, just on and on.

You fill in the blanks, but we need wisdom. And I was driving home from work one day just overwhelmed with this thought of feeling like I don't have wisdom. I don't, and then that verse came to me in James, that if any man lack, if any man lack wisdom, wisdom, God has all the wisdom we'll ever need.

wisdom. He has the answer to every question. He is the answer. But why does it seem that we have so little wisdom and God so much?

[31 : 39] God has all the wisdom, more than we can imagine. how can we, church, how can we tap into the wisdom of God for our answers?

Are you with me? Do we need answers? Is life sometimes hard, troubling, things that happen that are difficult to work through, and we just feel like we don't know what to do?

that verse in James, if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men, all of mankind, liberally, and he doesn't hold back, he abradeth not, and it shall be given him.

Here's the key. A lot of verses like these have keys. The next verse says, but let him ask in faith nothing wavering.

For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. Faith. To have faith.

[32 : 53] To believe God. Sometimes our faith lacks, and therefore we lack wisdom. I believe that we're in a time where the Word of God and the principles of God are being questioned.

perhaps like never before. I'm talking about, I don't know where everything is in other countries, but here in America, in the Christian America.

The things of God are being questioned. Principles that have stood for hundreds of years, years, that the church has believed for 2,000 years are being questioned today.

Why is that? I don't know why fully, but I believe that the church as a whole is not dead to the world, and the world is not dead to the church.

church. They have become friends. In fact, you can barely tell the difference. Think about it.

[34 : 18] Sometimes, I mean, other than words, you can't really tell the difference. They have become almost the same, and will this happen to us? I believe it will if we are not extremely careful and aware of Satan's tactics.

He will try with just one small compromise at a time. Last Sunday, we heard a message on compromise. I remember Brother Manny used to say that the devil won't ask you for a dollar, but he has no problem asking you for 20 nickels.

That's his tactic, just a little bit. Just a little bit at a time. In closing, I just have a few more, one or two more scriptures maybe, and then some things I want to share yet.

In Galatians 6, verse 14, where Paul said, But God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.

Do we glory in the cross? Do we glory in it? It's not a thing of, you know, sometimes in our minds we think that, well, being crucified, I'm just crucified, and I'm just somehow pushed down into a corner like I said earlier, and there's no glory in that.

[35 : 50] The glory is that it's with Christ, and it's through Christ, and with Him we can do all things. And Paul glories in that.

He's in glory today because of that. Can we sincerely say this morning that we have been crucified to the world, and the world has been crucified to me, because I have surrendered all of my life to Him who was crucified.

Jesus was crucified physically. And now I've been baptized unto His death, and my old man, the old nature, has died also.

Or am I still drawn into the realm of how the world thinks and the attractions that she offers? And is it possible today that God is just drawing us into a deeper surrender to Him, a deeper relationship with Him, where He becomes our focus, our best friend, our Lord, our Master.

He's a jealous God, and He's the one that said we can't serve two of them, can't serve two Masters. here might be some things that God wants us to surrender.

[37 : 28] There's been many things besides, just like I said in the beginning, that it's not just surrendering my old life and life of sin, but as we walk through daily living, there are many things that we can surrender to Him.

how about my family? How about things that aren't well in my family? Burdens we carry sometimes.

How about rejection from our parents? That's a big one. For some of you, that's still very fresh.

God wants to just take those things and say, I'll carry that burden for you. He'll help us.

How about the church, the local body, and every problem that we see in each other? You know, those things you see in me that you wish weren't there.

[38 : 38] Can we surrender those things to Him? Can we surrender those things? Our work, our business, about our future, about our lack of knowledge and wisdom, our weaknesses and our insufficiencies outside of Christ.

We're insufficient. In Him, we are sufficient. We're made complete. but the peace and the joy that comes and just once again just surrendering those things, those daily things that come our way.

When we surrender everything, I know for me, I tend to like if, you know, I don't want to live a life of sin or, you know, I'm not saying that, but where my weakness is is to start carrying burdens too much.

And this morning, the Lord just showed me that He wants us to be co-laborers with Him. And the more surrendered we become, the more life we will have.

And the more life we will have, the more God will use us. The more God can use us, the more we surrender those things.

[40 : 10] What about relationships? How is it in our relationships? Not just with each other, but with each other, outside even of this room.

God's people, God's people, are we doing all that we can to be restored to as many of God's people as possible?

God's people, especially in the household of faith. Or do we even care? God's love. If we don't care about relationships, then I guess I'd question about our relationship with God.

Because if we don't love our brother, how can you say you love God? Right? Scriptural. The principle's there. I think that's scriptural.

not saying we can restore every relationship, but remember when our brother Abe was up here a few years ago, I never forgot that picture of a window that's all dirty on both sides.

[41 : 28] Remember that, Mike, you weren't here, but he gave the example of a window, a glass window, and it's dirty on both sides. You can't clean the other side.

the other person's side, but we can clean our side of the window so we can see with a clear heart or however he had put it there.

So do we do what we can? Not to compromise in relationships, not to compromise the word of God, but do we care about having a good relationship with all that we can, to live peaceably with all men as much as is possible, the Bible says.

I'm going to turn to this song here and just in closing, I don't know if we'll sing it, maybe not now, but we could sing it, but the song 371, open the wells, it says, I'm just going to read it, Lord, I am fondly, earnestly longing into thy holy likeness to grow, thirsting for more and deeper communion, yearning thy love more fully to know.

is that our heart this morning? Open the wells of grace and salvation, pour the rich streams deep into my heart, cleanse and refine my thought and affection, seal me and make me pure as thou art.

[43 : 16] The Lord pouring his wisdom and his grace into our life. Dead to the world would I be, O Father, dead unto sin, alive unto thee.

Crucify all the earthly within me, emptied of sin and self may I be. Wow, this songwriter got the message. He got this right, he or she.

I would be thine and serve thee forever, filled with thy spirit, lost in thy love. Come to my heart, Lord, come with anointing, showers of grace sent down from above.

So blessed by those words. I'm just going to take my seat and let James come up.

Thank you.