

Off With The Old, On With The New
Colossians 3:5-14
Pastor John Miller

I don't know about you, but I don't like to pull weeds. There are a lot of weeds around right now. We have Roundup and weed whackers. I read recently on the Internet that you can pour vinegar on weeds, and that will destroy them. So if you don't learn anything today from my sermon, you can go home and use vinegar to kill your weeds. Coming to church can be profitable.

I believe that our lives are like gardens, and God wants to pull the weeds in our lives. If our lives are going to bear fruit, then the first thing you need to do when you plant a garden is pull the weeds.

Years ago I tried to plant a vegetable garden. Never, ever again will I attempt that. So much work and effort went into that. The vegetables were growing so beautifully, then all the gophers in the neighborhood arrived. They kind of were spying it out and knew exactly when to attack. It was very difficult. So I just go to the grocery store. Why plant a garden when we have grocery stores?

Your life is like a garden; before you can produce fruit, the weeds have to be removed. So Paul wants our lives to produce a beautiful garden of fruit. He wants us to live abundantly. We saw that last time in Colossians 3. In order to do that—and beginning the practical section of Colossians—we need to do three things. We need to seek the things above, verse 1; we need to think the things that are above, verse 2; and we are to believe that the things God says about us in His Word are true, verses 3-4. What things? That you are dead, verse 3; that your life is hid with Christ in God; that Christ is your life; and when He appears, we will appear with Him in glory.

Now there really is no break in the text. The theme and the subject matter continue all the way down to verse 17, technically. So from verse 1 to verse 17 is one unit. Today I want to look at verses 5-17, where Paul basically changes the metaphor from seeking and thinking and believing to a picture of taking off old, soiled clothes or garments of the old life and putting on the new garments of the resurrected life. When he uses the phrase, repeated in our text, “put on” and “put off,” it was literally used as taking off soiled or dirty clothes.

I'm assuming that most of you came today with clean clothes on. You get up for church and you put your “Sunday meetin'” clothes on. They're clean. If you have dirty clothes, the imagery is that you take them off, and you put on the clean clothes.

This is a picture of our conversion. When we were saved, we are now to take off the old garments of the old life, and we put on the new grace clothes. Someone said that we take off the grave clothes; we were dead in trespasses and sins. We put on the grace clothes; we're renewed by the Spirit into the image of Jesus Christ.

So using this metaphor of taking off and putting on, there are two things that Paul tells us. First, he tells us what we need to put off, and then he tells us what we need to put on. First of all, in verses 5-9, we're to put off the old vices of the former life, the sinful vices that we lived in.

Paul says, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth..."—Then he names them for us. This is a text that has specific sins mentioned—"...fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience..."—or literally "is coming on the children of disobedience"—"...in the which ye also walked sometime..."—this is your past—"...when ye lived in them. But now..."—here's your present—"...ye also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off..."—there's the imagery—"...the old man with his deeds."

He says in verse 5 that we are to "mortify." What does "mortify" mean? It means "to put to death." It's an imperative stressing determination and decisive action. Remember back in verse 3 that we had died and our life was hid with Christ in God.

Paul said in Galatians, "I am crucified with Christ." So when we were born again, God saw us in our identification with Christ; that when Jesus died, we died. When Jesus was buried, we were buried. When Jesus rose, we rose. But now we have to put that into practice. We have to implement that in our daily lives. It's not enough just to have theory. Yes, officially I died with Christ, but what I need to do is take a step of faith. In Romans Paul used the word "reckon"; that you believe or you account it or you reckon it to be dead to sin. That's what it means to mortify; that you reckon the old life dead and that you crucify the old man, its affections and lusts.

By the way, the term "old man" is a reference to your sinful, Adamic nature. When you were born the first time, you inherited from Adam a sin nature. Then when you were born again, the second time, by the Spirit of God into the family of God, you received a new nature. So only a Christian has the new nature. A non-Christian has the old, sinful nature, and that's why all that person can do is live a life of sin, unpleasing to God. So the new nature gives us a new capacity or a new ability to be able to live a life pleasing to God.

Notice in verse 5 there is a "therefore." Paul says, "Mortify therefore...." Because you are to seek the things above, you are to think the things above, that you are dead in Christ—Christ is our life, and He is coming and we'll appear with Him in glory—we are to mortify the deeds of the flesh.

What does Paul mean by "your members which are upon the earth," verse 5? He's saying that your sinful nature uses your physical body. You need to understand that the physical body is not sinful. It was created by God and can be used for God's glory. It can be used for sinful purposes, if it's out of the will of God, but your body is now the temple of the Holy Spirit, and you are to glorify God, to Whom you belong, with your body. The human body and even the hemostasis, the physical drives—the air drive, the thirst drive, the sleep drive, the sex drive—

are all God given. It's a gift from God. But if you are outside the will of God, it can be used for sinful purposes. So when he says to crucify "your members which are upon the earth," he's basically saying, "Don't let your sinful, Adamic nature get a hold of your body and use it for sinful purposes that will dishonor God."

Jesus said it like this: He said, "If your right eye offends you, pluck it out." "If your right hand offends you..."—or "causes you to stumble"—"...cut it off." Now that's a pretty radical illustration. Very clearly, He's not talking literally. If He did, we'd all have stumps now. No one could raise their hands to the Lord. Nobody could see anything. He's not talking physically. You can cut off your right hand and sin with your left hand just fine. Years and years ago in England, if you were caught pick-pocketing, your hand would be cut off. That's pretty radical.

True story: a guy was caught pick-pocketing, and they cut off his right hand. Several months later, he was caught a second time, and they cut off his left hand. He was caught a third time pick-pocketing. He was using his teeth. Can you imagine being in a crowd and someone was chewing at your pocket trying to take your wallet? He was trying to bite you. That's crazy.

I was thinking about this illustration while we were in an airport in a crowd, so I reached back and grabbed my wallet and put it in my front pocket. I thought I hope nobody bites me in the bottom right now looking for my wallet.

It goes to show you that you can cut off your hands and pluck out your eyes, but it's your sin nature that's the problem. That's the issue. You can go and live in a monastery and block out all the visual stimuli that brings temptation, but in your heart, you're still going to be tempted to sin, because you have that sinful, Adamic nature.

Paul also lists for us the sins we are to put to death or "mortify" or destroy. I don't want to tarry on these "weeds" that need to be weeded out of our lives, the dirty clothes that need to be taken off. But they're right here in the Bible, so let's look at them individually. I put them in some categories for you. The first category is five sexual sins that need to be "weeded out" or taken out of our lives.

The first is fornication, verse 5. It's the Greek word "porneia." We get our word "pornographic" or "pornography" from it. It's a general word used for sexual immorality. You ask, "Well, what is 'sexual immorality'?" Any sex that is outside the covenant relationship of marriage. And by the way, I need to define marriage for you. God, in His Word, said, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh," Genesis 2:24. Marriage is the divine institution created by God, and it is one man with one woman joined together for life. That's marriage. And I don't care what the world says or what the Supreme Court approves. Marriage is a man and a woman joined together for life. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder," Matthew 19:6.

Premarital sex is "porneia." You're not supposed to have sex before marriage to see if you have chemistry, see if it works out, and then if it doesn't, find somebody else. That's sinful.

Extramarital sex is sinful.

All these sins, by the way, are in the realm of sexuality. Sex is not sinful. Sometimes you hear preachers preaching on sex, and it's like, "Sex is bad. Sex is evil." No; it's a gift from God. Praise God. Amen. Hopefully it was just the married people saying "Amen" to that. You single folk have to sit quiet right now. But if you're married, thank God for that gift of intimacy that God expects us to have in marriage. The Bible says that Adam and Eve were both naked, and they were not ashamed. Adam "knew" his wife. It's supposed to be a part of your marriage intimacy in your relationship. But anything outside marriage, as God designed it, is sinful.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 says, "For this is the will of God, even our sanctification, that ye..."—speaking to believers—"...should abstain from 'porneia'"—or "fornication" it says in the English translation. It's sexual immorality.

Paul lived in a culture that had gone rampant into sex. You think it's bad today? It is bad today, but in the Greco-Roman culture, it was very, very vile. The whole culture was just a cesspool at that time. These Gentile Christians were getting saved, and they needed to understand that Christianity brings a new standard. If it weren't for Christianity in the world today, we would live in a very perverse world.

The second thing that we are to "weed out" or take off is uncleanness. It is moral impurity in all forms. It covers all filthy, suggestive thoughts and humor. J. B. Phillips renders this "dirty mindedness." It would include pornographic literature, movies, videos, the Internet and whatnot. So it's having a filthy mind or a perverted mind.

Thirdly, "inordinate affection" in my King James Bible. It could be rendered "deprived passions." It's the desire to use another for one's own selfish, sensual gratification. It's both heterosexual and homosexual in character.

The fourth is evil or wicked desires. My King James says "evil concupiscence." It's the desire to use your sex drive out of God's will and out of God's plan. It's only to be used in the covenant relationship of marriage as God has designed it.

Fifthly, we are to take off or weed out covetousness. Some Bible scholars debate as to whether this last sin mentioned, covetousness, is to be included as sexual sin. I believe it is a sexual sin. It is broader than just sexual sin. But I find it interesting that in the Ten Commandments, known as the Decalogue, the tenth commandment is "Thou shalt not covet." What's the first thing on the list you're not to covet? "Your neighbor's wife."

Covetousness is the desire for more. I find that interesting. If you're married, you don't want anyone or anything more than what your spouse can provide. "You don't meet my needs" or "You're not exciting enough, so I want something more." Notice it says that "covetousness, which is idolatry." It says it right there in your Bible. Covetousness is that desire for more. It takes the place of God and God's will for your life. It's like "He's not meeting my needs," or "She's not meeting my needs. I want something more." That's covetousness. "Thou shalt not

covet.”

Nothing destroys a person's life in a marriage relationship quicker than sexual immorality. If you're a married person, you need to be committed to and devoted to your spouse. There's only one person who can meet your needs in this area and even in other areas. Even socially and emotionally. You don't go elsewhere to meet your needs; you find it in your spouse. So beware of this sin of covetousness, wanting more.

We live in a culture like Paul's, where sexual sin is rampant, but it is not to be named among us who are Christians. We are to weed it out or take it off.

Then Paul give us two reasons why we should put these sins to death. Reason number one is in verse 6. It brings “the wrath of God.” It says, “For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.” God is holy and God will judge sin. And “whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,” Galatians 6:7. You cannot commit sexual sin and not have the judgment of God come upon you. It might be just that God lets the consequences of your sin come upon you, but one day you will stand before God and give an account of your life. Does God forgive sin? Yes. “He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,” 1 John 1:9. When you were born again, all your sinful past was forgiven, and you can praise God for that. It's washed in the blood of Jesus Christ. Now that you are born again, sin is not to be a part of your life.

In verse 7, Paul says it was part of your old life. So God will judge sexual immorality, verse 6. In verse 7, he tells them, “In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.” It's your past life; it's the way you used to live. Think about the way you used to live: in such darkness, greed, selfishness and immorality.

Not only does Paul give us these five sexual sins, but the second category is three attitude sins, verse 8. We must “put off.” Notice it in verse 8. He says, “But now ye also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice...” I put these in the category of attitude. There are sins of the flesh, and there are sins of the spirit. There are action sins, and there are attitude sins.

Some of you so far are feeling quite comfortable. “Well, I'm not guilty of sexual immorality. I'm very good in that area.”

“What about your attitude? What about anger, wrath or malice?”

The phrase “put off” means to take them off like dirty clothes.

Anger is that settled, seething feeling of anger, and there are a lot of angry people in our culture today. Then it leads to wrath or rage or outbursts. And it leads to malice, which is ill will; that you want to hurt someone. So it starts with anger, then it explodes in wrath and then it's like, “The first person who looks at me wrong, I'm gonna punch them in the face!”

“That came out of you pretty smoothly, pastor. You've really felt like that?”

"No, not me. Never."

Have you driven the freeways of California lately? How do you drive the freeways of California and not get angry [grimacing]? Road rage is a big thing right now. People just freak out. It's insane. It's hard not to get angry and not to explode and not to want to hurt somebody.

It's like the little boy who asked his mother, "Mommy, why is it that only when Dad drives the idiots are on the highway? Never when you're driving. Only when Dad's driving all the idiots are on the road."

Then Paul names three sins of speech. So he lists sexual sins, attitude sins and then sins of the tongue or of speech. Notice them in verse 8. They are "blasphemy, filthy communication" and then in verse 9, lying. Blaspheming is railing or slander. When it's directed toward God, it's blaspheming. When it's directed toward another human being, who's made in the image of God, it's slander.

Notice the second form of speech is "filthy communication," and he uses the phrase coming "out of your mouth." It's shameful speaking. Weymouth, in his rendering, renders this "foul-mouth abuse." It is completely inconsistent for a Christian to have filthy speech, to have bad words coming out of your mouth. "From the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks." When you get born again, God gives you a new heart. And one of the first things you see go is filthy words and bad words.

Do you notice in our culture today how vile the language is? Everywhere we go what we have to listen to? It's unbelievable to me. We think nothing of it. We live in a cesspool. But not us as Christians. People should be able to say, "I notice you don't cuss. I notice that you don't call people names. Why?"

"Because I'm a Christian. God's changed my heart." Filthy speech is to be taken off.

Thirdly, lying. It's in verse 9. "Lie not one to another." Why? Because you have "put off..."—or "taken off"—"...the old man..."—the old sinful nature—"...with his deeds." Lying grieves the Holy Spirit. He's the Spirit of truth. You should not lie "one to another." You can lie by exaggeration. You can lie by elimination; take information out or withhold information. Then you're a liar. The Bible says that as Christians we should be "speaking the truth in love." You don't ever want to lie to someone. Relationship is based on honesty and truth. Lying should not be a part of the believer's life.

In Ephesians 4:25, Paul says, "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor..."—Why?—"...for we are members one of another." In the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments, in Exodus 20:16, the ninth commandment says, "Thou shalt not bear false witness..." or "Thou shalt not lie." They are not suggestions; they are commandments.

So all of these "weeds" or sins—and Paul was not afraid to name sins. He was writing to Christians. Don't you ever get the idea that this is not pertinent or practical to us as Christians,

because many times Christians are committing these sins. We're to get rid of those things; we're to pull these weeds out. We're to take off these old garments of the flesh.

Now Paul moves from the negative to the positive. Secondly, in verses 10-14, he tells us to put on the new virtues. So take off the old vices, and we are to put on the new virtues. He says, "And have put on the new man..."—that's the new creation in Christ—"...which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him..."—that's Jesus Christ—"...where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Put on..."—he says again—"...therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies..."—tender mercies and compassion—"...kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity..."—or "love"—"...which is the bond of perfectness"—or "perfection."

I want you to note in this passage three new things. Number one, you have a new nature. The moment you were born again and received Christ, God gave you a new nature. In verse 10, Paul calls it "the new man." The old man is the old, sinful nature that dominated, controlled and dictated how you lived. Then when you were born again, you got a new nature that gives you the power, ability and capacity to live a life of holiness and true godliness. So you take off the old and put on the new.

Submission to the new nature brings spiritual victory. Paul says in Galatians 5:16, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh," which is the old man. It's what is called "sanctification." The moment you were saved, you were justified. God declared you righteous. That's your standing or positional truth, and that can't change. But now you have to take your position and put it into practice. It's bringing your practice up to who you are in Christ. You died with Christ, so you died to the old man. You rose with Christ, so now you walk in newness of life. You yield to the Holy Spirit. You obey God's Word. You don't sow to the flesh, which brings corruption. You sow to the Holy Spirit, which reaps life everlasting. This is what's called "sanctification."

It's a long process. I want you to notice verse 10: "...renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." In other words, it's a long, present, continuous process. You're being renewed—it's in the present tense there—in the image of Jesus Christ. The goal of your sanctification is likeness to Christ. So we have a new nature.

The second thing that's new is that we have a new family. You become a new person with a new nature, and then you have a new family. Ever notice that when you get saved, you have new brothers and sisters now? In verse 11, Paul says, "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision..."—in the family of God, the church, there is neither—"...Barbarian, Scythian, bond..."—or "slave"—"...nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."

I want to point out that in God's family, the church, there are no racial distinctions. Are there

different races? Yes; they exist. But your race has nothing to do with your standing before God or your relationship to God or your acceptance to God or the fact that we are equal in the family of God. The ground is all level at the foot of the Cross. He says, it's "neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision," so it's neither Gentile nor Jew. In the church, there's no racial distinction. In this church, we're not white and black, brown and yellow; we're brothers and sisters in Christ. We are the family of God. It's something to celebrate.

There are no cultural distinctions in this new family. Paul mentions "Barbarian" and "Scythian." You ask, "What is a 'Barbarian,' and what is a 'Scythian'?" I haven't met a Scythian lately. In the Greek world, anyone who didn't speak Greek was considered a Barbarian. This is cultural. The fact that they didn't speak the beautiful language of Greek, meant that they were just speaking "bar-bar" or gibberish, so they called them Barbarians. They weren't cultured. They weren't refined.

You ask, "Well, what about a Scythian? A Scythian takes it even further. Scythians are really bad Barbarians. They're like super bar-bar. They're like bad news. They were wicked, violent, sinful, cruel, radical low-lifers. They were bad people.

You ask, "Where did they come from? Who were they?"

Buckle your seat belts. They came from north of the Caucasus Mountains. That's where we get our word "Caucasian" from. You have a glorious past, you white folk. No need to feel superior because your skin is white. You're a Scythian, dude! They used to kill people, take their skulls and hollow them out and drink the blood out of the skulls. Then they'd take the skin from the skulls, use it for a napkin and throw it down. They were like pre-Viking. From Scythian we get our word "Scandinavian." They were the white folks. They were bad! So don't think you're hot stuff; okay?

But this passage is teaching that in the body of Christ, we don't relate to God in those terms. There are no racial, no social distinctions of that nature. No bond, no free, no social distinctions. This would be the slave and the free man. The Roman world was divided 50-50; half were slaves and half were free men. But when the Christians who were slaves got free and they came to church, they would sit equally with their masters. They were one in Christ. Onesimus was the runaway slave and Philemon was his master. They were from the city of Colosse, the very city Paul was writing to. No distinction of bond or free.

Here is the third thing that we have that is brand new: Not only do we have a new nature, a new family, but we have a new lifestyle, verses 12-14. When you received the new nature and you were placed in the new family, then you begin to live a new life; new nature, new family, new life. Paul's threefold description of believers is given there in verse 12: You are "the elect of God..."—It means God chose you. You are—"...holy..."—which means you are "set apart"—"...and beloved..."—or that you are "loved by God." I believe that Paul is reminding them of who they are, from God's perspective, because this is a motivation for holy living.

Next time you think you can go out and live a sinful life, remember that God chose you by His grace. Not because you're special. Not because you're wonderful. Not because of anything you are or you do. God chooses you by His grace. I believe that God saves us by His grace. We don't earn, merit or deserve God's salvation. It's all of grace. Yes, we have to believe. Yes, we have to trust and receive that finished work of Christ, but it's not something that we merit or deserve.

We're also holy, set apart, and we're loved by God. When a Christian sins, he not only breaks God's laws, but he breaks his Father's heart. I remember when I was a young teenager, I did some things I shouldn't have done, and I broke my mother's heart. I made my Mom cry. I disappointed my Dad. I'll never forget that to this day. But how much more do I break the heart of God and grieve the heart of God and wound the heart of God. I'm not just breaking a commandment; I'm grieving the heart of my Father, Who chose me by His grace, set me apart as holy and set His love upon me. It should be a motive for doing only that which pleases and honors God.

How should we treat others? Here are the things we need to put on, the grace clothes: In verse 12, it says there are "bowels of mercies" in the King James. Why? Because the internal organs are tender and soft, and that was the place where you felt. So the rendering should be "a heart of compassion." Christians should be compassionate. Apart from Christianity, we live in a very cruel, heartless world. Christianity brought compassion to a very harsh world.

Then we put on kindness, verse 12. That's sweetness of disposition. It's the fruit of the Spirit. If you're spiritual, you will be kind.

Then we put on "humbleness of mind," verse 12, or "humility of mind." It's not thinking lowly of yourself; it's just not thinking of yourself. Even as Jesus, in Philippians 2, put not Himself first.

Next is meekness, verse 12. That's power under control. That's not weakness, but it's submitting to God and letting God control your life. It's translated "gentleness."

And next, we have longsuffering, verse 12. Toward people, it literally means "wrath put away." Do you find yourself blowing up at people quickly? Do you find you have a short fuse? Longsuffering means you have a long fuse; you don't blow up quickly.

Lastly, we have forbearance. I almost wish this wasn't in the Bible, because we have to be tolerant of others who irritate us. I got on a plane to fly home with my wife and I was tired; I had preached all day and before, still feeling jet lag from going and coming back. We had all these college kids sitting around us. Talking. Super loud. And it was like, Oh, God, give me patience. I felt like standing up and saying, "Shhh!" I could just see myself in the news: "Pastor gets dragged off plane." "Hey, there's Pastor John in the news!" Then I come home and put this sermon together, and there's forbearance, being tolerant of people who irritate you. Let's go on to the next one. Put off the old, put on the new.

Forgiveness, verse 13. "Forgiving one another." And then it goes on to say, "If any man have a

quarrel..."—or "complaint"—"...against any, even as Christ forgave you so also do ye." If you have been forgiven by God, then you should be forgiving toward others. Christians should be forgiving. And when you forgive someone, by the way, you don't use it against them in the future, you don't talk about it to others and you don't dwell on it yourself.

And last, but not least, you have love, verse 14. Love all, or on top of everything or over everything else, "and above all these things put on charity..."—or "love." The Greek is "agape"—"...which is the bond of perfectness."

The imagery in verse 14 ties in with the put off and put on, because Paul is actually saying, like the oriental robe that had no Velcro, had no zipper, had no buttons, had no snaps—like a hospital garment. Those things are dangerous—the only way to hold it together was to put a belt around it and tie it up. If your belt fell off, it's like "Wool!" Dangerous.

So you pull your robe together, tighten your belt. What does your belt do? It holds everything together. Guys, you ever forget to put a belt on? It feels like you're going to fall apart. You need your belt to hold you together.

Love binds it all together. What good is it if you have all these virtues but you don't do them in love? You're just a "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal," 1 Corinthians 13:1. So put on love on top of everything else. Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another..."—and how should we love one another?—"...even as I have loved you." This is the mark of a Christian. The birthmark of a Christian is love. And love controls all of these virtues: humility, gentleness, kindness, forgiveness. They are all motored by love.

But here's my closing question: Are you a Christian? Maybe you're not a Christian. Maybe you sat through this whole sermon, and it's all Greek to you; it just doesn't make any sense. Maybe you're here and you haven't been born again. Do you know that coming to church doesn't make you a Christian? You can come to church every day, every Sunday, for your whole life, you can be baptized and you can even believe right things about God, but if you haven't been born again, you'll never see the kingdom of God. Jesus told Nicodemus, who was a very religious, Jewish man, "Nicodemus, you must be born again if you want to see the kingdom of God."

The Bible tells us that it's our sin that separates us from God. The Bible says that "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The Bible says, "There is no one righteous; no, not one." That's the reason Jesus Christ came. I want you to know that Jesus came to die for your sins. He paid the penalty on the Cross when He cried, "It is finished." It is done; paid in full. We owed a debt we couldn't pay, and He paid a debt He didn't owe. Your sins were placed on Jesus when He died on that Cross, He paid for your sins, He was buried and rose again from the dead and lives in heaven right now to forgive you and to give you new life. A Christian is someone who has the life of God in their soul. If you've been saved, you'll know it; your life has been changed.

So if there is anyone in doubt today as to whether or not you've been born again, that you really have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, I want to give you an opportunity right now, right here, to know that you are a child of God.

Do you have a new nature? Are you a part of this spiritual family? When you die, will you go to heaven? Are you truly saved? If not, why not? The Bible says that anyone who believes will be saved. The word "believe" means that you trust Jesus. It's a word of faith. You put your faith in Jesus. The Bible says, "By grace you have been saved, through faith. Not of yourself; it is a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast."

God wants to give you a free gift. And if you're here, right now, the Bible says, "Now is the acceptable time. Today is the day of salvation." And the Bible says, "If you hear God's voice, harden not your heart."

So now I want to give you an opportunity to ask Jesus Christ to come into your heart, to forgive your sins and give you eternal life, to make you a new creation in Christ, to give you the ability to live a life free from sin. He'll not only forgive your sins, but He'll give you purpose. He'll give you hope. He gives you the hope of heaven.