

BibleTalk Radio



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Christ for the Philippines Mission

Ladies' Bible Study

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I've got something here the Lord has given me. Anyone can listen, but I'm not attempting to teach the men, because the Holy Bible says that the woman must not usurp authority. But everybody can listen to this as just a word of comfort, I suppose.

Basically, the topic that I wanted to talk about is the real struggles of a true, converted Christian and saved person. I'm talking to myself, as well, a saved, true Christian, born-again, Bible-believing Christian. It would be good to listen to this, too, because it's always good to step outside of ourselves, outside of our skins. Always good to do that and to see a point of view of another person, any other person, not just ourselves.

Basically, this is on real struggles. I've pointed out struggles that I've come up with and, of course, there are many. There are a myriad of them, especially for somebody in a change, because indeed the Bible says if we are born again we are a new creature. Old things are passed away, that everything has become new. So, essentially, that is the kingdom of God. That's what it simply means when one is born again.

First of all, one of the struggles... and by the way, I will put out the Bible verses, the text verses that it's referring to in terms of these

points that I say to you, and I hope you will just bear with me with this one.

Let me give you a backdrop. Born again means that you have received Jesus as Saviour and you have realized your sinful condition and then realizing you cannot save yourself by charity works or even your membership in a religion, because the Bible says that's not what counts. So, if a person has received the Lord as their Saviour, meaning they placed their trust in Jesus Christ, number one, and, number two, the saving power of Jesus Christ and His complete work on the cross, then this person then receives Jesus Christ. He says, "God, take over. I will give You my life. Please save me." Simply. Some of the prayers are as simple as that. Remember Peter as he was about to sink? He said, "Lord, save me." Simple. And what happened to him? He got saved. So it could be something as simple as that.

That particular event that happens creates a born-again Christian, saved. From this point on, this person has a home in Heaven. This person is going to go to Heaven. In fact, that's what Jesus Christ is talking about in the book of John. He said, *In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would not tell you. I will go to prepare a place for you.* These places are really mansions for those that have trusted in Him and believed in Him.



So there is a change in this particular person. He belongs to Christ. This person is already representing Christ going forward because he has a responsibility to represent Christ and with that comes the struggles. And that is what I'm going to try to discuss with you right now.

What is the first thing that happens? And I'm only speaking out of experience. When that happened to me... Let me give a background. When I was just a student both in high school and college, I had been hearing a lot of people around the school. I belonged to a major religion and I would see these people, women, boys, and girls, young like me, and then I would just take note of it.

At that particular time, the first thing I would think about... of course, I didn't understand it... but the first thing was a defense. I would put on a defense for me. For example, "I don't need that. I'm not lost," or something like that. I didn't feel lost anyway. "I'm not a bad person," *A, B, C, D, E, F, G*, you know, and by saying that, basically it says in the book of Peter, one of the epistles of Peter, when you say that, it's like saying, "God, I don't have any sense." And the Bible says you make God a liar when you say that. It's a very difficult situation, because in His Word, He says everybody has sinned. Everybody has fallen short of the glory of God.

There are so many things that happen to this person, and then they have struggles. The first main struggle that this person will have after receiving Christ, there's the joy. The person will feel like a relief. For my case, I felt some kind of a relief, like my search was finished; my search was over and everything, and that was a very good thing.

The next thing that happens to this person that is saved is excitement. This person is on fire. This person says, "Amen," when there's something good that happens, "Amen," or "Praise the Lord," "Praising the Lord every day," and tells people about her story or his story. And it comes with the territory, especially your loved ones, your friends, the people that you treasure.

For the case of one who gets saved, this person particularly will share, "Oh, something good happened to me and I want to share it with you, and I hope it will happen to you." Sometimes it's met with, of course, friction. It's met with rejection because this particular message cannot be discerned spiritually without bias. First of all, it's very bold to say that. Now, this other person, of course, filters his own prejudices and inclinations. So the message is either rejected or just blocked. And sometimes it is dismissed as though you're a lunatic. Sometimes you are just being marginalized. But that's going to go away because you know that person. If it's your friend, they might be on drugs or marijuana or reading Playboy, whatever, so some of the times the people will say that. And when somebody who is just a bystander says that, and in any particular case, like an acquaintance for example, when it hits home is when you get affected.

Say for example, you share it with your family and that's the first trouble, basically, your loved ones, your very own parents, aunts and uncles, grandparents, siblings, cousins, best friends, everybody, when you share with them like how you have come to believe, that is where a great fight begins. A fight within and without begins. When you share, "Mama and Papa, I have become born again. My friend shared with me the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ died for



my sins. Nothing else matters anymore.” So you share that and then sometimes or in many cases it’s met with resistance. Especially if your family is highly opinionated or have very strong personalities or the whole family is attached or ensconced in a particular religion, say for example a very close family is in clergy or religion or an uncle is an elder or a bishop of that religion. Things like that. Then it’s really something else. Also for an extreme traditionalist or an uncle or aunt that’s highly superstitious, that’s another thing because then you will be met with things like, “That’s not what we are used to. That’s not the ways of your grandfather, great grandfather,” all that stuff, and uncles and aunts.

There will be a struggle. There will be a fight. You will understand why they don’t share what you share, because what happened to you is really something different. It’s Biblical and spiritual. Speaking of my own experience, you become on fire and then you’re under attack. The worst thing that happens is that people you look up to, that you love, that you’re inspired by, that fuel you, basically, will disagree or dismiss it. That is very hurtful.

Let me give you a Bible verse or a few Bible verses about it, because that’s where we ought to go. Now, for someone who is struggling who has been born again and is just a new Christian, has become saved and there’s a struggle with the parents. Speaking of personal experiences, my sisters and brothers in Christ, you have parents or grandparents or loved ones who are adamantly against your being saved and, of course, you are going to a church that’s also preaching the Word of God and the Bible. I’d like to share some Bible verses.

First is Ephesians 6. There is a struggle inside of you, too, because on the one hand we have to honor our father and our mother. That’s correct. The Ten Commandments says that, and then the New Testament in Ephesians 6. Let’s read it.

Ephesians 6 says, *¹Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. ²Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) ³That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.* That’s Ephesians 6:1-3.

And you know, this is very true. Indeed, we have to honor our parents. Why? Because it honors the Lord, and through them it’s a vehicle by which it honors the Lord. That in itself is really something to honor. We must indeed do that, honor them. These particular verses especially apply to the underaged, meaning 18 and below or 21 and below. Say, for example, I had an acquaintance, mid teens or something, on fire, until the time he was in college. His parents had the frame of mind to send him to the school of engineering, which is pretty good. The world needs engineers. And it’s a noble thing.

But this newly saved Christian wanted to go to Bible school. He felt he had a calling to become a preacher and he didn’t want to waste time. He didn’t want to turn left or right. He just wanted to go straight and follow the Lord. However, at that particular time, he had to obey his parents. So what happened was that he sought the advice of his pastor, and the pastor’s advice was, “You do have to honor them while you’re still under that household.” After much prayer and much seeking in the Word of God, his decision was to go to engineering school, which was fine. However,



after engineering school, he felt the call of God and he entered Bible school. So that's what happened. He honored his father. He was obedient and went to school to become an engineer and got his credentials at about age 21. Fast forward years afterward and his parents got saved. So truly, Romans 8:28 is correct. *Everything works together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose.* That is really wonderful. That's a wonderful story.

So we are talking about the real struggles of a true converted Christian, and we were just discussing one of the things that happens. One real struggle for such a person, for example, resistance from loved ones, having this newfound faith and being that the Lord has already saved this particular person. Any born-again Christian person will meet struggles like that and discouragements, also, and heartaches, definitely.

Now, on the other side of the coin, we do have to honor our father and our mother. However, there comes a point when – and Pastor Tirse does this also to remind you and he reminds us listeners about this – nothing should come before God. The verse says to honor the father and the mother because it's the first commandment promised that it may be well with thee and that thou may live long on the earth. However, there also comes a point in your life as a Christian where God should take precedence. What I'm trying to say is, when it comes to a point where someone important to you – it could be your husband – it could be annoying.

So, basically, anytime naturally you have to follow God, because God has the preeminence. Even the apostle Peter was told by the Pharisees that he must not preach about the

name of Jesus Christ, but Peter said, "It is more needful for us to follow God over man's authority." So that's making a stand, and every Christian will find himself being in a situation where he has to make a stand.

Now, being a Christian doesn't depend on your act. It depends on whether Jesus Christ has you and, conversely, you have Jesus Christ. So, anyway, when it does come to a point, like I was saying before I digressed, whether directly or indirectly, it could be a spouse, it could be a sister, brother, whatever, best friend, father or mother even, grandfather, and we'll see something to the effect whether Jesus did that. Now, naturally, your material things and your social status won't really talk to you and say choose. But then indeed there comes a point sometimes when figuratively there is a fork, a bifurcation. And, then, I'm sure, it's already happened to you as a Christian, I suppose. I'm sure it's already happened. It hasn't happened to me directly. I thank God for that. But let's see what the Bible says about that.

If you have your Bibles, please go to Matthew 10:32-39. Let's begin here because it starts with a promise. This is Jesus Christ talking because it's in red letters, and Jesus Christ is talking here.

³²Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

³³But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Not Peace, but a Sword

³⁴Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

Let me just stop a little bit here. Indeed, Jesus came to save all of us, all of those who are lost,



all the people who are lost, and He prefers peace, naturally. He didn't say, "Peace be with you. I come in peace. My peace I give." It's not like the world's and so on. Now, in this context here, as a Christian you will choose, and this will be really the greatest struggle a Christian will ever have.

And do you know that, for me personally, every day is a fight to choose? I have to choose. The choices that I make happen come every day, no matter how it might affect me, and, I suppose, everybody, whether a new or old Christian. Now, this one makes a point. *Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.* Draw the line on this particular point. The things that you will put outside of the line are the things that God will not like, and the things that are inside the line where hopefully you choose to be are the ones that God would have you do. So continue to verse 35.

³⁵For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

³⁶And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

So basically in these verses, the Lord in His infinite wisdom emphasizes these verses. In a family, it could be that this particular person could do something important for Him, he could say, "No, I won't do it, Lord, because..." for whatever reason, and so on and so forth. Or, "My brothers and sisters don't want me to do it." So essentially, in this scenario, God says, "I'm going to use you. I need you to do something for Me." This is after you're saved, after you and Jesus Christ have been close friends and He's become your Saviour, and then the

Lord will say, "Hey, I need you to do something because there's work to be done so that more people will be saved, more people will come to Heaven rather than to Hell. So I need you to go at the height of Ebola to the Ivory Coast or Sierra Leone. I need you to go there and deliver My message. The Holy Spirit's going to be with you." And right now though, it's at the height of the Ebola virus fiasco. Are you going to go? Or are you not going to go?

That is one struggle. For example, you're ready to go. "Oh, yeah, I'm going to go. Sure. I'm ready. I know how to speak whatever they're speaking." In Sierra Leone, I think, they speak some French. I don't know. Then you say, "I'm going to Sierra Leone. God is calling me there," but then your spouse says, "No, you're not going to go" and so on. Or, quite simply, your father and mother, "No. Who's going to take care of us?" Things like that, whatever their needs are. This is one situation where God is saying, *For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.* Because in this particular instance, Jesus Christ is saying, "It will cost."

So He continues to say in verse 36: *³⁶And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.* Wow, this is pretty big. Talk about struggles. Talk about conflicts. The worse conflict is the one that's inside of you. Forget the one that's outside. You can always run away from it. Like, for example, the shootings in airports and everything, people run the opposite way. You just run the opposite way, but the conflict that's inside of you, that is the conflict that you can't run away from because it will follow you.



So, it's pretty serious stuff. Now, continuing on to Matthew 10:37.

37He that loveth father or mother more than me, [the Lord says,] is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Chew on that for a little while, because I want the benefits of being a child of God and having the blessings of God and the peace of God. "Sure, Lord, I want Your peace, Your brand of peace, the one that makes me sleep at night like a baby, because You and I are in harmony. I want that peace. I won't have nightmares and so on. I want that peace, and, Lord, I want Your strength. I want the courage that comes from You. I want the strength that comes from you."

It's supernatural. Then, you have peace for some reason. It's because Jesus is carrying you. "I want that, Lord, yes, sure I do. My daily needs, Lord." I don't really have to struggle so much. I can eat. I'm out walking in the heat of the day, or something, but then, there's the rub. This is the crux of the matter.

But then, when He says, "Take up my cross. Take up a cross for Me." How about that now? What do you say? "I want Your peace so I can sleep well at night." "I want Your courage so when a problem comes up I have the strength." "I want Your provision. I want Your blessings." But then when He ups the ante to say, "How about this?" Take up a cross. Then what? As a human, are we the kind that will say, "Yes, Lord." If he says, "Go to Sierra Leone where the Ebola virus is happening right now. Go there right now," as an example. Or, "Go to Haiti in the aftermath of the earthquake or the storm. Go there or somewhere where there's disease or there's conflict; there's war. I need

you to go there because...." "I need you to take up this cross because...."

So verse 38 says: ***38And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.*** So, there are many people indeed. Like for example, let me just be clear. I'm not saying it doesn't happen, that a moment of weakness doesn't happen. I'm not being unrealistic about it. In reality, there's a moment of weakness. You don't want to go to a place where there's an epidemic, but, then, listen to what He says. ***38And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.*** ***39He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.***

See, there's a reward. That's in verse 39. So, basically, there's really just one struggle that I was able to discuss and that particular choice.

You know, my friends, as a Christian will you follow God at the expense of people you love? Even at the expense of the love of your own self. Would you? Would you say, of course, still with respect, "Mama, Papa, I love you but then you know that God is number one. You may not understand it, but I will go to that area there in Africa where the Ebola virus is at the expense of my life."

The same understanding, it could be that your family members are not saved. They don't know God, or they don't want to know God; they only know themselves; they only know their desires. So, aside from comforting them, despite hidden difficulties, because you want to follow God, because you want to be worthy of Him, because you want to take your own cross, because you will be worthy of Him and because you will find life if you do follow Him.



Maybe you would say, “What does that mean being born again? What does that mean choosing God over my own family, my own father, my husband, my children and so on. What did you mean God?”

Maybe it’s because you are not yet saved, because you’re not born again, maybe because you haven’t given your faith in Jesus Christ alone, and your trust, for you to be saved by Him.

You know, my friend, Jesus Christ has already died for you on the cross of Calvary and all you have to do is receive Him as your Lord and Saviour. A simple prayer, a simple acceptance in humility, to humble yourself just to say, “Oh, yes, Lord, there’s nothing I can do to ensure I will go to Heaven. I’m never sure.” But the Bible says you can be sure if you receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour, you will be saved, and you will go to Heaven. And then all of these things will be added unto you.