(continued from Part 1 - The Secret of Abiding in Christ | The Cross, Self-Life & True Christian Living)

Brothers, I'm clear that all of this would look very serious to a middle-class, upper-middle-class American looking in on us, even Christians. You people are crazy. This is insane, so and so forth. Listen, it'll be the makings of us. For one thing, it'll start teaching us something we Americans don't know: a little strictness in our lives, and an "other" consciousness. It's a beginning; it's not much, but it's a beginning. And the Lord Jesus knew it was an absolute essential to get anywhere. He drew the line there.

When you move from that point to the next point, as great as you may think what we're discussing is, when you move from there to the next point, you're probably taking the greatest single step, the most gigantic step, the widest point between two distances anywhere in Christian experience. You go from the loss of all outward things…no ownership…you lose that, and you lead that to the loss of the soul. And when you have come to the loss of the soul, the loss of outward property means nothing. When we speak of the loss of the entire soul, we're talking about something in regions that we can't even grasp. We're speaking of depths of comprehension we can't plumb. Heights we can't see. Breadths we cannot distance—the loss of the soul. The loss of the soul.

I see you all so willing to hold the pressure on the outer things. Praise God. I rejoice in that. The Lord rejoices in that. You're still willing. Your hearts are still there, but it's nothing compared to the beginning of the loss of the soul. There's nothing easier to forget than the loss of the soul. You can sit at home with nothing but a floor to sit on and look in an empty living room. Go to the kitchen, a bare cupboard. Down here in the grocery store, eating grapes. One pair of pants, one pair of socks, one pair of shoes, one shirt, and one old coat.

You're nowhere. All you have done, in fact, is symbolize what God wants to do to you inside: reduce you to nothing. If you think we've gotten anywhere in this, you're dreaming. When you get down into the internal matters, this is different. Where are you in dealing with the Lord? I'm actually here tonight to bring you back on course.

I see a people unlike us. I see a people not like us. I see a people so utterly removed from what we are. I see meeting a brother who, no matter what I talk to him about, never refers to I, my, or me. Well, I realize that there are times when the word I, my, or me may have to come out, but there's a world of difference. You can feel the difference. You can smell it and sense it. There's a time when the "I" comes out, and you know it's capital "I."

A brother may have to say, "I don't know." A brother may say, "I believe so." You may have to say that to communicate. And yet, if we could get rid of that, that would even help. We have moved to the internal, and that can't be done by external things. That takes internal involvement. This takes the Lord. In the weeks ahead, we must come to a whole new, deeper experience with the Lord than this group of people has ever known. All I can say to you tonight is that if the Lord gets what he wishes out of these people, there will be some hallmarks. Hallmarks. A hallmark is a

company's symbolic stamp. It's a hallmark. You recognize that company, that organization, by its symbol. It's a hallmark.

You will not criticize a brother no matter what he does, and there will be no exceptions to that statement. Furthermore, you'll not be put out with him, and you will not feel it. Secondly, you'll not complain. You'll not complain about anything. “Gene is putting us at an unfair disadvantage.” What about these responsible brothers, who do things to us that are not fair?

I have two things to answer. We have spent four years here, seeking to raise up men who don't conduct themselves that way. They don't always make it, but they try. Why don't we work it out? Brothers and sisters, they may make a lot of mistakes, and sometimes they do, in fact, do things unfairly, but it is not the tendency of their lives. It may become that someday; I hope not. I hope those brothers will always be harder on themselves than they ever will anyone. As far as that goes, I trust that, as a rule, they'll never correct anybody over anything, no matter what.

We have sought to raise up men in this church who do not behave that way. I trust that you will be raised up as a man who is not like that, too. We are a corporate body, and sometimes it is difficult for everybody to be treated exactly the same; if anybody gets picked on, it's first the single brothers, then the single sisters, and we don't care about them. (laughter) It’s good for them. We'll start treating them nice just as soon as they, especially the single brothers, soon as they're no longer single. (laughter)

Do not complain over anything. As long as we can complain, there's still so much left. “But, Gene, if I don't complain, there's *still* so much left.” Yeah, but not as much. When you're complaining, it's all still there. When you get to the place where you can keep your mouth shut and feel exactly the same way you would if you had it open, you have come a long, long way. When the mouth can close; when finally the mouth can close, death is not far away. You may feel exactly the same, but if the mouth is closed, progress has been made.

To complain over nothing. Oh, may God send the day when we rejoice over what we presently complain about. When we kiss the cross. When we kiss the cross and rejoice over it. When we will, in fact, never be offended over anything. To never be offended over anything. There's not much more that can be said at the end of a sentence like that. One word, and it all comes out. The whole battle is lost. We got through 99% of the hill and in the last one foot, we blew it.

So, we're going to begin to look a little strange. We can't do anything to prevent that. When we started giving up our middle-class American ways, we found they had deeper roots in us than we realized. Another citadel is out there, and that's our American way of talking. When I take a look at that fellow, I shudder. I don't even know how to describe this gentleman. He's sarcastic, glib, light, and on all the time.

Just by observing, I've learned a little about Americans. If two Japanese or Chinese people meet, they don't have to reassure one another that they like each other by talking. We Americans are very sensitive about whether we're liked. We're extremely sensitive in this area. It's part of our culture

to be accepted. The best way we have of showing one another that we like each other is to talk all the time. Do you understand that? To put one another at ease. If there's silence, it means we're mad at one another.

That's one little bitty look at this fellow. How little we would say under the permission of Jesus Christ. I never met Him personally while He was on this earth, but if I had…if I came back to the 20th century and gave you some idea of what He was like, the one thing I would say is there was no end to His infinite variety. I think I would probably also say He didn't talk very much. He didn't talk a great deal. Everything that He said can be typed out on about 20 pages of a typewriter that has been recorded for us. What's recorded that He said is very small. That's rather incredible. Maybe 25 pages, I'm not sure. I've seen all the words of Jesus, and there aren't very many of them. He didn't talk very much…and we talk all the time.

And so much of it is flippant sarcasm. That's just where our minds have been programmed to be, since the day we were old enough to talk. Parents started us off. You know, the thing of "baby talk" is not an international thing. We have not been programmed to be an inner people. We are the most outward people on this earth. Italians talk a little bit more, but they have some inner appreciation. The American people have virtually none. I'm not picking on you. I'm not picking on me. I want you to know we've got a long way to go, brother; that there's a quarter of a pound between the roof of your mouth and the bottom of your chin, that is, in fact, the biggest single barrier between you and Jesus Christ…and that citadel must fall.

So much of the inner man will go. I don't know how to even begin to describe the American personality. I'll go a little further. We already discussed this: your disposition. Have you defended your disposition lately? Are we still doing it? Be the way I am; this is how I look at things. I can handle that. Let me do it. Look here. I like what we did here. Isn't it neat what we did? But Gene, take that away, and you take away the whole reason for living.

Someone once said the one thing that a man lives for is to be appreciated. And he's correct. This book he wrote, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, show appreciation. People want appreciation. I want to be appreciated, and so do you. Dear brother, dear sister, that's got to die. Drawing attention to your own personality so someone will say, "Gee, what a neat guy(girl)." The disposition itself goes; the whole man goes.

One other note I made to myself was this: May God help us not to climb up some spiritual ladder we have not really attained. May I remind you of a little message we brought way back at the beginning of the summer: when we lie to others, we lie to ourselves, and finally we even lie to God. Do you remember that? When we tell others, "I have not sinned." Then we tell ourselves, "I have not sinned." And then we tell God, "I have not sinned." When you begin to live out the story of being a spiritual person, and people believe it, and you begin to believe it, you begin to believe what they believe. Then you'll even begin acting that way before the Father, expecting to fool him. Come on, have mercy on us all. Brother, don't climb my ladder. Don't climb the church's ladder. Don't build on another man's foundation. Start at the bottom with no claims on anyone else, and

be what you are…and brother, you're not much. I'm not much, and beware of the man who seems to be much. There is no such man.

I want to say again, let us forget our history. We did not come from the bosom of Martin Luther, nor Watchman Nee. We are some sinners, Gentiles in fact, in Isla Vista, one of the filthiest holes in the world, saved by the grace of Jesus Christ. Barely hanging on to salvation itself. We have nothing. We're lazy, unspiritual men and women. The only thing holding us together is the wonder of grace standing before our eyes. A radical change must come among the saints in Isla Vista. It is more radical than anything that I have the gift from God to explain. It will affect our mind; it will affect our voice; it will affect our tongue. It will radically alter our disposition and our personality. It will take away our very existence. Most of all, the inner citadel of our feelings will fall. We will have nothing, and we will be nothing.

“Gene, please help us know how this can happen.” Well, I'm not going to give you the whole answer tonight, but I'm going to give you step one. I don't care if you've already done this; personally, I must admit, I'm not satisfied. A few days ago, in my room, I walked up and down very softly, very quietly, very slowly, and I spoke out loud in the most conversational voice I have. I brought everything I talked to you about tonight to the Lord, and I said, "Lord, these things have all got to go. I give them to you, and I give my life to you to be worked on. These things must go, and Father, when they don't go, I've got to deal radically with them in my life.” I cannot stop this war. Whether I win or lose is immaterial; whether I'm making progress or not is immaterial; whether the Lord's getting any ground is not material. The important thing is that the battle continues.

My sisters and my brothers, there has got to be a coming to the Lord more refined than any of us have known to date. I want to meet some single brothers who put me to shame, who won't meet me the way I am used to meeting my fellow Americans. I want to be put down by some single brothers who won't give in to my weaknesses.

Sometimes I don't grow weary in this, but I grow lonely in this. I go into a room, and there it is so obvious that we all need to turn to the Lord. Why does it have to be me who turns folks to the Lord? I'm not complaining. I do it with joy; it's fun. Why won't you turn me to the Lord? Well, I know some of you do frequently. Praise the Lord, I'm just trying to jack this thing up a little bit. Why won't you turn me to the Lord? Why won't you catch me off guard, brother? Why won't you walk into the store and turn it to the Lord? Have you ever called a prayer meeting over in the store? I bet you…I'm probably the only brother that's ever called a prayer meeting in the grocery store. Am I the only brother with a spirit so strong? Have you not got a spirit?

There is nothing like ritual. Y'all eat lunch together every day, I know you do. It just kind of goes from sop to syrup, and then it goes good…and then it dies. Somebody had a strong spirit and got it started. Do you know why it died? It got in a rut; there was nothing new. Where is a new strong spirit that can walk on the spot? Gee, that's exciting, Gene, let's do that. That's not enough. None of this is enough. There has got to be a total end to being. Then, in the process, half dies and the

other half lives; there has also got to be a total living to Jesus Christ. We have a long way to go. Tonight is basically a negative message. Brother and sister, I ask you again to come back to the Lord, raise standards, and get violent. Come up with some new things in new territories that have not been touched so far.

Youth is for getting saved, giving your life to the Lord, and getting married. It's what youth is for. Middle age is for serving the Lord. Old age is for being a testimony to his faithfulness. To the single sisters, you're really banking on me to get these brothers to get married. I think the single sisters have got to face a heavy thing. I mean, that is, that many of you will not, in fact, be married. Now, sister, you can struggle with the next 20 or 30 years of your life, or you can settle today that you will be the Lord's and give your passion and your love to Him.

Single sisters, I want you to know the church of Jesus Christ depends on you. Utterly dependent on you. Totally dependent on your example. To be an example of what the bride of Jesus Christ is like. To the married sisters, I would say…boy, the married sisters feel so condemned sometimes about having children and having a home. You must not feel that way. We don't sit around here encouraging people to get married and then get condemned over it. You have got to learn to be an outward help, not always an inward one, to your husband to go on with the Lord and not be a hindrance to him as he leaps forward. Therein, you must be very careful.

But sister, I'm more concerned about something else: your tongue. Your tongue. I would say to a married sister, "Oh, married sister, be so careful about what you say." Your great damage to your husband often comes from what you say about others. Sometimes the church of Christ is destroyed initially by a wife saying something to her husband, and it is interesting that in the scripture, there is a pointed word said to sisters whose husbands are elders, whose husbands are servants, and whose husbands are workers. You carry a triple responsibility. Sometimes Eve's seed is planted in a dear brother's heart. He would never have thought about it if his wife had not planted it there. If you wish to do battle, do battle there: end negative discussion of other saints, situations, and spiritual conditions in the Lord's house.

I have only walked around the outer edges of this thing. I have not at all tonight dealt with the main thing. The main thing is this. Step one: we must go to the Lord and give Him our lives to be brought to an utter death. I would ask you to bring everything that you can name to Him; everything, and ask Him to bring it to an end. This is the negative. One day we will come to the positive, but we need a deep impression of the negative. I ask you to be so practical with the Lord tomorrow. Try to live out tomorrow in the sense of tonight…and be my help to do the same.

I want you to know the Lord's making some progress. Not much, but we are not where we were, generally speaking, 3 months ago. Some of us haven't moved a peg, but there's been a little work in general among the Lord's people. Praise the Lord, a better day is coming. I have not given you all the help there is for this; the Lord didn't allow this summer to be a time to give us much help. This has been a pretty dry summer for spiritual revival, but it has been a time to get an idea of what the Lord is after.

You have been reading some dear chapters on humility. Have we had time with chapter 12? I passed it out, but nothing was done. May I ask you to turn that room over there into a 24-hour intercession that God brings this church to be nothing. That we might have an example as clear as the life and testimony of Madame Guyon, and that is not, in fact, enough; that we must be the testimony of Jesus Christ; that we must be the bride's own testimony.

Brother, sister, will you make this something that we bombard heaven with? Will you go to the Lord and make this a real thing of prayer? In doing it, say to the Lord, by Your Spirit within me, show me clearly the territory you're demanding in my life. Let's get back to being ruthless with ourselves and with one another, and so sensitive to our helpless condition before the Lord. If you see me fall short of that which I speak, I beg you, let part of your prayer be, “Lord, I'll not take Gene as my example.” If you do that, we're all ruined; take the Lord, not as your example, but as your footsteps.

Brothers, I tell you, right up here is a mind that can hardly even think in the terms that we must live in. We can hardly even articulate this. Watch our testimonies in the meeting. We hardly even know how to talk about this subject; how far we have to go, how much we need to pray. I beg you to be bold. Don't go whining and whimpering. Turn those prayers to the Lord. Challenge Him with His own faithfulness. Speak to the Lord's triumph, for He has triumphed.

Father, bring every one of us individually and the church corporately to utter death till there is no feeling, until we are in the name that You can begin to be All. If it takes a lifetime, Lord, we're committed. We are forever committed to this work in our lives. Change us, alter us, so that when men meet us, they will know we live in a very confined place; that we are not privileged to wander all over with our thoughts and our words, but that we live a very strict life before the Lord. A life of constantly being put to death to our own desires, whatever they are. Come to the Lord and raise a standard higher than my words can raise. Praise the Lord.