John 5:19, *Jesus therefore answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself unless it is something He sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in a like manner."* Whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does. The Son can do nothing of Himself unless He sees the Father do it.

Verse 20, for some reason, that thing of seeing, and that thing of the Son cooperating with the Father, the Son looking at the Father always has in it the element of love. *For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing. And greater works than these will He show Him, that you may marvel.* And that, brothers and sisters, was the resurrection. Well, that is the drama of something that had never happened on this earth: a man totally dependent on God. His name was Jesus Christ, and He was totally dependent on the Father. The world had not seen anyone totally dependent on the Father.

God created man, but He had never entered human history; not in experience. When that thing of God being only God changed, a second experience came, and now there were two. God experiencing being God, and now, for the first time, a man is experiencing being God, but how does that man experience being God? By total dependence upon the Father. This had never happened to a human being before, and that's what we have read in John 5: a man totally dependent on God.

Now, He comes toward the end of His last day on earth; His last full day on earth. He knows that He has to say something to indicate a third situation. In John 15, if you'll forget man completely… Let's read John 15, the first few verses - There are vines, many vines, but only one of them is real. I am the real vine, and my Father is the vine dresser. The Father is about to work on the Lord Jesus Christ. Now ask me, how did He become the vine? Before you tell me, I want the highest possible answer you can give. Please draw your answer from John 15, and use the vocabulary of John 15. I want you to draw on what we've learned about the Lord. If somebody can give me the right answer, I'll be thrilled. I want you to tell me how He earned the right to make that statement.

By first being a branch Himself.

You said it over and over. He abided in the Father, but I couldn't accept that He was rooted in the Father. The Father was the root; the Father was the vine, and Jesus was the branch. He earned the right to make that statement. From John 1 through John 13, you see the story of a branch. The Father was the vine, and Jesus Christ had been nothing but a branch. God has got to open our eyes more deeply to this.

Brothers and sisters, I don't know how to say it. He could never say anything for us to be without first being it Himself. He cannot say to you, "You be a branch, and Me be a vine," without His having first been a branch. Do you want to know what a branch is and how you abide in the Lord Jesus? People have been talking about abiding in the Lord since the second century. I've heard message after message after message about how to abide in the Lord. It's 15,000 different things that will get you so under bondage.

Do you want to know how to abide in the Lord? Read John 1 through 13, and watch Jesus Christ abide in the vine. So, all of you were right, but I wanted that part brought out, brother. Because unless you can see the Lord Jesus abiding, you'll never know how to abide. We need a consummation…we need to be consumed with the sight of our Lord abiding.

I am the true vine; my Father is the vine dresser. The way He was promoted from a branch to the vine was by the Father's pruning of Him. Watch. Each vine in Me that does not bear fruit…turn it around. I was a branch to my Father, and I bore fruit. He did not take Me away. And every branch that bears fruit…I did bear fruit. What did the Father do to Me? He pruned me that I might bear more fruit. **Audience:** You can really see it in His life.

And He bore fruit. Praise the Lord. *You are already clean because of the words which I have spoken to you.* Praise God, Jesus Christ was clean by the word that was always spoken in Him. I abided in my Father, and He abided in Me. And I, the branch, could do nothing of Myself unless I abode in the vine. Now, the point: you can do nothing unless you abide in Me.

When Jesus Christ walked into that room, that portico, and healed that lame, impotent man, He did it by simply abiding in the vine. So you cannot, unless you abide in Me. *My Father is the vine; I am the branch. He who abides in my Father and My Father in him, he bears fruit. Apart from My Father, I can do nothing.* I'll read it again. I am the vine because I was once the branch. He who abides in Me, just as I abode in the Father, and as I abide in you, just as my Father abode in Me. I bore fruit, so you bear fruit, for as I could do nothing apart from My Father, so now you can do nothing apart from Me.

So, brothers, in John 5, we see a Christian life being lived out by the only Christian. That was the Father's life. Now, the unique experience of one man, the Son of God, having that same experience. Now, suddenly, in John 15, this beautiful history of life, this glorious experience, this magnificent relationship, this unutterable, incomparable experience known by no one but God and Christ, suddenly, historically, gloriously shifts. And the invitation is given to others to join this two-person experience.

That experience can't be compromised. That experience can't be cheated. It can't be watered down. And somebody has got to stand in the third place. In fact, it is only second place, because even the Father had never had this experience. So, it was the Father and the Son having the experience. Now then, it is a third person, and who has the experience? Who? Us, with the Son, in the Father. Us, with the Father, in the Son. So there are two experiences: the Son experiencing this relationship with the Father and the Father experiencing this relationship with the Son.

Now there is the disciple, you, experiencing the same experience with this duality. The Father and the Son now experience with you what the Son once experienced with the Father. I tell you the Father gets joy out of re-experiencing His experience with the Son. All He needs is somebody who will hold their nose and jump. It'll take a long time for us to understand that experience.

Alright, let us listen to a disciple who one day decided he would, in fact, walk this way.

Galatians 2:20. You've read it a thousand times or at least a dozen. *I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God.* I believe you're all aware that it should read, "I live by the faith *of* the Son of God," and I don't know why the New American doesn't translate it that way. It doesn't give it a little note in the margin, either. I live by the faith *of* the Son of God. He loved me, and He delivered Himself up for me. It's the last part that I want you to look at. *He delivered Himself up for me.*

He delivered Himself up for me. Those last six words, what is the deep meaning of that? What is the deep meaning of that? It was the deepest meaning I know…the deepest meaning I know was delivered to you on the night we talked about the Lord dying, but give it to me in a whole, complete statement that we can all understand.

He allowed Himself to die. Now, this is closer, much, much closer. All right, I'll help you. Christ had to do something even the Father could not do. This, I believe, is what made Him redeemer, but it was a legitimate question; this, I believe, was the last moment in yielding Himself to death that He had to do alone. This is where He really earned His saviorhood that no one else can have.

Now, listen. The word "Himself" is the key here. He delivered "*self"* up for me. He took the nature, "self," and put that self on the cross to death. What self did he deliver up? *His* self-life was delivered up. Until then, Jesus said, "Apart from the Father, I can do nothing." There was *"I"* in there, but in the last moment on the cross, He delivered the "I" up. Now the "I" is put to death. He took not only the self, but He also took…He really took *the* self, the only real *self* there was. If you please, the only *unfallen self* there ever was, and He allowed something unfallen to go to the cross and die. He took the self-nature and put it to death.

Now, brothers, praise the Lord that never happened; not even to the Lord. The Lord Jesus could not say, "It is no longer I that lives but the Father." He never made that statement. He never said, "No longer I, but the Father." He said, "I put Myself in subjection at all times to the Father." He could not say "I no longer exist," but in the last moment on the cross He took His self-nature and put it to death.

John 15. Now please tell me what I'm about to say. **Audience:** He became one with the Father.

Alright. Wonderful. **Audience:** The vine became the branch.

The branch became the vine. But now, look at Galatians 2. Alright, I've changed the subject. I'm now in Galatians. Do the same thing in Galatians as we did in John. *He Lost The "I."* There was no longer a Christ; He was put away. The "I" was dead and killed. Now, He's no longer the branch; He's the vine. Whatever has happened to Him has happened to me.

Now then, I don't say I have died in the Lord and can do nothing. I don't say I can do nothing; I have been dead; when His self died, He took all other selves and put them to death, too. We are not, in fact, putting ourselves in subjection to the Lord Jesus as He put Himself in subjection to the

Father. That is over. That He had to do to earn the last second on the cross; to do something there: that was to eliminate you.

After the cross, the Lord Jesus could say, "It is no longer I that live, but the Father lives in me, and the life I now live…I live through the Father. Do you in fact believe that such an experience is obtainable for you? YES. At least we want to. We want to believe that. You really want to believe it. Well, do you believe the Lord Jesus did that? Yes, then you're halfway home. Halfway. The last half takes a little longer.

You're going to hold an auction this weekend. That's to get rid of our outer things. The Lord Jesus Christ is holding an auction, a rummage sale. I want to get you clear. You better be in the process of getting rid of the outer, or there won't be any riddance of the inner, because you start with the outer, and that's where you usually find out how little of the inner has been given.

I have marveled in the last few months at those of us who lived in all of this and thought we loved the Lord so much. In fact, I never knew the world we were dragging around by. Now, is that not true, brother? In fact, it has only been in the last month or two that I think we've got anywhere near…stock worth crucifying…crucifiable stock.

Brothers and sisters, better be rid of all the outward. “Well, Gene, I've got a few problems.” Well, I think we all have, and when it starts hitting home, there are 10,000 good reasons why. Aren't there? Always. It's only been recently that we started getting down to firm ground. Really, now there are 15,000 good reasons, but I don't know any other way to do it than do it totally. That's right…and I don't think you all agree. “Wow. Gene, that's a little risky.” That's right. That's why the Lord Jesus said, "Go give it to the poor."

Brothers and sisters, give it to the poor. I believe I love the Lord for that so much. He did not say, "Go give it to Judas Iscariot." He said…he was the treasurer…He said, "Go give it to the poor." What you can't sell, give away. Some of you are having a hard time giving it or selling it, taking it out and throwing it in a ditch. Get up on top of a tall building and throw it out of a window, because the message tonight is irrelevant without the first part.

I've come to learn that, as drastic as the outward act might appear, it is, in fact, very superficial. It really is. It's a rare act, I agree, but not one to boast in. It is really a superficial act. The 12 disciples lived in that act for three or four years and had got nowhere. Instead, they had grown in pride and a little spiritual understanding. It was not till the cross was applied.

Now, I am just telling you I will not back up any further. Here I stand. I can do no other. God help us. We've got to become a people with nothing outward, or we will have no testimony for the Lord taking away everything that is in us. We have got to be nothing outward before we can be nothing in. Now, for some of us, that means not only getting rid of the outward, but also taking care of things in our past. I believe I mentioned this in passing; I don't think any brother or sister in this room is going to get anywhere with the Lord until you've rectified things in the past.

Let me tell you something. I sat down…and the Lord knows I'm trying, even right now…I kept looking and tried to list every debt I owed on this earth as far back as I could remember. I think I told you that I have two things in my possession now that I don't know how to return. One is a book, and I can't find the book. I finally located the pastor from whom I borrowed it. And to show you what a great Christian I am, I can't even remember what the second thing is. Oh, I do; it's another book. I can't locate that book either, but I know they're somewhere. I haven't thrown them away because I've kept them. For a long time I didn't know where the two fellows were. I finally put forth the effort to find out where they were; now I have to find the books.

We've got to be that strict with ourselves. Is there a fine you haven't paid? I am really after you. A debt you haven't paid. Some of us tend to rack up debts. I don't care if it takes you the rest of your life; you better start paying them all back. If we are to be what God wants us to be and do what God wants us to do, we have to be able to stand before men with a conscience as clear as crystal. Otherwise, something will always hold us back.

(Continued in Part 2 - *Radical Spiritual Transformation | Dying to Self and Following Jesus*)