
VCL International
VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIVING CONFERENCE

EXTERNAL/INTERNAL

Lesson Transcript by Bill Houck

I'm really thankful to be here with you and share the EXternal deception and the INternal truth of Christ's life living within us. Please turn with me in your materials to the lesson called "External/Internal." What I intend to do in the next few minutes is help you see a major deception of the world. A deception that I bought into for a number of years. I, also, want to help you learn how to experience the internal life of Jesus Christ and see how Christ living His life out through you functions practically today.

Many Christians are deceived into thinking that life is found in external circumstances and external things. Actually, some of us have even been deceived into thinking that service for Jesus will bring us meaning or happiness, which is not the truth. So, look with me at your explanation page. You have a short Scripture, 2 Corinthians 4:18, right in the center of the page. Let me read it to you in context. Verses 16 through 18 say: "Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Our focus should not be on the things which we can see, but our focus should be on the things we cannot see. God, His life within us empowering, should be our focus. Look with me at your explanation. Read along with me please. "How have you been pursuing happiness?" How have you been doing that in your life? "Jesus said that life does not consist in the abundance of things

that a man possesses (Luke 12:15). Rather, life is to be found INternally, not EXternally. Yet we are tremendously influenced by what the world tells us is important. Most Christians easily stand against the idea that fulfillment is found in drugs or alcohol or illicit sex—and yet, more often succumb to the seductive idea that education determines success or that financial security assures happiness or that psychological understanding provides satisfactory answers to life's problems."

Let me share with you a little bit of testimony from my life. I did not come to know the Lord until I was 30 years of age. Before that time, I looked to many of these things for fulfillment and happiness in life. Actually, until the time I was 30-some years of age, my gods were sex, drugs, and speed. I liked sex a lot. I liked doing drugs and alcohol a whole bunch. And I liked going fast on anything—cars, motorcycles, boats, down a ski slope, out of an airplane free falling—whatever it took to get that rush of speed. Those were the gods in my life and I worshiped them at every available opportunity.

After I got out of the military service, I used my GI Bill and went to college and studied psychology because I knew I had a lot of problems. But, pride being what it is, I didn't really ask anybody for the answers, you know. What I wanted to do was to get out there and find the answers. My thought was pretty good, "If I find the answers then I can show those answers to somebody else someday and help that person find the answers." Well, after several years of study, expending my GI Bill, and then going into a practical internship ministering with psychological techniques to juvenile delinquents, I found out that the ways of

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the world, they flunk. They do not work in practical life circumstances.

Shortly thereafter through a series of circumstances, I met the Lord Jesus Christ in a personal way. A number of years later, I met the ministry of Victorious Christian Living and through the teachings and the understanding of the materials I want to share with you today, I began to see the deceptions in my life.

I actually had a contest with a guy at the steel mill where I worked 22 years. He had a T-shirt that said, "He who dies with the most toys wins." I wanted one of those T-shirts. You know what, he wouldn't tell me where he got it. Do you know why? Because he was one-up on me. He had something I didn't have. But I WANTED that T-shirt. We would compete all the time in the steel mill for toys. If somebody got a boat, somebody else would get a bigger boat, somebody else would get a faster boat, somebody else would get a shinier boat. If somebody got a tent, somebody else would get a topper for his pickup, and somebody else would get a camper. Then, someone would get a motor home. Then, somebody would get something to pull behind his motor home. All the time we were in this competition. That's all a deception. None of those things bring fulfillment and meaning to life.

Finish with me the introductory page. "Where is life? Could Jesus say to us that we are unwilling to come to Him to have life?" Could He say that to you right now? Actually, let me ask you a hard question. Why are you here? Why are you sitting here listening to me today? Why did you come? Let me explain to you why I came here. I came here because I really care about you and your walk with the Lord Jesus Christ. There's no other meaning or purpose for me to be here other than I see a lot of people deceived, floundering around, and functioning by the world's circumstances. I want to help you see the lies that the Devil and the world bombard us with consistently, so that you can experience the truth.

The truth is Jesus Christ. The only valuable experience in all that there is—a direct, personal relationship with Jesus Christ—His life. But you first need to understand how you're deceived and then I'll explain the truth to you.

THE DECEPTION OF EXTERNAL FULFILLMENT (Diagram 130-A)

Turn with me to your first diagram, 130-A, "The Deception of External Fulfillment." Isn't it true as you look at this **key diagram** in this message, that if you could put little plus signs in all of those ovals around the big center circle, that you would be happy? Isn't that true? See, none of these things around the circle in and of themselves are sinful. Let's go around the circle together and look at them.

Let's start right at the top with marriage. I am married to Juli. Juli and I are in our 27th year of marriage. I went through the 1st through 8th grades and there were 8 people in my class, 6 guys and 2 girls. As a freshman, I went to high school and the first day I discovered there were 418 freshmen and there were 4 classes in that school. I got hopelessly lost. By 6th hour, I was devastated. I sat down in study hall across the table from the most beautiful woman I had ever seen in my life.

"Juli Holmes, my name is Bill Houck."

This woman! I went home that day and I told my mom. She said, "How was your day?" I said, "I met the most beautiful woman in study hall, Juli Holmes. I think that's the girl I want to marry."

It took me 4 years of high school, dating all of her friends, before I finally got her to realize that I was alive. She started dating me and 2 years later we got married and 27 years later we are still married and having a great relationship. I wanted Juli really, really bad but, you know, within 12 hours of being married to her, I realized that somewhere along the line I got deceived, that this

wasn't all that I thought it was going to be. How many of you got married and realized shortly after the wedding ceremony was over, that everything you thought was going to be there didn't necessarily happen? Marriage in and of itself won't fulfill you.

How about a job? I was talking to a businessman the other day, and he was saying, "Years ago I thought when I get to this economic level, then I'll be happy." Now he is at this rung, he said, "I finally broke the six-digit mark, I'm at this rung," and he says, "you know what, when I get to that rung, then, I think I will be happy." That happens to many of us in the job world, we think when we get to the next level then we'll be happy. That's not it. It's not getting to the next level in the job that makes us happy, significant, and fulfilled. It's not getting to that next rung that makes you significant, it's something else.

Look with me at health. A couple of years ago I got to the end of the year and I went through the annual trek of evaluating. How many of you do that? I do that periodically. I discovered at the end of that year, really, practically, if I know the Lord Jesus and I am walking with Him and I am physically healthy there isn't anything else that really matters. Everything else you can just do away with, you know, clothes, stuff, if you're healthy. But what if you're not healthy? What if you're somebody like Joni Eareckson Tada who can only turn her head a little bit back and forth like this? What if your earth suit, your body, doesn't function? Can you still be happy, significant, and contributing meaningfully to society? Absolutely, you can. Health is not the determining factor.

Neither is your location. Juli and I bought a nice little house in town and we lived there, but I got claustrophobic. When I opened the shade on my bedroom window, I was looking into the neighbor's bedroom window. Depending on which one of them was looking out at me, it was either a good day or a bad day. We decided that

what we needed to do was move out-of-town. So we went on a motorcycle ride and we saw this knoll in a subdivision and I said, "That's the place; that's where we need to build a home." She said, "Well, it's only a few miles from town, I guess that will work." So I built my own house just the way I wanted it on top of this hill. That was 20 years ago. I put a new roof on this summer. You know what, that house is never done; it's never complete; it's never finished; it's never up to date; it's always calling to me for attention. I discovered just 2 years ago, I'll never own that thing. Even when I get it all paid off, if I don't pay my taxes "my uncle" will repossess it. He's the one who really owns it. So, my deception was: "When I get that house then I'll be happy. When I get that house done I'll be happy." Juli was thinking, "When I get that house decorated then I'll be happy." Not true. See, that doesn't make you happy.

If I just made a little more money, then I'd have enough. How much is enough? Someone has asked some of the most influential rich people in the world, "When is it enough?" They said: "The next million or the next billion. That's when it's enough." Money in and of itself has never satisfied.

How about children? Juli wanted to have children. One of the endearing things about her when I met her was she said, "I want to have 12 kids." I was thinking this is a woman who likes to have sex. This is the woman I want to marry. Twelve kids! All right! But then, I told her she had to wait 5 years before she could have any babies. "Because," I said, "if you can put up with me for 5 years, you'll stick with me for the duration—I'm not going to have my kids go through a divorce." So, 5 years later we began to have children. Our first baby went right up to the day that she was meant to be born and rolling over to exit Juli's birth canal she strangled herself on her umbilical cord and she died. She died in the process of being born. That rocked my world and destroyed my wife's world.

Juli went looking for solutions to life because of that incident. That led her to a radical experience with Jesus Christ. Me, I went for better drugs and stronger alcohol to numb the pain. Juli found the truth. After a year and a half of poking and prodding at her Christianity, I finally discovered that she had something vital and I surrendered my life to the Lord Jesus Christ. Now we have 2 children, Monica and Kristopher. Monica is 21 and Kristopher is 19. Those children to this day continue to be a joy and a challenge to my life, but in and of themselves, they do not provide happiness or significance.

How about a church? We spent a year looking for the best church we could find. Do you know what the conclusion was after searching a year? There isn't a perfect church. The bottom line is if there was a perfect church and Juli and I joined it, it wouldn't be perfect anymore. See, you can't find the perfect church; that will not make you happy.

How about friends? If you just had one good friend that you could go to and bare your soul to, wouldn't that be nice? But you know what happens when you get that one friend that you can go to and bare your soul to, then you forget going to your best friend and baring your soul to Him because you go to somebody with flesh on rather than a Spirit.

How about looks? How many of us would just like to have a little more here [pointing to hair] or a little more here [pointing to shoulders] or a little less here [pointing to stomach]? Looking different: if I could just look better then I'd be happy, then I would be significant. It's a lie. It doesn't work. That's not real.

Things: if I just had more stuff. I'm staying at a guy's house who has a float-deck boat. When I first saw it, I said, "I need a boat; I want a boat." Then we talked for 25 minutes and he told me all the problems with the boat. My conclusion was I don't need a boat; I don't want a boat; I don't

want one more thing in my life to fix. As soon as you get things, then you have to fix them, then you have to maintain them. Things are not the solution to life.

How about leisure? If you just had enough stuff, just had enough time to play with it, then you'd be happy, right? The worst times for me are the times when I am not involved in anything. You know why? Because I get involved in things that my heavenly Father would not have me involved with. Now the world says you need time for yourself. God says, "You need more time, more intimacy with Me. You don't need time to just lay around, you need time fellowshiping with Me, interacting with Me, and being about the making of disciples." That is the commission God has given us.

Look with me in the center of this diagram. This is really the important part—the control center. Who is in the control center? Self. Self is ruling. If you spell self backwards and put an "h" on it you have a word called "flesh." Flesh is ruling this person. Let me share with you a man who has gone the full gamut, so to speak, in this circle and that's a guy called Solomon. You see on your diagram it says Ecclesiastes, Chapter 2, verses 1 through 11. Here's what it says:

I said to myself, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure. So enjoy yourself." And behold, it too was futility. I said of laughter, "It is madness," and of pleasure, "What does it accomplish?" I explored with my mind how to stimulate my body with wine while my mind was guiding me wisely, and how to take hold of folly, until I could see what good there is for the sons of men to do under heaven the few years of their lives. I enlarged my works: I built houses for myself, I planted vineyards for myself; I made

gardens and parks for myself, and I planted in them all kinds of fruit trees; I made ponds of water for myself from which to irrigate a forest of growing trees. I bought male and female slaves, and I had homeborn slaves. Also I possessed flocks and herds larger than all who had preceded me in Jerusalem. Also, I collected for myself silver and gold, and the treasure of kings and provinces. I provided for myself male and female singers and the pleasures of men—many concubines. Then I became great and increased more than all who preceded me in Jerusalem. My wisdom also stood by me. And all that my eyes desired I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor and this was my reward for all my labor. Thus I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and **behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun.**

Here’s Solomon. He’s got more money than anybody else. He’s got more slaves. This guy had 700 concubines and 300 wives, a thousand women. He had everything you could imagine. After accumulating all that, the smartest man in the world said, “It’s futility; it’s not worth it.” So, where is your focus? Is your focus on things?

THE CHRISTIAN’S DECEPTION OF EXTERNAL FULFILLMENT (Diagram 130-A1)

Look with me at your next diagram, 130-A1, “The Christian’s Deception of External Fulfillment.” What happens to many of us is that we get saved by God’s wonderful grace and then we think that we need to perform to keep that salvation. That’s a lie. What happens is we often shift our focus from the Lord Jesus Christ to me and what I am doing for Jesus. That’s wrong. That’s a deception. Look at all these external things that have been added: “Witnessing for Christ.” Is that a good thing? Sure. “Giving to good causes.” Oh, yeah. “Helping Others,” “Developing Hospitality,” doing this, doing that, “Leading Bible Studies,” doing these things, attending those meetings. Are all those things good? Oh, sure, but if you’re doing those things to provide fulfillment, meaning, and significance in life, then you’re functioning in a way contrary to the way God would have you live. What’s actually happening here? I was counseling one day and a man next to me was really excited. He could hardly wait for me to get done. He had explained this diagram to a woman and the woman said, “I see it. I’m a human *doing*. God designed me to be a human *being*, but I’m not being, I’m doing all of this stuff.” The focus becomes on the things that we do. Any of those things can become an idol in your life, even serving the Lord Jesus Christ.

EVERYTHING BUT GOD (Diagram 130-B)

Look with me at your next diagram, 130-B, “Everything but God.” What happens in many people’s lives is, rather than going to God, they go to something else or someone else. I want to read to you Jeremiah, Chapter 2, verse 13, “For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, / The fountain of living waters, / To hew for themselves cisterns, / Broken cisterns, / That can hold no water.” So there are two things. First, they forsake God and second, they created cisterns of their own. God designed us to experience Him as living water. Do you remember Jesus talking to the Samaritan woman in John Chapter 4? She’s talking about water out of the

well and He's talking about water flowing up from inside. God wants to fill us with His living water.

But you see what happens is we go to another source. We may call to a friend for advice. We may even turn to a beautiful biblical counselor. Oftentimes, I have people come and they lay this whole scenario out before me and I'll ask them, "So, what does God have to say about that?"

"We haven't talked to God about that yet."

"When do you think you should talk to Him?"

You see, they come to somebody else rather than going to Him. You don't want to go to somebody else, you want to go to God.

You may use food to fill in the vacuum. I watched a video the other day of Patsy Clairmont. She put this list on her refrigerator door, and any time she went to get food out of that refrigerator, she had to write on the list why she was eating. She would write things like this, "I'm eating because I'm tired. I'm eating because I'm excited. I'm eating because I'm bored. I'm eating because I'm frustrated. I'm eating because I'm mad at my husband. I'm eating because the dog peed on the carpet." All these different reasons and at the end of the day she discovered very seldom did she eat because she was hungry. Why? Because we have this something inside us we want to fill, so we look for something to put in there to fill it. Maybe food is that in your life.

How about using uppers, downers, or alcohol to relieve anxiety or depression? I did that for 14 years. For fourteen years, I was on a daily basis smoking dope, drinking beer, and many other things to take the rough edges off of the world. Uppers and downers were a way of life for me. Speed was something I did on a regular basis, flying for days. All of those things were because I didn't like life. I didn't like the way it was, and

I found a pretty good chemical creation where I could alter life to where I enjoyed it. But all of that was sin. I was looking to those things to fulfill me—trying to figure out with my mind by going to study psychology. Why? So that I could understand how I worked, so I could get me to work the way I wanted.

Buy something to distract you from the pain. When the going gets tough, the tough go shopping. Right? Yeah, buy some new threads, then I'll feel good about me. Isn't that true? No, it's not true.

Get angry, that will get results. How about that? Work harder to overcome it. Pull yourself up by the old bootstraps, a little more commitment, try a little harder, that will get her done. Right? God wants you to surrender, not try harder. Get busy and you'll forget all about it. Does that work? Can you get busy enough working that for a brief moment of time you don't think about your problems? Sure, but as soon as you get unbusy do they come back? You bet they do. So, that doesn't work either.

Give money away. That will soothe it. If you have enough money, you can do that.

Get divorced or get a new spouse. Will that work? No, that doesn't work. In my counseling experience all the people who have gone through the process of divorce say they thought this would simplify their lives, that everything would be better if they could just get that other person out of there. Never, never, in the years I've been involved with counseling, has that been the truth. Every time it got worse for them and worse for the children involved. That's not the solution.

Spend time sleeping to escape overwhelming life situations. How many of you, like me, have days when the alarm goes off you just want to pull the covers up over your head and just stay in bed all day and forget all about it? Just hide out. On a regular basis, I want to do that. I do not want to get up and face the challenges of the day. What I

have discovered is the best thing to do is pull the covers down, look directly up to my heavenly Father, and say, "I can not survive this day without You." Before my body ever splits the sheets, "I surrender my life to You, and I want to be your body today. I am a living sacrifice unto You. I can't get out of bed; I don't want to get out of bed. So, when my body gets out of bed, it's You doing it through me." When I live life that way, the day is significantly different.

LOOKING INTERNALLY TO CHRIST FOR EVERYTHING (Diagram 130-C)

Look with me at your next diagram, 130-C. This is a **key diagram** in understanding the life of Christ functioning within you. You will notice on the upper left-hand side is the word "life" spelled out "Look Internally to Christ For Everything." That is the solution. It's not just sitting cross-legged with your hands looking internally for life, it's looking internally to Christ for life.

I was sitting in my east window the other morning when the sun came up. I was actually sitting there cross-legged with my bathrobe hood up, with my Bible across my lap, and a cup of coffee next to me and I was thinking about this diagram. I was thinking: I still sit cross-legged, I still like to put my hood up, I still like to be still, but my focus is not on me and me being able to create the energy to survive this day. My focus is on plugging into, tapping into the life of the Lord Jesus Christ in such a way that my hoses are connected to His water source so it is Jesus Christ who gurgles out of me all day long. But I need time alone with Him in the morning. I need time in the evening alone with Him. I need to sneak out of the office periodically and go for a walk and spend intimate personal time alone with Him. I'm a very needy creature. I am desperately in need of the Lord Jesus Christ's life. For how that takes place look with me at the center of this diagram. You see, this is not self-ruled anymore is it? The rulership here is

Christ's rule. Christ is in control of this person's life. The control center is your spirit and soul. God is in control of the spirit and the soul of this individual. How does that take place? Well, you'll also notice that there is a cross inserted in here. Across the crossbeam it says "being." Do you realize in our human language, our English language I should say, we are called "human beings," aren't we? God, even in the language, wanted us to understand the truth of His design. We are to be "being" related to Him, "being" intimate with Him, and if you'll look at the very center of that word what is the letter on the cross? "I," correct. I am on the cross. I, Bill, have been crucified with Christ. It's no longer I, Bill, who lives in this earth suit, it's Christ who lives within me. When I am co-crucified with Christ, when I am seated in the heavenly realms with Him, when I am functioning in my true identity as a son of the most high God, my spiritual, soulistic identity is being intimately related with God. God energizing my personality. Bill is a little bit different than all the rest of you. You probably noticed that by now. God flowing through Bill looks different than you, but it's still Christ's life being empowered in me, being indwelt in me, being my very life.

Now I don't know how many of you struggle with this death issue, death to the selfish lifestyle, death to my life. See, when I came to know the Lord, I knew enough about the Word to make a clear understanding of what it was going to cost. I looked at it and I had this running dialogue with God. I said, "Okay, God, I have one life to live, right?" [God responds, "right."] "And you want me to give you my one life to live, right?" [God responds, "right."] "So, who gets to live my life if I don't?" [God responds, "I do."] "Well, what about me?" [God responds, "You'll be better off."] "I don't get to do anything?" [God responds, "right."] "But I want to do something." [God responds, "right son, it's the best for you."] I went through this ongoing dialogue, I wanted to do it. Come on, I only get one chance and you want me to give you my one chance so that you

can do it through me? Yes, that is what He wants from me, that's what He wants from you. And you know what, it's the best way to live.

After living 30-some odd years in sin after my flesh, and now just the last few years, the last 11 or 12 years, walking in God's Spirit, walking after God's Spirit, this is by far the best life to experience. I cannot find the words to explain to you all the value, internally and externally, for living life this way. When Christ is in control of your life, when He is your very life, then you see shooting out of this control center all these things.

Love. When I first met Juli, I didn't really love her. I lusted after her. Now I know how to lay my life down and love her like Jesus Christ loves the church.

How about joy? Did I have fun free-falling? Oh yeah! Is there anything as joyful as walking with the Lord? Nothing. Is there anything as much of a rush as seeing the sparkle in somebody's eyes when the person begins to get a glimpse of, just a glimpse of who God is? Nothing compares with that joy. There is none.

How about peace? Peace that surpasses all understanding, being able to stand in His presence, being able to stand firm, secure in your identity in any circumstance. See, God designed us with feet that we stand on. When your feet are enclosed in the peace of knowing the Lord Jesus Christ—knowing His life that is our life—anywhere you go, no matter where you stand, you stand in peace. You can go anywhere, you can do anything, you can meet anybody because you know Christ.

In Philippians, Chapter 4, verse 13, it says, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." See, Bill cannot do everything. But with Christ in me, working through me, I can now do anything. I can even be patient. Whoa, I can be patient with people! I can be kind. I can be

good. I can be gentle to people. I used to think gentleness was wimpy. If I went to a men's room and it said "gentlemen" on the sign, I went to find another one that said "men." I wanted a "men's" room, I didn't want a "gentlemen's" room. Do you know what I have discovered, God is the gentlest man you will ever know. Gentlemen know their heritage, they know who they are. Real men are gentle men. They know the gentleman of the universe, God himself. Being gentle is cool. Being gentle is the most manly expression. Now that's not what the world says, but that's what God says.

How about faithfulness. I was not faithful. I walked after my flesh. I did a lot of sinful things. I was not faithful to God. I was not faithful to my wife. But since coming to know the Lord Jesus Christ, it has been incredibly wonderful to be faithful to Him and faithful to my wife Juli. That faithfulness is not something I can do. That faithfulness is an expression of Him.

Self-control. Some of you watching this are sitting there thinking, old Bill is not very controlled, because I am rather animated from time to time. I am personally under the control of the Lord Jesus Christ. He controls my "self," therefore, I am self-controlled by God. God is in control of my life. He's the one who controls me.

You have several different verses at the bottom of your diagram. Let me read for you in the book of Colossians, Chapter 3, verses 1 through 4, "If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory."

So, what we need to do brothers and sisters in Christ, is we need to keep seeking the things that are above, not the things that you see. Don't be

looking to the next thing that you can acquire—that’s not the solution to life. That’s not where happiness is found. That’s not where joy is. That’s not where peace is. Set your mind, set your thinking on the things that are above. Keep looking heavenward. Keep looking to the Holy Spirit that lives within you for everything. Don’t look at circumstances. Don’t look at the people around you. Look to the Lord Jesus Christ who is your life. As you begin to walk, consistently walk in that, the One who is your life, He will begin to show up in you. So, function in this focus. Focus on Christ being your life. Surrender to Christ being your life.

REVIEW

Turn to your review with me. As you look at that, let me share with you a quote from Oswald Chambers book *My Utmost for His Highest*. On October 18 he wrote this, “The key to a missionary’s devotion is that he is attached to nothing and no one except the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. It does not mean simply being detached from external things and surroundings, our Lord was amazingly in touch with ordinary things of life, but He had no inner attachment except to God. External detachment is often actually an indicator of a secret growing inner attachment to the things that keep us eternally. The duty of a faithful missionary or a faithful Christian is to concentrate on keeping his soul completely and continually open to the nature of the Lord Jesus Christ. The men and women of God that are sent out on His endeavors are ordinary human beings, ordinary human people, but people who are controlled by their devotion to Him, to Christ, which has brought them through the work of the Holy Spirit.” So, focus your devotion on the work of the Holy Spirit. The work that Christ is doing in you, that’s our focus, not on the things around us.

Look with me at the review points. Number 1, “Happiness is not found in things or in people.” Number 2, “Fulfillment comes from God being

my focus,” that’s fulfillment. Number 3, “Joy comes from Looking Internally to Christ For Everything.” What is not covered in everything? Does everything cover everything? I mean every pair of socks I wear, every T-shirt I choose, everything I eat, I should be looking internally to Christ Jesus. What are you hungry for? You guys didn’t have pizza when you walked here. Want to do a pizza? How about it? You guys didn’t have tacos. Do you want to do a taco? Let’s do tacos. Cool!

Look internally to Christ for everything. “God, we have 10 minutes. What do you want to do in these 10 minutes?”

“All right, let’s do that. Great idea. I like it.” See, look internally for everything. Pray without ceasing. This is it. That’s the life.

Number 4, “I must repent of all external idols such as relationships, possessions, accomplishments, job, and even Christian work.” There is a process: I must turn from the idols of my life. Is there a man or woman in your life that is more important than God? If there is, that’s an idol. Are there children in your life that are more important than God, more important than your wife or your husband? Is there? Then they have become an idol. Is there some thing in your life that you think about more than God? Is there? If there is something—whatever it is, boat, car, motorcycle, job, money, you know, what ever it is that you value—you think about more than God, that has become an idol in your life and you must repent. You must turn from that and turn back to God. God is number one. He is a very jealous God. He will not tolerate us having other idols as more important than Himself, not even Christian work.

I had someone say to me in counseling the other day, “Oh, it would be so easy to be a Christian if I had your job.” And I said, “Do you want to know the truth? The truth is the hardest place to be a Christian is in my job.” He says, “Huh?” I

said, “The reality of living in the position that God has given me, is it’s more difficult to be real, doing what I do, than any other job. It would be much easier to become a Pharisee and just fake it, as if I’ve made it. But the reality is, I haven’t made it. I need Jesus.”

Many people put on the air: I know it all, I’m so high and lifted up. That’s pride. That’s not the life of Christ. We never fully comprehend the reality of God until we get there. Always be growing. Always be reaching for more of it.

Number 5, “Real life comes from Jesus Christ.” Jesus is the way; He is the truth; He is the life. You don’t find the truth, you find Him. You don’t find a way to live, you find Him. That’s life. He is it. Look nowhere else. Look to no one else, to nothing else, but Him. Have you been looking elsewhere? Let’s spend a few minutes and go before the throne, and I’ll give you a chance to turn from that right now and experience Christ as your life.

Let’s pray. “Father, thank You for revealing to us this very day the deception that we get distracted by stuff and people. Things, Father, we confess that we momentarily, hourly, daily, get distracted by those things. Father, we admit to You that they’ve become idols in our life. Right now we lay them before You. We humbly receive from You Your love, Your washing, Your forgiveness. Thank You, God, thank You for forgiving us. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for providing a way for us to be redeemed. Holy Spirit of God, thank You for Your anointing, thank You for Your presence, thank You for Your fellowship right now. Minister personally to each one of us, oh Holy Spirit, in a practical way that leads us to a greater dependency and a greater demonstration of Your life in this world today. Be honored, be glorified because of our turning to You, because of our humbleness, magnify Yourself. Thank You, Lord Jesus, in Your precious and perfect name we pray. Amen.”