

VICTORY TEMPLE

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February 5, 2012

Super Sunday: What Makes it Super?

I was preparing my sermon and I did not look – when it is on the computer you’re not always paying attention to how many pages, so when I printed it out I realized I had four pages. So you guys are in trouble. I guess I could read it straight through and then we would be ready to go, right? Hopefully that doesn’t necessarily equate to a longer homily but we will find out.

In the book of Romans, chapter 8, verse 1. I’m going to read several verses of scripture, all the way down to verse 17, before we pray and let you sit down. (TURN AROUND TO SOMEBODY AND TELL THEM ‘I’M GLAD TO SEE YOU ON THIS SUPER DAY.’). I am reading from the New King James Version and it reads as follows:

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus (NOTICE THE PREPOSITION?) who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. ³For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. ⁷Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸So then, those who are in the flesh (KEEP NOTICING THE PREPOSITIONS.) cannot please God.

⁹But you are not in the flesh (EVERYBODY SAY, ‘I’M NOT IN THE FLESH.’ I KNOW THE PERSON BESIDE YOU IS THINKING, ‘OH, YES YOU ARE.’) but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. ¹⁰And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. ¹¹But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

¹²Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” ¹⁶The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together. (Romans 8:1-17 NKJV)

I would give you the title differently, but then it would give away, perhaps, the message before I preach and I don't really want to do that, so I am just going to call this Super Sunday: What Makes it Super? And we'll find out in just a moment. Let's bow our heads and close our eyes.

PRAYER: Jesus, thank You for coming in the flesh, giving Your life for us. We thank You that You rose again the third day, You showed Yourself alive by many infallible proofs for 40 days in front of many witnesses, You ascended to the Father and the angels said, "This same Jesus is coming back again, so we look for You to return. You said to those that look for You You will appear the second time without sin unto salvation, so we pray this Sunday morning that we will recognize that there is a place, there is a secret place, as the song just said, that we need to go to and we need to get in there and we need to stay there, in Jesus' name. And this Sunday morning impress it upon each and every one of us like never before. In Your name we pray, and everybody said, "Amen."

(YOU MAY BE SEATED. MAY THE LORD BLESS YOU.)

Let me just share with you some things. First of all, how many of you ever played Superman when you were growing up? See, just me and Randy Schmidt. Some of the younger folks, too. I was thinking that maybe that was before all the other superheroes eclipsed Superman. He was seemingly, I think, when I was growing up, and some of you can't relate to this because you're too young, the most popular. There was Superman, Superwoman, Superboy, Supergirl. There was even Mighty Mouse, but I didn't play that very much. You know, you put a cape on, jump off the picnic table, stretch your hands out and you holler "Superman!" And then you land, of course. In your own childlike mind that was good enough to pretend. We did a lot of pretending. So we were always aspiring to be something we deemed super or beyond what we actually were, so we would play these games. We didn't have Playstation and XBOX and all that. We made up our own games. There was a lot of fantastical endeavors that we did in the backyard or out in some empty field, and we seemed to be pretty happy, those of us who grew up back in the day. I wonder why we do things like that? What makes today so super/Super Sunday?

I wrote down some trivia. Actually they are facts, but are trivial. A lot of it is not important, I suppose, but – 8 million pounds of guacamole is consumed on Super Bowl Sunday. Now, if you don't like football or the Superbowl, just hang with me for a little bit and pretend that I'm talking about something you like, because the same principals will apply. Trust me. 14,500 tons of chips are eaten along with that guacamole. Of the top ten most watched American television programs of all time, nine of them were Superbowls. Superbowls are measured in Roman numerals because a football season runs over two calendar years. Over 700,000 footballs are produced annually for official NFL use and 72 of them are used for the Superbowl. Did you know that NFL stands for "Not for long?" They were interviewing Joe Namath on television this week and I did not know he was still alive. He still looks pretty good for somebody who has been banged up the way he was. He was telling about all the different fake parts, bones, and things he has in his body and how football, even back then, was so rough that it did a number on him and he has some pain from time to time. He said, "I still have all my organs, and my brain and everything, so actually I feel pretty good." But then when he went off, one guy turned to the other and said, "You know what NFL stands for, don't you? It means not for long." Because the life expectancy of someone playing that sport is about 3 years or so. Some play longer, obviously, but about three years is amazing. So these are just some things to think about here as we think about why this day is super.

It is the second most watched sporting event in the world. More than 100,000,000 people worldwide watch the Superbowl every year. I think they said 173,000,000 are expected to watch this year. In fact, Superbowl XLIV in 2010 unseated MASH's series finale as the most watched show in television history with over 106.5 million watchers. One 30-second commercial aired during the Superbowl costs at least \$2,000,800. The NFL has a policy against holding Superbowl games that have a climate of less than 50 degrees Fahrenheit unless it is an enclosed stadium. No fewer than \$55 million is expected to be spent on food for the big game. Sunday marks the day on which Americans chow the second greatest amount of food. Thanksgiving is the first.

7-11 claims a whopping 20% in sales of antacid the day after the Superbowl – Tums, Roloids, Tagamet and Zantac. 36% increase in sales of frozen breaded mushrooms prior to the Superbowl. 29% increase in sales of frozen shrimp. \$237.2 million spent on soft drinks at grocery stores during Superbowl week. 30% increase in sales of processed cheese loaves the week before. 68% increase in the sale of flavored snack crackers. It is amazing. No wonder we need to get out and go to the YMCA. Frozen pizza is the top Superbowl seller at grocery stores. \$11.8 million additional sales of beer. 30.4 million pounds of snack food Americans scarf down on Superbowl Sunday, twice the average daily amount. Pizza Hut expects to sell 2 million pizzas on the day of the Superbowl, which is 60%, or 1.3 million more than an average day. Tickets average about \$4000. I went on Stubhub to find out what the cheapest ticket was (I wasn't planning on going). The cheapest ticket on Stubhub right now was \$1,800. That is one ticket. But, if you wanted a whole suite, \$445,000. And all in between, various seats and suites and stuff.

Today has been hyped beyond our imagination. This is the day of football's biggest stage. Tickets to the Superbowl, like I said, are thousands of dollars apiece. 65,000 to 70,000 people spend more money to go to the hospital than (and you fill in the blank.) That is not counting their hotel rooms, their wardrobe, their meals. I heard the price of a local hotel suite or room was just unbelievable, because, of course, they jack the price up for times like these. Millions of people worldwide will be tuned in. Gamblers will make bets on the winner. The players will make tens of thousands of dollars extra. Parties will be thrown all over the country. Even churches will use this day to fellowship. We are going to have our monthly meal, but we are calling it the Super Sunday meal. Even churches will use this time for fellowship, to have fun and even reach out to their community that might not have an initial interest in coming to church or hearing the gospel of Jesus. Hopefully a bridge will be built so that the people can connect and ultimately become one of the Lord's disciples. That is what you would think would be the superior motive.

But what makes it Super? I was thinking about this the other day when this came to me and I thought, "Here's what makes it Super. People." (I'M TALKING ABOUT PEOPLE THE NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS.) Why do people make it Super? Because people play the game, people coach the game, people watch the game, people pay the big bucks. People promote the game. People like the parties. People hype the game. It's people. It just so happens that certain things about this particular football game have been enlarged beyond astronomical proportions. It is just beyond my little 3-pound brain to grasp, I'll tell you the truth.

But I want to introduce to you an idea that is even more fundamental than anything I mentioned so far, as to the dynamic of what is happening here with all this hype, and the concept that I want to speak to

you about is very biblical. It is called vicariousness. I am going to give you a definition of the word vicarious (EVERYBODY SAY VICARIOUS). It is an adjective. The word vicarious is an adjective. It is a word that every Christian should be familiar with. Don't tune me out. You need to know good sound doctrine. You need to know what vicarious means. So I am about to give you a little definition. It means to experience in imagination through the feelings or actions of another person. Here is a sentence. "I could glean vicarious pleasure from the struggles of my imaginary film friends." Meaning #2 – Acting or done for another. Here is a good example. A vicarious atonement. You all need to think about Jesus right now. And then physiology of, or pertaining to the performance by one organ of the functions normally discharged by another.

So let's just look at it just a moment. When people watch the game, they pick out a player. They pick out a coach. They may even pick out a cheerleader. Or they may pick out a fan. They may pick out a famous fan. A lot of famous people down there in Indianapolis right now. A lot of people were lining up in a certain venue yesterday and the day before, just to get a glimpse of somebody. They didn't know who. Maybe I'm going to see somebody famous. They have their iPhones and everybody is going to take their pictures or maybe get an autograph. Who knows. So maybe they pick out a famous fan. They see in that person something they want to be like or something that they like or perhaps something that entertains them. You know, the saying "I want to be like Mike." Everybody watching Michael Jordan over here (I'm getting off football a little bit), but sailing through the air with his tongue hanging out. His hang time is like "can he really stay in the air that long?" Yeah, in slow motion he can. And dunking the ball in every conceivable way and every little kid growing up that plays basketball want to be like Michael Jordan, so the advertisement came out, "I want to be like Mike."

But people pick out somebody that they want to emulate. They wear their jerseys -- yeah, with their name on it -- and start pulling for and defending their star. Their person. Their quarterback, their fullback, their tailback, their linebacker, their lineman, their defensive back can do no wrong, almost. If they hear some scandal about them, the first thing is "I don't believe that." They want to defend them because they have aspired to be like them in some way. It is just amazing what happens. They see in that person something that they want to emulate. All of a sudden, instead of the Patriots They it's a Patriots Us, or the Giants They, it's a Giants Us, when you pick out our team. It does not matter whether you're from the underdog or the one that Las Vegas says is going to win. It doesn't matter who you pull for. You have an invested interested. You have to understand this. There is something in that that comes in some small, or maybe some big way, it becomes you. And when they do good, you feel like you did good. If somebody drops a pass, you'll drop your nachos. You know what I'm talking about. Because, you are watching it with a vicarious eye. You are seeing yourself on the football field. You are seeing yourself in life, doing what they are doing. That's why people succeed and then you high-five and you fist-bump. That's why people holler. That's why they leap. That's why they celebrate. When your team loses, you are sad. My team used to lose a lot. Sometimes they still do. When I grew up in College Station and Bryan, the Aggies had a motto -- "Wait till next year." I remember being sad for days when the Dallas Cowboys would lose. I'm kind of getting over that. It may take you about 30 to 40 years to get a grip on life. But you get a little sad. But why does it even matter? If they win or if they lose it is because of their vicarious involvement. I'm talking about people. This is why people make it Super. This is why people are so engrossed, so involved, so indulged, so invested. It is because they are substituting that person's life for theirs in this vicarious dynamic.

Let's move beyond football a little bit, because some people may say, "I don't like football. I don't want to hear about football." Well, that's what I know about, so I'm going to be talking about it sometimes. It makes a good example. But let's just move into your life a little bit. The vicarious dynamic happens with our kids. They do well, we feel that we have done well. We're proud. "Ask about my grandson." They flub up, we wonder what we did wrong. (DON'T SHOUT ME DOWN.) We even try to correct it if we can. We find ourselves telling our 30 and 40 year old kids what to do. Because that's us. That's me. That's a chip off the old block. They sprung off me. That's me. We are vicariously involved with our kids. I'm not saying it's right or wrong, I'm just saying it's the way it is. People are people. It is a little more real and a little more down to earth than a football game when you look at your son and you look at your daughter and their success has become yours and their failure has become yours. This vicarious aspect of life is something that we cannot get away from. I think it happens in almost every area of our life. We watch a movie, watch a TV series. If Jack Bauer or Sydney Bristow whoop up on a terrorist, we just feel good. We feel like going to get another package of Doritos out of the cabinet. You may not be able to do any martial arts whatsoever. You would probably fall over if you tried to kickbox, but you saw it on television and that character, that protagonist, you have lived vicariously through them. Back in the day (I guess they still show soap operas on television – I don't want to chase a rabbit here) but if they don't they show things that are whole lot like them. I call them glorified soap operas. But people would watch "As The World Turns" and they'd pick out characters in there and every day – they didn't have DVRs, they didn't even have VCRs (this is way back) – so they had to be there to see it (there was no computer to get it on Hulu, there was no way you could see it afterwards, you didn't know there was going to be a TVLand in the future) – you had to be there to see what was going to happen to your life on "The Edge of Nowhere, er, Night." People get so involved in all these things. It is a little bit of an escape, when it comes to a television show, or a book, or maybe a football game.

I'm not trying to discuss the right or wrong, I'm talking about the reasons why people do the things they do the things they do is because they live, in a sense, through another person. You read a book and automatically identify with the hero or the heroine. You want to be like them and when you get to the end and the good guy wins, you feel like you won. This is all part of life. We feel complete. Even if it's fiction. Somebody could have just fabricated the whole story, but just for a few hours, while we read that 400-page novel, we identified with that hero and when it came to an end, if they ended it right, we felt good about it. Why? It was fiction. Because you were living for the moment vicariously through that other person. You see, people are funny. People are cool. They live vicariously.

This is a fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. Listen, I'm going to take it a step further now because now vicarious becomes a little bit more serious than anything I have been discussing so far, except, perhaps, the thing with our children. It becomes a little bit more serious when we recognize the fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. Jesus really did become a man. You think you become that character for three hours, Jesus really did become a man and he did the vicarious thing. Hebrews 4:15 says, "(he) was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (KJV).

Isaiah 59, Wednesday night, we were looking through it and we found out that God couldn't find a man to stand in the gap and make up the hedge. He couldn't find a man to do the work, so he came himself. He put on human flesh and said, "If I can't find anybody to do it, I'm going down in the form of a man and Yahweh became our salvation and they called him Yeshua. His name is Jesus. Jehovah

is salvation. The babe born in Bethlehem of Judea was not just something to give us something to do once a year and celebrate a certain holiday. That was God manifest in the flesh. I'm talking about vicariousness, but I have not really gotten to the crux of the matter, because I am starting out with the doctrine of the incarnation. The fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith is the incarnation. God came in the flesh. Read Romans 8:3 and 4. Read First John 4 and 3. God came in the flesh. That baby born in Bethlehem was God in the flesh.

But the vicarious atonement that I mentioned when I was reading the definition, had to be enacted 33-1/2 years later on Golgotha's hill at a place called Calvary. (I WANT YOU TO PUT ISAIAH 53 UP FOR ME). Many of you quote this and you don't recognize, perhaps, this Messianic prophecy by the prophet Isaiah concerning the work of Christ. In Isaiah 53:4 it says --

⁴Surely He has borne our griefs (COME ON NOW, THEY WERE OURS. YOU GET INTO THE NOVEL, YOU GET INTO THE SUPERBOWL, SOMEBODY GETS INJURED, YOU FEEL A LITTLE HURT. YOU POUT FOR THE REST OF THE GAME IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL. BUT THAT'S A GAME. THAT'S SOMETHING THAT'S TEMPORAL; HERE IS SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED THAT IS PERMANENT, IT IS ETERNAL. IT IS REAL.)

And carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.

⁵But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, (EVERYBODY SAY MY TRANSGRESSIONS.)
He was bruised for our iniquities; (EVERYBODY SAY MY INIQUITIES.)

The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed.

⁶All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his own way;
And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:4-6, NKJV)

See, here's the truth. Now he really lives in us. This is not a fiction book. And we really live in him. You don't believe it? Let me show you a passage in Galatians 2:20. The apostle Paul was into this vicarious understanding. He understood what it was all about. He never saw the Superbowl. He probably never read the novels that we read. He was not familiar with the television series that some of us watch, but Paul was familiar with this fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith – the vicarious atonement. And he recognized that Jesus really does live in us and we really do live in him. And this is what Paul said –

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ; (WHEN? YOU SEE IT IS SOMETHING THAT WE DIDN'T LITERALLY DO. JESUS ACTUALLY TOOK OUR PLACE. IF YOU HAVE A HARD TIME REMEMBERING THE WORD VICARIOUS, YOU NEED TO THINK OF THE WORD SUBSTITUTIONARY. EVERYBODY SHOUT, "JESUS IS MY SUBSTITUTE.) it is no longer I who live, (IT'S NOT ME) but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. (Galatians 2:20, KJV).

Jesus lives in me. Wow, that just phenomenal. I have to go back to my original passage before I conclude. Romans chapter 8. I want you to get this. You have to understand. You may never be like Mike. You don't have to be. Hallelujah. But you do need to be like Jesus and the only way you're going to be like Jesus is Jesus has to get in you and live through you. And when He gets in you, you get in Him. I know it's hard to get all these prepositions straight, because you think, "If somebody's in me how can I be in them?"

We're talking about vicarious living. The vicarious atonement. Jesus took my place on the cross. Now I don't have to die on the cross. Now I don't have to go to Hell, because Jesus took my place. I was crucified with Him. When He was on the cross, the songwriter said, I was on His mind. Selah. You mean when Jesus was on the cross and he could have been thinking about Aaron Smith he was thinking about Rick Bowen? No. That's not what I mean. He was thinking about Aaron Smith, too. Me? Jesus is suffering and dying. When He went to the cross He saw you? Your visage, before you were ever born? Why do you think he got up from the garden and said, "I'm going to the cross." Because it's God's will. He saw the salvation. For the joy set before Him, He endured the suffering, even the death of the cross. You're what got Him to go. He was going to substitute His life for yours. You can think about this all afternoon because the fact is, that was where you belonged; that was where I belonged; that was my destiny. Hell was my destiny. Death was my destiny. But Jesus took my place. Romans 8:1 –

There is therefore now (EVERYBODY SAY, "RIGHT NOW") no condemnation to those who are (WHERE ARE YOU? WHERE DOES IT SAY YOU ARE? COME ON, SOMEBODY HOLLER AT ME) in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1a, NKJV)

Remember all that stuff I was talking about the begin with? Let's pretend? This is not pretending. Let's make-believe? This is not make-believe. Someone says, "Well, the Superbowl is not make believe." I know it's not make-believe, but it is temporal. When it's over, somebody will be sad, somebody will be mad, somebody will be glad and they'll get over it and they'll want to see the game next year, maybe, if it's their team. If it's their team – so there's the key. If it's their team. But this is something everybody can claim. Everybody who gets in Christ through repentance and faith, He puts His Spirit in you. Now I'm in Him and He's in me. That's who we are talking about here.

. . . who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. ³For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh . . . (Romans 8:1b-3a, NKJV).

Superman came from the planet Krypton. But it was all a fictional account. Jesus came from the Father. This is not fiction.

²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

³For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness . . . (Romans 8:2-3, NKJV)

People looked at Jesus and he looked like Joseph's son and they were talking about him like they talk about Clark Kent – "That guy with glasses on? That nerd? That's Superman?" They were talking

about Jesus that way. “Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Isn’t this Joseph the carpenter’s son?” But inside the veil of that flesh was God Almighty. The incarnation. The vicarious atonement was about to take place. It did take place. So the law could not set us free, but Jesus did.

He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. ⁷ Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸ So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (Romans 8:3-8, NKJV)

Well you know good and well that doesn’t mean those who are in the body. We are all hopeless. If you are equating your body with the flesh (and I know your body is flesh) but we are talking about a spiritual principal here that I don’t have time to explore too deeply, but a spiritual principal called the flesh. If you are in the flesh, you cannot please God. So Paul could have said, “The end. Have a nice day.” But he didn’t. He said, “But, you are not in the flesh.” Now, he’s not talking to ghosts. He’s not writing to ghosts. He is writing to people in bodies that are Christians, born again, Spirit-filled.

⁹ But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit. . . . (Romans 8:9, NKJV)

Everybody say, “I’m not in the flesh.” Say, “I’m in the Spirit.” But here’s the stipulation. You can’t just say that just because the pastor said say it. Oh, I know you did and can, but it doesn’t necessarily mean that you are in the Spirit unless the following -- “If indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.” (Romans 8:9, NKJV). You’re in the Spirit if the Spirit is in you. “Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.” (Romans 8:9, NKJV).

So Paul wants to clarify just a little bit. In verse 10, he says –

¹⁰ And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. ¹¹ But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. (Romans 8:10-11, NKJV).

You had better hope, when they bury you in the ground, you are a born again Christian, because the only thing that is going to make your body alive is Jesus in you.

This should be the reason why, if you get this, when you come to church, you worship God because you’re in Christ and He’s in you. Nobody has to beg you to do it because your living your life through him. You’re walking in the Spirit and anytime you deviate from that you go to your knees or you repent and say, “God, I’m sorry. I got distracted. I’m not going to yield to the flesh. I’m walking in the Spirit. I’m in Christ. Legal status is in Christ and if You’re in me and I’m in You, then You’re going to give life to my mortal body.” Read the whole chapter of I Corinthians, chapter 15, and you’ll find out about the resurrection.

He is in me. I know I don’t look like much, Hallelujah, but I’ve got Jesus in me. That’s what counts.

And I'm in him. So when the devil sees a person in Christ, he doesn't must see that frail, emaciated frame, he sees Jehovah-Nisi. He sees Yahweh-Nisi. He sees my Banner and he believes and he trembles, not because of this mortal frame, but because of what's in the mortal frame. Christ in you is a hope of glory. I'm talking about winning, not losing. You predict one team, you might win, you might not. You get on this team -- eternal winner. You can't lose. Because he won the victory for you on Calvary.

Let's stand on our feet.

I like being on the winning side. That's why people watch these shows, watch various sports. Some people even like curling. I don't know why. Some people will sit there and watch the World Wide Sport of Poker. They'll watch people play chess. It's like snails moving. 40 minutes later a guy makes a move, but they're engaged, because that's them. All these things are temporal. But what we are all about as humans. We want to win. We want to succeed. We want to get somewhere. We want to be like somebody. And that's why all this stuff exists. But here's what counts. Do you want to be like the Lord? And if you do, there is only one way for that to happen and that is for Him to get in you and you to get in Him. Bow your head and close your eyes.

So Nicodemus had a problem with this. He was a great teacher of the law who saw Jesus by night in John 3 and he said, "Lord, I want to talk to you a little bit" and before it was over Jesus said, "You must be born again, Nick" and he said, "How in the world am I going to get back in my mother and be born?" So, see, immediately when we start thinking about getting in Christ and Christ in us, a lot of you guys have a problem with it because you're thinking about how would you do that? I'm not limber enough. I'm not small enough – whatever your concepts are. We are talking about a spiritual condition. We are talking about a spiritual status that Jesus has made possible for you on the cross of Calvary. You can get in Christ by faith. You can get in his lineage by faith. Even being a gentile, being an alien from the household of faith, being a foreigner. Yet through repentance and faith you can get in Christ and he can get in you by His spirit. And that's the only way that you're going to be able to live for him.

I just want to pray this prayer with everybody today, because I recognize a lot of people in this room are saved, they are Christians. Some of you were saved decades and decades ago and some of you last year, and some of you maybe a month ago, but you're Christians. You call yourself a Christian, but maybe you didn't really understand that Jesus is inside you and therefore you should be living differently, and you're inside Christ and you can live differently. A Christian can live a sanctified life. A person that is not, cannot. The carnal mind is enmity against God. But the Christian can. He might not, but he can, because he is in Christ.

So everybody bow your head and close your eyes and I want you to pray this prayer with me even as if it were you praying it for the first time. And if you pray it for the first time, make Jesus the Lord of your life, I want you to let me know about it, or somebody in this church know about it before you leave here today. I want everybody to pray this prayer. Say –

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, thank You for Your death on the cross of Calvary. Thank You for the blood You shed. Thank You for dying in my place. I'm glad that You became my substitute and You died for me. Thank You, Lord, for Your offer of salvation to whosoever will. Lord, I will. Save me,

deliver me, fill me, live in me, be my savior, be my Lord. I believe it and I receive it in Jesus' name. From this day forward, I want to live my life as a testimony for Your greatness, by living in Your Spirit and by having Your Spirit live in me. I thank You for it right now. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Now lift your hands and praise him right now.

I want you to come stand up here with me for just a moment. I want to give you some instructions before I dismiss you here in just a little bit. Everybody just come on up front and stand with me for just a moment. I want to give you a few instructions. The Bible says in Romans 6 –

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? (Romans 6:1-2, NKJV)

How can you do that? How can you live in sin if you die to sin?

³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him (SEE, NOTICE THOSE PREPOSITIONS AND YOU'LL GET THE IDEA OF VICARIOUS – THE WHOLE THING PASTOR WAS TALKING ABOUT TODAY) through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of *His* resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*. (Romans 6:3-6, NKJV)

When you get saved, then you see that when Jesus died, you died to your old way of life. That is your testimony now. That's called repentance. That old man was crucified with him that –

. . . the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. (Romans 6:6-8, NKJV)

And I could go on and on, because the apostle Paul dealt with theology throughout the New Testament. I encourage you to read it. All I can say is, Wow, if you repented and put your faith in Christ, you need to go to the water and get baptized in the name of the Lord. And then you need to be an earnest, hungry, thirsty believer who says, "God, fill me with Your Spirit." Not so you can have a one night's experience of joy, which it is, but so you can walk in the Spirit the rest of your life, in Jesus' name.