The Cross Pull

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Father, as we come again this morning, we're so thankful that we know that it's in the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ that we come. We don't have to ask You to love this people. You've already demonstrated that you love every man, every woman, every boy, every girl that shall ever breathe the breath of life. And you so loved them that You gave them Your only Begotten Son that they might as the song said, be Free to go home. We're grateful, we know that the mighty Holy Spirit is here to convict hearts and lives. We pray that there'll be no lack that we might point to men and women the issue that face them here and now. They might not just make a living, but see the value of life, and we'll give you the praise in Jesus' name. Amen. 01:21

I read the experience of an internationally known commentator, and it was the reading of his experience that would give me the title of this message this morning, Brother Freestone and I were talking. He said several have said brother had preached the sermon once; they'd like to hear him. Well of course, I don't just pick out sermons, I trust God to lead me, but this morning has laid it on my heart to speak to you about the cross pull. This man told how that some years ago he went from the east out in our western country to a ranch to spend a vacation. He said while I was there, I became acquainted with a little short bowlegged cowboy that they called Shorty. And he said this cowboy was about the most miserable fellow that I had ever met. It seemed that he had reared from a little colt a fine stallion. 03:07

And it'd come to be a stallion of a great deal of worth; he was a show horse. But the horse had stepped in a gopher hole and sprained his ankle, and while he was healing Shorty had shut him away in an old pasture where he wouldn't be with other horses and want to run until his ankle healed. About the time the horse's ankle healed, a band of wild horses came by, and they broke the fence and went into the pasture where the stallion was, and when they left his stallion left with them. And the horse had been gone several days when the commentator arrived at the ranch, and Shorty didn't know whether he'd ever find the horse again or not. He said the entire ranch was alerted, and some of the surrounding ranches to watch out for his horse. He said the second evening that I was there one of the cowboys came riding in at a gallop, and when he got within distance that he could be heard he began to shout Shorty, I found your horse; I found your horse. He said, he told him of a certain canyon where the horse was feeding with a band of wild horses. And as it was almost dark, they couldn't possibly go at that time, Shorty made preparations to go early the next morning after his horse. 05:05

But I begged him to let me go with him. And final he consented, he said that if you'll stay up on the rim rock, I'll let you go and not make any noise. He said we made preparation the next morning. Before daylight we rode out to where this canyon was, and

he said I stayed upon that canyon, and Shorty started his descent down into the canyon. He said as he made his way down the lights begin to break over the valley, and he said I began to faintly make out that band of horses grazing. He said Shorty was a real sculpture and he never made a noise. He crept down into the valley, and he said I knew when he got close because he said suddenly the horses threw up their heads and looked toward the canyon and he said then I could see Shorty standing up down there, and he said the horses gave a snort, and they reared, and away they went. He said when I couldn't hear him, I knew that Shorty was talking to his horse for all he's worth. He said that horse made several hesitant steps, and then he stopped and looked back over his shoulder towards Shorty, and then he said he looked around at the vanishing herd, and he took three or four steps, and then he turned and looked back at Shorty. And he said this time he whirled away from the wild herd and slowly trotted off to his master. 07:14

He said I saw him stick his face out, head out on a halter. Shorty put the halter on, then he said I saw him nudging at his pocket where he had lumps of sugar. And he said if I watched that, suddenly my mind went back to the Christian home where I'd been raised to a godly mother and father. They done their best to keep me in church, but as I'd grown old, got in college I forgot about my upbringing, and I like the prodigal son had broken away and gone with the wild bunch. He said that that began to pull in my soul. He said I bowed my head in my arms on that old rim rock, the sun barley beginning to show in the east, and he said there I sobbed my heart out before God. And I told God if He'd just take me by the hand again and let me put my head in His bosom, that by His grace, I'd never run with a wild bunch again. Now, that's a story in itself. That's a sermon in itself, isn't it? I think I could make an altar call now, and you'd know what it's all about wouldn't you? Yes, you would. 09:13

But there are many, many times that the cross pulled on me in our lives. I'm going to speak about just four times this morning. You remember that poem by the British soldier. He wrote the poetry He says I'm a sinner. John Bull, he says I'm a sinner; both of them bound to be liars, I'm neither of them, I'm me, I'm a man, and a man is a mixture right down from the day of his birth. A part of him comes from heaven, and a part of him comes from earth. Now, that isn't all together scriptural, but it has a lot of truth in it. And so that's you and me. There's a something in us that wants to go one way, and there's a something in us that wants to go another. And certainly, there are many areas in the which in this life that this experience is true. And we feel the cross pull but again let me say I'm going to confine my thinking to just four of them. 11:05

You remember how the Apostle Paul in the Seventh of Romans, He said for that which I do, I allow not. For what I would, that I do not. But what I hate, that do I. And then he said oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? So, it's like two people waring within a believer, and fighting for the rule of that life in the natural in that light. And yet then before you become a child of God there can be this cross pull in you, and I trust if you're here without Christ you will feel the pull like I did almost fifty years ago when I stood in a little chapel back in Leavenworth, Kansas, and

the wild crowd were out yonder, and God was working with my heart. And the devil said to me that night, what you going to do with your old buddies? If you go down there you know you're going to have to them old buddies up, you know you're going to have to give up that kind of life you've been living, you're drinking, you're gambling, you're fighting, you're carousing. You're going to have to give that up. Well, thank God, I made the move, and I never had to give anything up; it all fell away. 12:58

And the Christ Who loves you this morning, if you could just realize oh what He'll give you in place like in the millennium instead of a thorn there's going to be some fruitful thing go up. God just don't come in and remove the few, He may take away a thorn bush, but He'll put a peach tree in its place. And you don't want the old thorn bush anyway, do you? Not if you got tangled up in one a time or two. I can't help think of Ginny. She got tangled up in a cactus one time, and you don't want something like that. 13:55

Now first let's think of the cross pull between right and wrong. Such a battle faces us from the earliest days. The poet put it like this. The greatest battles that ever were fought, shall I tell you where and when? They were not fought on the battlefield; they were fought inside of me. And so, every one of us, young or old know the truth of this. A battle goes on back yonder if we have any early training. One of the tragedies of youth today, it knows nothing but wrong almost from the cradle. Most of you precious young people, and most of the precious people of this generation don't know the kind of home I grew up in even if it didn't have a father. Values were placed in front of my life of a moral, and a spiritual nature, that I've learned they're far more valuable than all the silver and the gold that's in this world. 15:16

I talked to a multimillion heir some years ago, and he was showing me, and I told about how his boy was an international playboy; the best shot in the world with a shotgun. And I told him Mr. Hoffman, my mother could scarcely put food in my mouth, but one thing she gave me in that day when I had to make a decision, and that was a feeling that there was a God, and I was going to have to meet Him. And I said Mr. Hoffman you can give your boy everything this world affords, but if you don't give him that, one day you're going to come face to face with the fact that you were the greatest robber of your son that there could have been. 16:24

All of our lifetime we've been faced with such a choice. I remember as a child something about my sister. She said she never did whip me, and she wants to forget this. I was visiting her, she's setting back there somewhere, you see a woman with a real red face, that's her. And I was staying with her in Saint Joseph, Missouri. She took me over to visit her sister-in-law. There was a box there and it had a lot of things in it, and there was a little pearl handled knife about this long in there. I was about six. You can imagine a poor boy that had never had anything much, only enough clothes to cover him, and enough to eat, and the only horse he ever had was a stick horse, and the only gun he ever had was one that was whittled out. And you played like you had things. Like I had said the other Sunday, make believe, but I was just as rich as these other fellows. I just

didn't know it. But anyway, I saw that knife, and I just knew that it couldn't be missed, so I got the knife. 17:56

Well, I went home, I got on my brother-in-law's lap, I got that knife out and he said where'd you get that knife? I found it. Well, my sister knew where it came from, and she wouldn't just whip me, she whipped me all the way to her sister-in-law's house. Now, she don't remember that. Well, bless her heart, I'm glad I had a sister like that. What you permit is alright. Well, you'd have thought he's a little poor boy that has nothing, I'm not going to punish him for getting this. But I was raised up to believe that such things were wrong. The cross pull, I knew I was right. I knew that knife wasn't mine, but I was going to have it any way. 19:17

Well, recently my grandson, I think he's here this morning, one of his attorney friends told him how that they could take about seventy, eighty thousand dollars and the woman would never know it. He said oh no, I don't want any part of it. I'll tell you, what he turned down wasn't a drop in the ocean to what he gained. You see, you never win. Don't be deceived, God is not mocked. Someday you'll come up before God, and I hope it's going to be as His child when you come. Don't ever come up before Him as someone that has rejected the gift of His precious for your life. What a horrible, horrible thing, and so the cross goes on and the pull between that which is right, and that which is wrong. 20:52

And secondly the cross pull comes between feelings and instincts. Proverbs tells us that there is a way which seemeth right unto man, but unto him thereof are the ways of death. Do you realize that the unsaved man is as blind as he can be? Do you realize the unsaved man is completely shocked, he's a rue, he's a wreck, he's a nothing, he's a nobody in the sight of God. God looks at that little two by four brain of yours that can figure how to land a man on the moon, and He says that's foolish. That's just plain foolishness. Now, can he think he's smart? Why, I put the moon there. Why, I've made suns millions and millions of times bigger that that little earth that he's on; it's a witch-hunt. But man is shocked, the unsaved man is blind, the bible says he's altogether unprofitable, there's none righteous, no, not one, there's none that seeks after God; he's just dead to God, absolutely dead to God, and his instincts tell him to make a living, have a good time, live it up, get all the gusto you can out of life because you don't come this way but once. 23:01

And after all, when you're dead, you're just dead like a dog and it's over. So, get it all when you can get it all. It don't matter how you get it as long as you can get it, get it. The bible tells us it is not of man to devise his steps, and that's something that a lot of Christians had better listen to. You think you know how to make your way through this world, but you don't; you need God. And such gloss over the fact, they like to believe that all religions are good. That there are many ways to get to God. Recently I talked to a young woman, she said I had my opinions. But then so did Mary Eddy Baker. So did Joseph Smith, there's a lot of people have their wrong ideas, but their own ideas are

deadly; they'll take them to hell. They'll bring you up before God short; He'll have to deal with you. 24:23

Some years ago, I was at a convention in Tulsa, Oklahoma. There was a man that was preacher and life instructor. And he thought that God had led him to start a school to teach missionaries how to fly so they could go into the foreign field. And he told the story that impressed me so deeply that I never forgot it. He said he was taken into flight school back before the World War two, and he said the first day in class the instructor said something that just shook me through and through. He said we were studying, and he was showing us a drawing upon the board that was just like the instrument panel in a cockpit. And he said, this is what he said, he said now boys, let me tell you something. You see that thing? That can kill you. He said, there you have your compass, you have that which levels you with the earth, you have your altimeter, the level with the horizon, and he said you must pay strict attention to this. 26:11

He said the day may come when you'll feel a different way than what they say. He said don't go by your feelings, go by this. If you don't it'll kill you. Well, he said I never thought too much about it. After that I went on to school, became a pilot in World War two, and He said one night I was flying a mission over Germany. He said it was a real foggy night. I was flying in a cloud. He said I was flying along, and I got to feeling that my left wing was low. He said I straightened it out. He said I flew a little farther, and I got to feeling that that left wing was low, and he said I straightened her out. He said I flew a little farther, and I got to feeling that left win was low, and I straightened her up. He said I'm flying along and suddenly I feel my shoulder strap going into my shoulders. And it suddenly dawned on me I was flying upside down. He said I looked at my instrument panel and I was, I was flying upside down, he said I corrected it just as soon as I could. He said after that I got saved. He said I learned to trust the instrument panel. 27:59

How many times I've had people miss the way, miss the truth because they went by their feelings, and their opinion. Your opinions are no good, your feelings are no good. You can't trust your feelings. How many times I've had God's own precious people come in that office. Brother Hill, I feel. I feel, I feel. I don't care what you feel. If it don't correspond with this, you're flying upside down. You're not going right, this is right. This is the way, this is the truth, this is the light. I read an article just this last week, and I say this kindly, I don't want to throw bricks at anybody, but it's time you wake and find out what's going on. The leading; well, I guess I can call him spiritual leader in this world today, but at the most prominent, the most popular, the most capable; the spokesman for apparently the people of God. If you want to know privately who it is, I'll tell if you if you haven't guessed yet. But interviewed by McCall's magazine. He said I used to play golf, I don't anymore. I used to preach there was just one way to get to heaven, that was by the Lord Jesus Christ, I don't anymore. I believe that there are other ways that God can reveal Himself to you. 29:59

He went on about some of the religions that are spawned in hell, and they'll go to hell. And he said I believe God's people are there too. What's he going by? a few. Yeah, you were his bodyguard once, weren't you? A few, he's going by the popular opinion. Dear hearts, we're living in an hour when God's word is almost of no value even to God's people. Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit said Timothy, be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For he said the day will come when men will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. Oh, he said, from such turn away. Can you feel it? Feelings come, and feelings go, but this old book is always right. Aww, yes. This is your compass, and this is your altimeter, and this is your level in which to go; trust it at all times, and you'll never regret it when this life is over. It's going quickly. And there is a cross pull between the good and the best, and I've said it before, often the worst enemy of God's best in your life is His good. 32:13

I told you about A. B. Simpson, and A. S. Copley. I've told you about a letter I'm indebted to Brother Burge for this letter. This was a letter written to Brother Burge about a parader who was considered the heir apparent to the throne for A. B. Simpson. This letter is telling about, this'll be Paul Raider. He, that is Paul Raider said with tears briming out of his eyes in a contemplating recollection. When Doctor A. B. Simpson laid dying, he called me to his bedside and he said Paul, I've missed it. I've missed it, I've missed it. I missed the opportunity of my life. When the latter reign began to fall, I could have gone into it and led my people in. But while I hesitated many of them went in, and now they're in, and I'm on the outside. Paul, I've missed the opportunity of my life, I have missed God's best. 33:42

That's that man that we love to sing songs. I got the rest of that some years later. Some of you have heard me tell it. Dear old A. S. Copley who cried, he was with A. B. Simpson in his beginning, he was kind of like his right hand. But when the Holy Spirit began to come in a very real way in about A.D.1906 along there, Brother Copley stepped into it. He went to Brother Simpson, he talked to him, he tried to persuade him, and this is what Brother Simpson said to Brother Copley: Sidney, you believe too much. Brother Franklin said at the age of eighty-four he was kneeling by the altar by himself, a frail old man ready to go home. Brother Franklin said he was so enraptured with the Lord I got up close to him to see what he was saying. He said he was taking his old boney hand and striking it in his palm, and he was saying what if I'd missed it? Oh, what if I'd missed it. 35:15

The day's going to come when you're going to know there was a best. The day is going to come when you're going to realize that God offered you the best thing that He had ever offered to a human being. That He offers you the full right to be the bride of Christ. Precious hearts, oh precious hearts again, I think of how dear Brother Hatch that night I sat in his home he had the good, he was respected and honored, held highly in esteem among the brethren. That night as he set there, and he's a little bit moved across, his mother was going to turn against him, and his loved ones, and his friends, and

everybody, and he said to his wife Alice, I've made up my mind, and I'm going this way if it cost me every store I have. I don't know whether he's ever regretted his decision or not, I hope he hasn't. I don't think he has, but I'll tell you, there's a morning going to dawn when he won't regret it. 36:54

Now, there's a day going to come precious hearts when you're going to realize that all the time that you were a child of God, you are an heir of God, and you could have been a joint heir if you'd been willing just to go without the camp with Him. Oh, thank God; thank God. I think of the time that I've been tempted to have a big meeting and have a lot of people. I've had them to come and offer it to me. I had one of the leading Christian Full Gospel Businessmen in this town come to me and said, Brother Hill we'll get back of you, he said, you're the greatest preacher I ever heard. He said, if you can just let us do it, we'll build you a place, and oh, he said, oh Brother Hill, you can fill it if. f you're just going to have to give up some things. It's alright if you believe it, but you can't preach that to people and make them believe it. He said, Brother Hill, you've just got a few fact sheets. 38:09

I thought about a little boy David. When he came down to kill Goliath, he didn't know he was going to kill anybody, but he was. And got down there and his brother said what'd you do with thy few sheep? Well, he was faithful to the few sheep, and God was going to make him the king of all of the sheep. Didn't you know that? Sure, Listening, our help don't come from the east, or the west, or the south, it comes from the Lord of hosts; it comes from God. God can make you anything He wants to make you. Bless your heart, let me tell you this, I saith not boastfully, but in the grace of God there's one thing you don't seal with these doors Ichabod, the glory of God hasn't departed this place. Oh, bless your heart, I'm glad I picked over there, and I've been running with the best for a long time. Kind of a nice crowd to spend eternity with. 39:29

Well, I'm not going to go any further with that one, I'm going to finally end up with telling us about the cross pull between selfishness and service, and if you come to this assembly here long, you've been told it whether you believe it or not that when you took Christ as your Saviour that was a forever thing. It wasn't a temporal thing. You might be unfaithful, but He won't be. You might dilly dally around, but He means business. And I want to tell you, and I'm not encouraging you to do it, but I'm just going to tell you, because I know most of God's people do it this way. But though we fall, but shall we not utterly be cast down. Underneath are the everlasting arms. The Lord will hold you up, He can't deny Himself. Nobody can pluck you out of His hand. Try to get away, you can't get away. You want to see a miserable person? See some Christian that's trying to get away from God. I'll tell you. you'll understand if you go long enough what that prodigal felt when he walked in that pigpen, and in feign would have filled his belly with the husks of those swine. Right there he got his eyes open. He said, I'm going to go back and tell my Father I'm not worthy to be His son, I just want to be like one of His servants. 41:13

But you know a son could ever be anything but a son to his father. That's true of you and me, how much more is it true of God? And when that dear old man led him out there, aw, he said forget about that boy, I've been fatting up a calf for you. I knew you was coming; didn't you see Me standing out here on this hill this morning? I knew you was coming back. Huh? Oh yes, well, but I want to tell you, you got an inheritance, and you can have a wonderful place with God, and everyplace is going to be wonderful. There's not going to be anybody unhappy in heaven, don't you know that? Don't you realize there's not going to be anybody running around crying there. He's going to wipe away all tears. I don't know Arthur, maybe He's going to take the tear ducts out of that new glorified body because they're never going to cry anymore; isn't that wonderful? Sure, it's wonderful. But now look, I know you'll be happy no matter what, but why not be happy with the best? Why not have the best? You can have the best? But you say I'm not worthy. Of course you're not. I know that this is all by agree, but I'll tell you what, you've got to believe God. You're not going to have His best by just dilly dallying around and floating with every dead fish. You're a raft, you're going to have to get a wiggle in your tail and go up the stream. 43:12

Sure, someone said to me the other day, Brother Hill, why is it we get saved, and then you're tried so much? I said the Lord's trying to train you to get on the throne; don't you know that? Why, you're not going to get on a throne unless you're ready. Oh yes, you need to learn a little old something down here, and one day you'll get up there and He said now this crown is made just for you. Darell can't have your crown; this is for you Hill; He set it on me. You say Hill, you're crazy. Yeah, I'm flying by the instrument panel. My feelings don't tell me this, this bible tells me this. This says if I'm a son, I'm a heir, and I am a son. I'm just as sure of heaven if I didn't end up meeting you. I know where I'm going, I know exactly where I'm going to go. I don't quite know quite when, but I know where. 44:36

Well, isn't it a marvel that God would share His glory with me? I've had people to say and bless your heart. They get up and testify, I'm happy that you love your pastor, but ooooh, have you ever gone along, my sister will remember out there, the old place years ago we lived just across the road. There was a spring, one of the finest springs in the country there, and someone had fixed it up and put a water tank there and piped that water out. Many a time I've walked that seven miles up from west at about one o'clock, two o'clock in the morning. I'd get there and I'd look forward to getting there because I knew I was going to get a refreshing drink of water. I don't know whether I was ever thankful for the person that worked to put it there or not, but there's a lot of people like that. 45:46

Do you know there are a lot of people don't realize that there was some people that were willing to serve. They could have taken that money and put it a lot of places selfishly, but they said we got to build a bigger church. WE want more people to come. WE want more people to hear what we've got. We want to make a place now, if Jesus tarries, we got to do it again. And we're making plans to do it again. I had a party in my

office this week and he said Brother Hill, I come, but if I don't get here in time I've got to go downstairs. I said well. We're going to fix that up pretty soon if Jesus tarries. Oh, God bless you on what you've done, that's all I can say now. But again, being of the seed God is not mocked; what you sow, you're going to reap. You cast your bread on the waters. As a party said to me recently, Brother Hill, I just can't cast my bread on the water. You can't, you know where it's going to go, you can if you can see the harvest, I've laid down for us. I know what it is to take my corn seed, my wheat seed, my molt seed, my alfalfa seed, and my clover seed, my tobacco seed, and go out there and put it in the ground. I know what it is. 47:39

Now a hailstorm, a flood, a drought, too much water, too little water, some blight, some disease would come along and destroy that. But I'll tell you, I've been putting some seed in a long time, and I found it is incorruptible. I found it never returned void; I found it accomplished what He sent it to do; I found out it would work. I found out it would save you; it would mend you; it would heal you; it would satisfy you. This is what satisfied you old buddy. This is what satisfied you honey. Sure, I called on Sonny to pray, and as he was praying a thought backed that fellow up here in Cripple Creek. Some smart intellectual fool aimed to intellectually show how it wasn't unto God. Before that, the town drunk, he posed the question, he said I believe in God. He said prove it to me. But if you'll go and talk to the marshal of this town, and if you'll go and talk to the teachers in this town, and you'll go and talk to the citizens of this town they'll tell you how that three years ago I was the town bum, and the town drunk. I laid around drunk, I beat my wife, my children were naked; they were half starved, and some old country boy came to town and told me about Jesus and He came into my heart. Now I'm a fireman, and they have clothes, they have food, they go to school, they're no longer the laughingstock of the town. He said, do you want any more proof that God's real? I don't need any more than that, do you? I look over to that old Darrell and I know God's real. I look at Bob, I know He's real, I look at this sweetheart, I know He's real. I look at Harve, and I know He's real, I look at you and I know He's real. Why sure. 50:16