

Sermon On The Mount: Matthew 7:21-23

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Are You Saved: Part 3

By Robert Haling

Bible Text: Matthew 7:21-23

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Calvary Baptist Church

18807 Wekiwa Road

Sand Springs, OK. 74063

Website: www.calvarybaptistsandsprings.com

Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/preachthetruth

Open your Bibles this morning to the gospel of Matthew chapter seven beginning to read in verse 21.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.¹

Our gracious heavenly Father, we come and look to you, we thank you that we have access to the throne of grace in the Lord Jesus Christ, your beloved Son. Lord, I dare not come on my own knowing that even in me in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. But I thank you for the confidence and the faith in your beloved Son in whom you are well pleased. And I come in him.

We thank you that you have given us your Word. And my heart and my desires is that, Lord, that we might be faithful and I might be faithful to your Word and to the best of my ability that I may communicate these truths that are so weighty. We pray that you would give us ears to hear.

Oh, Holy Spirit, come and show us whether we are truly saved. And we pray that you would do the work, the convicting and convincing of sin, of righteousness and of

¹ Matthew 7:21-29

judgment. And I pray that you would lay bare and I pray that we may respond to your mercy and grace and to your Word, that we might find ourselves on that path that leads to life and that we might find ourselves on that strong and sure foundation which is none other than the Lord Jesus.

*Oh help us this day as we look to you and we ask it in Jesus' name and for his glory.
Amen.*

You may be asking the question, “Pastor, why are we still here in this passage?”

And the answer is this. It is a matter of life and death. It is of utmost importance especially in the environment that we live in. And because of the words of the Lord Jesus as I look at these words over and over again, what serious and sobering words they are, that he would respond to them and that he would say, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.”²

And then there are those who have been under the religion umbrella, of the umbrella of the Lord Jesus Christ and they would say to the Lord, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied and have we not done many mighty things in your name? Have we not cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?”³

Because of these words, of these words that are so serious and that he would say, “And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”⁴

As I was sitting here this morning and I was thinking about that the gravity and the weightiness of this portion of the Word of God. I can't get away from it, that I cannot but help to think that in eternity—and I am sure that what while probably will not happen, be the case that someone would say to me, “Pastor Haling, why did you not warn me of this? Pastor Haling, why did you not open the Word of God to me and make it very plain to me? Pastor Haling, why didn't you...?”

And oh, beloved people of Calvary Baptist Church and those of you that are members of Calvary Baptist Church, I take the responsibility very serious and that those that God has given me the oversight of and that I might watch you as an under shepherd under the shepherd the Lord Jesus Christ and that I might speak the truth. And as I mentioned last week if you are joined to the Lord Jesus in a saving way that you can say, “Oh, Lord, I thank you that even though your words are... they are very serious and searching, that I can say, ‘I know that I am his and he is mine, that I am joined to him in a saving way and these things are searching, but I know whom I have believed and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.’”⁵

² Matthew 7:21

³ See Matthew 7:22

⁴ Matthew 7:23

⁵ See 2 Timothy 1:12

But those of you that are here this morning and Christianity and faith in Christ and exercising in the activities of the Church is simply an occasional thing when it is convenient to you, my prayer is this: that the Holy Spirit will strip you bare to the point and show you who you are, that you may not hear the words of the Lord Jesus that would say, “Depart from me, ye that work iniquity. I never knew you.”⁶

These have been sobering truths that we have looked at in this chapter. We have looked at this last week and three weeks ago. We have looked at the first thing that we considered where the Lord Jesus is saying, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.”⁷

The second thing that we saw and considered very closely, “But he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”⁸

This morning we were singing, “Trust and obey for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.” And that is not simply trusting and obeying occasionally or when it is convenient, when it fits our schedules and when it does not interfere with me, myself and I, my things. But it is trusting and obeying 24/7, 365 days a year. The walk of faith is not something that we turn off and on occasionally. The walk of faith is that life that we live following, pursuing and keeping our eyes on the prize which is none other than the Lord Jesus.

The third thing that we saw in this passage is this. That even though the name of Christ is used, folks, many will say in that day, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils?”⁹

Have we not considered that and we find that even though that those that would use the name of Christ and what a sobering thing? And we are talking about those who are active, they are involved with the things of Christ. They are saying, “Lord, we have done all kinds of things in your name, done mighty works and mighty miracles.”¹⁰

And the Lord says, “I don’t know you. Depart from me ye that work iniquity.”¹¹

And then as I look at this passage I am thinking those who are... they are not even evoking or promoting the name of Christ. Perhaps occasionally they mention something, but they do absolutely nothing in the name of Christ. And I am concerned as much for them as I am concerned for those who name the name of Christ.

The Lord Jesus makes it plain in this passage that we read:

⁶ See Matthew 7:23

⁷ Matthew 7:21

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Matthew 7:22

¹⁰ See Matthew 7:22

¹¹ See Matthew 7:23

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock...And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.¹²

When you look at that in the context you find it is very plain and clear, folks, that, you see, in this life maybe momentarily you see all things seem all right and ok. But there comes a time when all of us must appear and stand before the all seeing eye of God, the one who truly sees us and knows us. There is going to come a flood. There is going to come a storm and that is called judgment and it is called... and how in the world are we going to stand and face that apart from the sure foundation that is found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now this morning, beloved, let's continue with that question that we asked last Sunday. And the question that we asked last Sunday was, "Did you know, preacher, I thought that salvation was by grace and that not of works? Do you remember that? I don't understand. I just don't understand."

And if you don't understand I have to say, "We do not understand the grace of God."

We don't understand the grace of God. We don't understand the grace of what it is and we don't understand the effects of the grace of God, what it does. We do not understand salvation. We don't understand the condition of man. We do not understand the work of the grace of God, what God has in mind when he saved us.

What do you think that God has in mind when he saves us? You see, when we contemplate we realize what man is in his natural condition. You folks, we do not hear that. It is not being preached from the pulpits. And we are silent on it. The thing that we hear today that is preached in our pulpits is this, that God is love and God loves us and God wants to do something for us. Basically, that is the message.

Turn on the television and listen to the preaching and listen to that which is being proclaimed in our day, that somehow or another, you see, here is the message that is communicated. God's hand is tied. He has done all that he can do. He has communicated his love to us, to mankind. He has sent his Son into the world, you see, to save the world and God has done, the Lord Jesus has died on Calvary's cross and there on Calvary's cross he has taken up on him the sins of the world and now he has ascended up on high and now the rest of it is left up to you and to me.

Folks, that is wrong theology. Well, that is not theology at all. It is heresy when we say the condition of man is this.

¹² Matthew 7:24, 26-27

The Word of God is very plain and clear when it teaches us that the condition of man is this, that he is spiritually dead. He has absolutely no good and wherewith all at all. He is described in the Word of God as a child of wrath even as others.¹³

The Word of God describes man in his condition that he does what he does because, you see, he is influenced and impacted by the environment that he lives in. Let me read it to you. I don't want to misquote it. Let's quote the Word of God.

Paul writes to the Ephesians and here is what he said. And he says, "And you hath he quickened, who were..."¹⁴ 90% dead in trespasses and sins.

"And you hath he quickened, who were..."¹⁵ partially affected by sin.

What is Paul saying to the Ephesians? He says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."¹⁶ And then he talks about the grace of God. He says, "Now here is what has happened to you."

Folks, when you contemplate, you realize. Listen to me. When you realize and recognize that we have absolutely, by nature, no spiritual wherewith all and goods to be right with God contrary to the preaching and the teaching that we have had and that we have listened to all of our lives?

All of our lives we have heard preachers. They preach sermons. Then they get into this mode of the invitation and we are talking about getting people manipulated emotionally somehow or another for them to make a decision to accept Christ and to ask Christ to come into their hearts.

Folks, that is... that is heresy. The point of it is that we are spiritually dead. And I have got news for you. Not 95% dead, not 90% dead, not 99.9% dead and one tenth of one percent alive. We are talking about horizontally dead with no good, with no wherewithal, none whatsoever. Man is hopelessly lost and helpless, dead in his trespasses. He is spiritually dead with no good to respond to God.

But more than that he doesn't only have... he doesn't have spiritual life, but he thinks that he does.

Listen to what he says. "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."¹⁷

¹³ See Ephesians 2:3

¹⁴ Ephesians 2:1

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ephesians 2:2

In times past how did we live? We lived according to the course of the world. We lived according to the prince of the power of the air. You see the dictates and the things that he threw at us.

And then he says in verse three, “Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”¹⁸

I want to tell you. It is a condition of mankind, this fallen world and we are in desperate straits. We are in a helpless way in ourselves. We are in a place that we cannot help ourselves.

As a matter of fact, when the apostle Paul comes to the conclusion where he is proving the guilt of all mankind in the book of Romans, does he not come up with a list of Old Testament verses of Scripture where he... where he in a sense he... he adds it all up. And he says, “There is none righteous, no, not one. They are all unprofitable. They are all gone astray. There is none that seek God, no not one. Their mouths are full of poison of... well, full of poison. And the way of God they have not known.”¹⁹

And then when we come to the conclusion of this we find that Paul says, “For we know by the law there is knowledge of sin and we know that whatever the law saith, it speaketh to them that are under the law that every mouth may be stopped and the whole world become guilty before God.”²⁰

Now, folks, that is the plight and the condition of man.

Have you ever recognized and realized that I do not have the life of God within me save for the mercies that are coming from the Lord Jesus Christ and then he imparts in us? “And you hath he quickened.”²¹

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,
Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,
(by grace ye are saved;)²²

Now, folks, when I look at this passage and when I look at the passage that we are... that we used for our springboard here, the passage when the Lord Jesus is saying, “Depart from me ye that work iniquity, I never knew you.”²³

Of those our folks, you see, that have gone through fleshly mechanics and motions under the religious umbrella to do some kinds of things for the cause of Christ, but yet at the

¹⁸ Ephesians 2:3

¹⁹ See Romans 3:11-13

²⁰ See Romans 3:19,20

²¹ Ephesians 2:1

²² Ephesians 2:4-5

²³ See Matthew 7:23

same time they have never been quickened. They have never been the recipient of the life of God. They were never saved from on high. They have never had the power of conversion take place in their heart. They are spiritually dead.

And then Paul continues and he says:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.²⁴

And so when we contemplate, we realize that we ask the question. “Lord, I don’t understand.”

We must understand the work of the grace of God. We must understand the condition of man. We must understand what needs to happen in our lives, folks. It is not my job and my responsibility to stand before you and then somehow or another say, “Let’s figure out a way [?] that when we come in here on Sunday mornings let’s figure out a way of how we can have an emotional effect and an effect upon those that will come and let’s see if we can get them emotionally worked up in some kind of mindset.”

And then you prepare... you see the stage for the environment for me to come and to preach. And then I stand before you. And then I come with a message and at the end that I say, “How can I now manipulate and work so in them that they will respond for the things of Christ.”

That is modern day evangelism.

It was about 10 years ago in Oklahoma City, First Southern Baptist in Dell City. Tom Ellis was the pastor. They had the power team come in and in the power team, the power team was there a week. And after it was all said and done thousands of young kids came, thousands. And I mean the power team they got up there with their extraordinary efforts, energies and demonstrating—quote—the power of God in breaking bricks and tearing up phone books, mighty men, strong men. You see, when you look at them you say, “Oh, my, look at the physical strength.” Blowing up hot water bottles for Jesus.

And the thousands that responded... The reason I know this is that the lady that was our pianist she worked over there at First Southern and it was about six months after it was all done. They tried to follow up with the so called—quote—1400 decisions that were made for the Lord Jesus. And the educational minister of education said, he said, “I want this book closed. I am done with that,” because, you see, they tried to follow up on these that had—quote—made a profession of faith and a decision for Christ. And there was nothing but a... an emotional being worked up that had absolutely no concrete connection with being born from above and being stripped to the place that brings us to the place

²⁴ Ephesians 2:8-10

where I cry and call up on God, “O wretched man that I am! who shall [save] me from the body of this death?”²⁵

We must understand what happens when a person gets saved. And we can't be sentimental here, folks. Listen to me. What happens when a person gets saved? What happens? Is it merely mouthing a prayer? What happens when a person truly gets saved? What happens when the breath of the Holy Spirit, you see, quickens us? “And you hath he quickened, [that] were dead in trespasses and sins.”²⁶

What happened? What happens when a corpse is quickened? What happens? Life is being breathed into that corpse. There is life.

I am really troubled. I tell you, I am so troubled about Christianity in the United States.

You know, we have been praying for revival. Folks, we need to get away from revival. Do you want me to tell you what we need to be praying for? We need to pray for spiritual awakening.

I am telling you. I constantly hear from people about those that at one time had made a profession of faith. At one time they have gone through the baptismal waters and they shook the preacher's hand. And I mean years have past. There has never been an evidence of holiness and righteousness and godliness in their lives. And I hear you say to me, “Pastor, he has been saved.”

God doesn't have any stillborns. There is no such thing as stillborn babies. When God saves somebody they will have the DNA of God in them. And, folks, that is all throughout the Scriptures. We do not understand what happens when a person gets saved. We do not understand the new birth. We don't understand the why. Why does he save us?

Let me tell you what we do. We don't preach it and we don't declare it. We simply say, “Do you want to go to heaven? Anybody here that want to go to heaven raise your hand. Ok. Now those of you that are not saved would you come down here and I will repeat a prayer after you? And let me hear what I would do if I would do that. Those of you that have raised your hand and you say, ‘I want to get saved.’ You come up here and I say, ‘Will you repeat this prayer after me?’”

Folks, that is not salvation.

Do you want me to tell you what I do? If I know that somebody is working in the lives of people let me tell you what I tell them to do. I say, “What you need is not something that I can do for you.” I will leave them in the room where I am at and I am leaving them. And I say, “You can stay in there as long as you want to. But you have got to do business with God and God is doing business with you.”

²⁵ Romans 7:24

²⁶ Ephesians 2:1

Do we understand? Do we truly understand the why? Why does he save us and what is it that he has in mind? We don't preach it. We simply say, "Do you want to go to heaven? Repeat this prayer after me and then it is done."

What about the fact that you see the spiritual deadness and being a child of wrath even as others and following after your own lusts and after the dictates of Satan and the world? What about that when you come to the place of where is repentance here? Where is a turning from ungodliness? Where is it to say, "I have bowed before the Savior?" Where is that that I want to bow before him and crown him as my Lord and I want to follow him?

"Pastor, why is that?"

And I really believe, folk, honestly. And I am not patting myself on the back. I will tell you what. I cannot get away from this passage. I can't do it. When I started out in January to say we are going to take a tour through the Sermon on the Mount I had no realization that we were going to preach three sermons from chapter seven in that particular passage.

But, you see, I cannot get away from it for the very fact that I am desirous to see you alive for Christ and that instead of my worry and concern about, Don, what is it that I can do to enroll people in discipleship training that those that will come face to face with the Lord Jesus, they will have the same response as what we find in the book of Acts of those that were saved that said, "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and in the breaking of bread and worship and prayer."²⁷

Let me tell you in a modern day and where we are in 2008 I almost tremble in my boots when somebody walks the aisle because I wonder. I wonder if in two weeks that which is on fire for God that very moment, I wonder if in two weeks that it is still a reality.

I am speaking the truth to you. I am not scolding you. My interest is this. It is that each and every one of you, visitor and member alike, that you will understand what it is when God saves a person and what happens to that person. It is not just simply making a decision at [?] and putting a nail in a cross. And you are on an emotional and spiritual high and then three months later you are back down to reality where you are and then the Lord Jesus Christ is simply constantly thrown in front of your face and say, "You need to do this and you need to do that and you need to do this and here is what God wants you to do."

And, I mean, we are wondering about how in the world how can we move these people along that have professed the Lord Jesus.

I believe the pulpits have failed. I believe we are not plain and I believe we have been afraid.

²⁷ See Acts 2:42

You see this kind of preaching do you know what it does? God's people will say, "Amen, that is what I want." But then there are those who do not know the grace of God. Do you want me tell you what Satan does the very moment, the very moment even right now he will say, "This guy is way out of left field. You can go somewhere else and they will make you feel good."

I mean you will have the spiritual interpreter dancers. You have the big stage presentation. You have got the... I mean when we are all said and done and when we leave we say, "Oh, that was nice. Wasn't that wonderful?"

But I want to tell you. I am not interested in whether you... my interest is this: that you come face to face with the holiness of God and that you shrink before his face and that you fall on your face and that you say, "Oh, Lord, have mercy on me a sinner. Save me. Save me."

And so we must consider the work of God in saving us. You see, when you think about the apostle Paul when he talks about himself... and here is a guy, what an example, you see. I mean here is a guy that at one time hated all of the things of Christ. This guy was a somebody in the Pharisees. He belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. He was a member of the Sanhedrin. He was somebody.

What happened to this guy? I've got news for you. He was not looking for the Lord Jesus. And do you know what? You are here this morning and I wonder if the Lord Jesus is looking for you. You may not be here looking for the Lord Jesus here this morning. You may be here for other reasons. And for whatever reasons you are that you are here, I wonder if the Lord would not stop you on Wekiwa Road this morning and cause you to come face to face with the glories of the Lord Jesus even as he took this guy. I mean I am talking about a religious somebody that according to the law was blameless. There was no fault to be found in this guy. This guy was somebody respectable. He was upright with everything that he had done.

The holy Christ, our Lord and Savior, he saves sinners.

Let me tell you. As I study these passages and I as I work them over every week, you know, the questions that I ask, Brian, is I ask myself: Do I know the Lord? But more than that: Does he know me?

What happened to this guy, Saul of Tarsus? What happened to him? Let me tell you what happened to him. God saved him. The Lord Jesus saved him. The Holy Spirit saved him. What happened to this man? This man was... this life... his life was radically changed.

Isn't that what we need? Isn't that what we need? Isn't that what we need, that we need a life that is radically changed and that we would have a sense in the heart of the love of God in our lives and it would be that which would move and motivate us?

You know, when Frankie and I were dating she could save 44 years of a happy marriage. The first few years in our marriage was pretty rugged and it was not rugged because of her. It was rugged because of me. I was an arrogant, proud and selfish man.

I remember it was the first or second Christmas or it was one of the holidays she prepared a meal and she didn't know. She was young, 20 years old. She did the... cooking was not on her agenda. And I remember she had, I don't know, some kind of a meat dish and a cake and I don't know what all, all in the oven at the same time. And then when it came out it was a little bit on the dry side.

I am not sure if I ever said that I am sorry about that, but I said, "I am not eating this garbage," that is what I said.

What happened to me? In the course of it all because of the Word of God and because of full preaching and being exposed to the truth of the Scriptures what I was, a child of wrath even as others with the wrath of God abiding on me that I came and I was made aware of the fact that I am in a heap of trouble. I am lost and undone.

Paul says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us."²⁸ If you want to know what a Christian is, a Christian is not somebody that has a bunch of dos and don'ts. Listen to me. Do you get it?

"For he hears these sayings of mine and doeth them..."²⁹

But, you see, what the Lord has in mind in all of that is this. "If you love me, you keep my commandments."³⁰

You see what we need and what Christianity is is a love for Christ. And it is the love of Christ that enables us to respond when things are inconvenient, when it is not on my schedule or when somehow or another it demands from me time and energy and money and it is a love of Christ that causes us to say, "Where? Who am I? Which direction am I going?" It is a love for Christ.

I mean you take this Pharisee that raised the banner of the Lord Jesus high over his house and you look at this man's life and what all that he experienced. Do you know what he experienced? He is in Corinth a year and a half preaching the gospel. And I mean he leaves and he hears word that there is division and he writes and there are members in that church that have all kinds of problems with him and even questioning him as far as his apostleship. And he takes all kinds of guff and persecution and all kinds of things from within that church. And then wherever he is at preaching, whether it is in the synagogues or wherever it is at you can see there is a trail that is following him. Either there is riot or there is a spiritual outpouring where God saves people. I mean you read in the Scriptures and this man suffered a great deal.

²⁸ 2 Corinthians 5:14

²⁹ See Matthew 7:24

³⁰ See John 14:15

How in the world could he do that? “For the love of Christ constraineth us.”³¹

And then he says, “And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live,”³² Listen to me!

And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.³³

And then he said, “Therefore...”

What happens when a person gets saved, young people? I don't have to get on your case every week for you to study your lessons on the survival kit. I have got news for you. If you are alive you can tell that if you are alive that when you come home from school you say, “I'm hungry. Momma, what we got to eat?”

“Well, look in the icebox.”

“Is that all? I'm hungry.”

“Did you have lunch?”

“Oh, they had something there. Pizza.”

“You are not going to like pizza.”

“I'm hungry.”

A good testimony of the fact that you are alive, you have an appetite. And listen to me. If you know the Lord Jesus in a saving way, there is an appetite for the Word of God. You see, the pastor, the preacher, the Sunday school director or the youth director, he doesn't have to manipulate you that, “Oh, on Monday I am going to read a study or I am going to read a lesson.”

I know that, you see, there is a lot of other things that come in there. But there is a desire inside of you that has been placed there by the Holy Spirit of new life. You have an appetite and desire to hear from God's Word.

So what happens when a person is saved? What happens?

³¹ 2 Corinthians 5:14

³² 2 Corinthians 5:15

³³ 2 Corinthians 5:15-16

“Therefore if any man be in Christ,”³⁴ He is what? “He is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”³⁵

Salvation is what?

I have got all kinds of notes. We are not going to get done with this passage.

The old man has died Did you hear that? When a person gets saved the old man has died and, you see, it is not that that person, you see, he still has... the dominion has died. Old flesh, remaining flesh is still there. Paul makes that very plain and clear. Romans chapter six or five, the end of it. “But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”³⁶ And then he goes on, “Do we continue in sin that grace would abound?”³⁷ [?]

Do we continue in sin that grace would abound?”³⁸

And then he said, “God forbid. We who are dying to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?” Is that what he says?

No, it is not what he said. What is he saying? “We who have died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?”³⁹

And then he begins to teach us what happens and that while once we were servants of sin and the flesh. We were servants, but now we have been set free by the living Lord Jesus Christ. And he goes all through that.⁴⁰

Do you know what modern day pulpits do and modern day churches do? We are just constantly in the business and trying to constantly kill the old man.

Folks, the old man, according to the Word of God, has died. The dominion has died. Yes, he sticks up his ugly head, you see. But the old man has died. And there is new life. You see, there is a new creation. The dominion of self and flesh has been broken. There is godly life.

And, you see, one of the things that we see here and the Word of God is very plain is this. That we come to the place and realize that when the Lord saves us he gives us a new heart, a new nature, a new direction and a new desire. And you don't have to force and manipulate and play games. You don't have to be the round peg into a square hole. You see, when God gets a hold of a person and saves him, there is new life.

³⁴ 2 Corinthians 5:17

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Romans 5:20

³⁷ See Romans 6:1

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ See Romans 6:2

⁴⁰ See Romans 6

Do you believe that? Do you believe that? Are there evidences of that, that there is new life? Is there a difference between you and what you were before you made a profession of faith? Is there a change of life and a change of direction and a change of heart? Is there a desire to be holy you see?

“Oh,” you say, “Brother Bob, don’t scare me with a new word.”

That’s another new word that kind of scares people when we say you need to be holy.

The writer to the Hebrews says, “Without holiness no man will see God.”⁴¹

And so you find here that, you see, that we don’t need to manipulate and force and that what. What we need to do preach that you are lost and undone. There is no spiritual goodness wherewithal. We preach the truth of the Scriptures that you turn and repent and then we preach the Lord Jesus Christ and mercy and we preach faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. You call on him and you ask him to change your heart.

And, folks, if there ain’t a new heart, you call on God and say, “Lord, I am not going to leave you until you bless me. Change my heart.”⁴²

And so we find, very plain and clear that the grace of God does something. And so we find, as we look at the Scripture, it said the work of God, you see, the result of grace, the effects of new life, we are getting new speech, a new heart, new affections, that you see that there is something that happens when God saves people. There is a love for God. There is a love for people. You see, the Lord in his mercy and grace he adopts us into his family. He gives us the heart of adoption whereby we cry, “Abba, papa, father.”⁴³ There is a relationship that he gives us as children and as the heavenly Father, the Lord Jesus our elder brother. And there is a heart and a desire of worship and to fellowship. There is a desire to be holy and righteous and to pursue and to follow after him.

Every church will just about in this country will bear out a testimony to this. Tonight when you come back tonight there will be a handful of people comparing to what we have today. And then on Wednesday it is even smaller than that.

Now that bothers me. It does. Now I know that providentially some of you can’t come on Sunday nights or Wednesdays. But when you look at the early church and you look and see what happened in the early church it was that there was this heart and desire to meet with God’s people and they continued steadfast in the apostles’ doctrine and breaking of bread.⁴⁴

⁴¹ See Hebrews 12:14

⁴² See Genesis 32:26

⁴³ See Romans 8:15

⁴⁴ See Acts 4:24

You see, there is something. When God gets a hold of us and saves us let me tell you what he does. He gives us a heart for God. And let me tell you what else he gives us. He gives us a heart for people. He gives us a heart for God's people.

I enjoy being around God's people. I enjoy being around God's people and worshipping and praising and blessing God. I enjoy that. That is part of our lives. You know, that has been our life. Forty-four years we have been married and for about 42 years that I have been plugged into the life of the church.

And I tell you what. The saints that are upon this earth, they are the majestic ones in whom there is my delight. I want to be around God's people. And I am concerned. I am not able to look into the heart. But I am concerned about the different groups and I really wonder as we look at Christianity in our day and around our United States, do we believe and preach in a regenerate church membership?

What does that mean? Do we believe in membership of people that have a living relationship with the Lord Jesus because they have been born from above?

That bothers me. It bothers me here because we have got all kinds of numbers. I don't know how many members Calvary Baptist Church has. I have no idea. And then when I look at those that are on our membership and then I ask questions. I say, "Well, what happened to these people. Where are they?"

"Well, they got upset with the former pastor or somebody happened to them and they are no longer... they are not going anywhere."

And then, I mean, we can go over lists. I have got lists of people, of folks that I have tried to make...somehow or another a connection with that what happened to them. And then when it is all said and done, it is a sad testimony. Well, there at one time they professed the Lord Jesus. They went to the baptism of water. They were here a while and something happened and they have fallen by the wayside.

If we believe what the Word of God says, something is not right. You can't just simply say they are in a backslidden state.

Listen to me. All the Father loves he chastens and he scourges every son whom he receives.⁴⁵ And everybody that is part of the family of God when my little grandson back here, little Rhett, when he gets out of line with something. I know that he has got a daddy that loves him and his daddy will say to him, "Rhett, they are going to serve spinach at school. I want you to eat it there. I want you to learn something there," because, you see, he loves you.

And the parallel is this. It is that all of those that have named the name of the Lord Jesus, he says, "And if you are not chastened, if you are not disciplined by the father, then you

⁴⁵ See Hebrews 12:6

are bastards,” he says, “You are illegitimate children.”⁴⁶ The King James uses that word and he says, “You are not mine.”

And he says, “All that are mine are chastened and disciplined.” And then he says, “When I discipline, count it as joy.” You see, no chastening for the present seems to be joyful, but afterwards it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby.⁴⁷ And then he says, “Raise up, you see, them feeble knees and straighten up and follow peace with all men for without holiness no man will see God.”⁴⁸

Now, folks, that’s the truth.

Are you saved? Have you ever seen a radical change in your life? Don’t wait until we all must appear before the Lord Jesus and he says, “I don’t know you.”⁴⁹

And you say, “You know, I don’t understand. I was a member of Calvary Baptist Church. I came to Sunday school. I went to youth camp. I have done this and I have done all of that.”

And the Lord says, “I don’t know you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”⁵⁰

Have you been saved? Are you saved?

In closing I want to say, “Will you give it serious thought and prayer and say, ‘Lord, will you show me if I am truly saved?’” And then flee to him and say, “Lord, have mercy upon me sinner. Change my life and change my heart and change my nature and give me the affections, give me the affection, give me that love of Christ that Paul talks about that restrained him and caused him to act upon. Lord, will you give me that?”

Let’s pray.

Our Father in heaven, we come humbly before you. You know our hearts. We know that all things are open before you and you see the things the way they really are.

Oh, Holy Spirit, come and work in us. Quicken, grant faith and repentance. Give all of those things that are necessary to bring us near. Oh, Holy Spirit, quicken us and give us life that comes from you. Cause us to be born from above. Oh, Lord, I pray, give us a desire that will follow and pursue after you for the rest of our days. Work as only you can in Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Will you stand?

⁴⁶ See Hebrews 12:8

⁴⁷ See Hebrews 12:11

⁴⁸ See Hebrews 12:12-14

⁴⁹ See Matthew 7:23

⁵⁰ Matthew 7:23