

Exodus 31:18–32:29
Just How Bad are We?
February 26, 2012
Sermon Outline

Notes:

I. The Folly of Worldly Thinking

A. My Inability to Effect Change at NBC

B. Misguided Fantasies about Miracles (Scrooge)

Luke 16:30–31

³⁰ And he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ ³¹ He said to him, ‘*If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.*’ ”

C. The True nature of Our Rebellion

Psalm 36:1–2

¹ Transgression speaks to the wicked deep in his heart; there is no fear of God before his eyes. ² For he flatters himself *in his own eyes* that his iniquity cannot be *found out and hated*.

Key Idea

We do not need better proof from God, we need new hearts.

II. God is the Perfect Father

A. God’s Clear Expectations

Exodus 20:4-6

⁴ “You shall not make for yourself a *carved image*, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵ *You shall not bow down to them or serve them*, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Exodus 20:22–23

²² And the Lord said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the people of Israel: ‘*You have seen for yourselves that I have talked with you from heaven.*’²³ **You shall not make gods of silver to be with me, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold.**

B. Israel Accepts God’s Rules

Exodus 24:3, 7

³ Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the rules. And all the people answered with one voice and said, “***All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do.***”

⁷ Then he took *the Book of the Covenant* and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, “***All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.***”

III. The Flat Out Rejection of God’s Rule

A. The Heat of the Circumstances

Exodus 32:1

¹ When the people saw that *Moses delayed to come down* from the mountain, the people gathered themselves together to Aaron and said to him, “Up, make us gods who shall go before us. As for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”

B. Trusting What You Think You Know

“The *calf* is more precisely a young bull. Images of bulls were widely used in Ancient Near Eastern worship.” *

Exodus 32:4–6

⁴ And he received the gold from their hand and fashioned it with a *graving tool* and made a **golden calf**. And they said, “**These are your gods**, O Israel,

* Carson, D. A. (1994). *New Bible commentary : 21st century edition* (4th ed.) (Ex 32:1–6). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill., USA: Inter-Varsity Press.

who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!”⁵ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, “Tomorrow shall be a feast to the Lord [Yahweh].”⁶ And they rose up early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play. (NIV – “indulge in revelry”)

- C. Judging the Severity of the Crime by the Severity of the Punishment (Ex. 32:9–10, 25–28)

IV. The True Power of God Revealed in Jesus

- A. Not Just His Miracles...
B. Not Just His Warnings...

Matthew 13:40–43

⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, ⁴² and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. *He who has ears, let him hear.*

Romans 1:18, 32

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ...

³² *Though they know God’s righteous decree* that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

John 8:34

Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, *everyone who practices sin* **is a slave to sin.**”

- C. The Power of the Gospel/Good News!

Romans 5:8

⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

John 14:23–26

²³ Jesus answered him, “**If anyone loves me, he will keep my word**, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴ Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. ... ²⁵ “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. ²⁶ ***But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things*** ...

John 15:4

⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

D. Specific Implications:

1. Parenting
2. Battling Sin
3. Building the Church (Psalm 127:1a)

When I was considering becoming the pastor of the faith family I now lead, I thought and even said to other people, “This church has so many resources—so many gifts, so many talents, so many leaders, so much money. If this church could get behind a global purpose, it could shake the nations for the glory of God.”

I have since discovered that this was a woefully wrongheaded way to think. The reality is that it doesn’t matter how many resources the church has. The church I lead could have all the man-made resources that one could imagine, but apart from the power of the Holy Spirit, such a church will do nothing of significance for the glory of God.

In fact, I believe the opposite is true. The church I lead could have the least gifted people, the least talented people, the fewest leaders, and the least money, and this church under the power of the Holy Spirit could still shake the nations for his glory. †

† David Platt. *Radical*