

A Cure for Carnality - a Call to Be Steadfast - Part 1

by Alan Martin

The sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual growth and diligence in overcoming carnality and achieving maturity in our faith.

Scripture: Hebrews 3:12

Topics: "Carnality"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having the right spirit as a child of God. He references Apostle Paul's words in the Book of Romans, urging believers to never be lagging in spirit but to be fervent in serving the Lord. The preacher encourages those who may find themselves in a lukewarm or stagnant state of spiritual growth to humble themselves before God, confess their sins, and ask for a right heart. He also references the parable of the talents, highlighting the importance of being productive and faithful with the gifts and opportunities God has given us. The sermon concludes with a call for introspection and honesty, challenging individuals to evaluate how they prioritize their spiritual walk compared to other activities in their lives.

Transcript

It's been on my heart, I think, hopefully, I want it to be indelibly stamped upon yours, so that it's our corporate desire to be mature believers, to be finished, to be completed, for Christ not only to become the author of our faith, for Him to be the finisher. That's our, that's the goal, that's the express will of God, that's the calling for every person here. I'm called to preach, but every single one of us as a Christian is called to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

And it's that calling we're seeking to fulfill, and with that in mind, I want us to look this morning at our role in this process. The reason I want to look at our role is God's role is blameless. God has already provided everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him.

Christ has already become for us the wisdom from God, salvation, righteousness, and redemption. Every spiritual blessing has already been given in Christ Jesus, and for us, every single one of them is yes and amen. There's no question God has provided His grace.

He's provided more grace than we'll ever need. He'll never let us be tempted above what we're able, never has, never will. Not one time will He, or has He, ever let us be tempted above the grace He gives us and provides a way of escape in every temptation.

So I don't need to look at what He's provided. I want to focus on our role. What's our role in this process of coming to completion, of Christ becoming the finisher of our faith? And let's look where Paul starts here in 1 Corinthians 3. The very first verse of the chapter in verse 1, Let's establish right off the bat, not every Christian is spiritual.

Just because you're a Christian does not make you spiritual. There is such thing as a carnal Christian. What does that mean? Well, spiritual is one who relates much more to the activity of the Holy Spirit, much more sensitive to the movings of the Holy Spirit, spiritual fruits, spiritual leadings, spiritual workings, whereas a carnal person is much more related to the physical, his physical nature, his physical senses, sight, smell, touch, feeling.

So he's much more in tune with just the natural as opposed to the spiritual. And I want us to understand something. Carnality limits.

What does Paul say? I don't want to address you as spiritual? Is that what he said in verse 1? He's not able to. He wants to, but he's not able to. Therefore, understand this.

Carnality limits. And it doesn't just limit the hearer, it limits the messenger. It puts limits on what the messenger can actually say.

Notice he says in the same chapter, if you want to look at verse 6, 1 Corinthians 3, 6, he says, well, no, 2, 6, excuse me, 1 Corinthians 2, 6, we're a little backwards. 1 Corinthians 2, 6, he says, however, we do speak a message of wisdom, but to whom? The mature. Now this is what we're talking about.

We want to become mature. We want to become finished. We want to become completed.

Then we can hear the message of wisdom. But a carnal person cannot hear the same message that a mature person can. It's limited.

Also in the same chapter 2, verse 14 says, it indicates the natural man does not receive the things of the spirit because they are foolishness to him. He is not able to know them because they must be spiritually discerned. So being in a carnal state is an extremely limiting state.

And notice there back in 1 Corinthians 3, verse 1, that carnality is an evidence of a lack of progress, a lack of growth. Because he says he could not address them as spiritual, as carnal, and then how does he describe carnal? What does he follow that with in verse 1? Mere infants in Christ. Now there's something wrong here because carnality is one of the clearest indications that there has not been spiritual growth.

That the natural order of things has not occurred. Spiritual infants, you see, must be limited, as he says in verse 2, to milk. See there in verse 2? I fed you with milk and not with solid food.

For until now you are not yet able to receive it. Even now you're still not able. What's he saying in that is by now you ought to be able.

Even though you've had time to become mature, you are still an infant and your carnality limits you to only being able to handle certain food. What is the danger of giving an infant solid food? They choke. They

can't swallow.

And you know what the difficulty is? If there are some people because they have limited themselves, they are yet carnal, they cannot handle strong teaching because they choke on it. They just can't swallow it. I can't swallow that.

That's too hard. You're an infant. You're carnal.

If that strong teaching is for the mature. And you need solid food. That's why babies have to have their food.

When they begin, someone has to chew it up for them. I want you to notice also about verse 2. It says that you are not able. Neither yet now are you able.

That a carnal condition, and I want you to hear this word correctly, is a retarded condition. What does the word retarded mean? It means hindered, delayed, diminished capacity. It is a hindered, delayed, diminished spiritual capacity.

Because to retard someone means to render them more slow in progress. So a carnal Christian is a Christian who has retarded spiritual growth. They have not grown at the normal rate.

And it is a very limiting condition. We just need to understand that. Now, if we understand that carnality is a result of a retarded spiritual growth rate.

It is imperative that we begin to understand what retards spiritual growth. What hinders. What delays.

What restricts. What diminishes the capacity of spiritual growth. We must understand those things so we can lay aside them.

Rid our lives of those things. Now, the place to understand that clearer is a very similar passage to this found in Hebrews chapter 5. So turn with me to Hebrews chapter 5. And you will see this. Find verse 11.

When you find Hebrews the 5th chapter. Hebrews 5.11. Speaking about Christ and His high priest. The order of His high priesthood.

According to the order of Melchizedek. It says in verse 11. Speaking of Christ of whom we have much to say.

But it is hard to do what? It is hard to explain. Since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers.

You need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God. And you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness.

He is a babe. Solid food belongs to those who are mature. That is those who by reason of use have exercised their senses to discern good and evil.

Notice here. Paul the writer of Hebrews. Whoever that is.

Probably had an influence with Paul. But whoever the writer of Hebrews is. We do not know for sure.

Says I have much more to say this to you. But it is hard to explain. The word explain comes from the Greek word.

We get the English word hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is the art of finding the meaning of an author's words and phrases. And explaining it to others.

That is what hermeneutics is. What he is saying here is it is hard for me to explain to you what I am trying to say. And why is it hard for the writer of Hebrews to explain to them what he was wanting them to hear.

Because of what? They were what? They were dull of hearing. Dull of hearing is an evidence of a carnal spiritual state. The Greek word is epi.

Sense because. And it is interesting. It is a perfect tense.

You have become dull of hearing. Now the perfect tense in the Greek means this. You have gone through a process.

And it has reached a state of culmination. And it has become a fixed state. Now this is the wrong direction for a Christian.

To go through the process where you suddenly become dull. That is the wrong direction. We are supposed to be coming ever increasingly quick to hear.

Quick to receive. Quick to understand. And here they have gone through the wrong process.

And now they have become and are dull of hearing. Now what is the word dull here? It means sluggish. It means lethargic.

It is rather than progressing towards quick and diligent hearing. These Christians have developed a spiritual lethargy. A spiritual sluggishness of hearing.

You know this cripples the very foundation of faith. How would being lethargic in hearing cripple the very foundation of faith? How does faith come by? Therefore if faith comes by hearing and you are a lethargic hearing. What kind of faith are you going to have? It is going to be lethargic.

It is going to be dull. It is going to be retarded. It is going to be limited.

It is going to have a diminished capacity. Directly because you are not hearing quickly. That is how critical this is.

This cripples, it limits. Like for example. So if lethargic hearing means a lethargic hearing of faith.

Faith is how we receive. Faith is how we were strengthened. Faith is how we overcome the world.

Faith is how we resist the evil one. So a person hearing lethargically receives slower than he should. It takes him longer to be strengthened.

It takes him longer to overcome the world. And it takes him longer to learn to resist the devil than he should. He still obeyed when he ought to be grown.

When he ought to be mature. And it results in lethargic faith leaving us. What would this person be left in a state of? Vulnerable, weak, immature, unstable, unproductive.

Self-limiting. Self-limiting. And you know, but it is bad that it is self-limiting.

But it also limits the teacher. I don't know if you have been in our public schools. But we do have some teachers that are with us.

But do you know how fast a teacher can teach? Fast as they learn. There is an ever-diminishing capacity when the hearer is lethargic. Regardless of the amount of grace that God has provided.

Now to see this, the danger of this. Let's look and see what this might affect. If you are still in Hebrews, flip over to the 6th chapter.

And find verses 11 and 12. What would spiritual lethargy affect? Progress most definitely. Look with me in verses 11 and 12 of chapter 6. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end.

That you do not become sluggish. Same word. But imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

So what could lethargic hearing actually affect? It will affect whether you inherit the promise. What promise? Just your rewards? May have less rewards than the next guy in heaven? And this is what he has promised us. Even eternal life.

This will affect your eternal destiny. Being a diminished, retarded, slow, carnal Christian. Can actually affect your eternal destiny.

This is what the word teaches. I don't know if systematic theology teaches this. I'm not concerned.

This is what the word teaches. It affects your spiritual inheritance. Now notice this in verse 11.

If you have a pencil and you want to strike through a word in your Bible. I'll give you a chance to strike through one here. Verse 11.

And we desire each one of you to show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end. Strike the. It's not there in the original.

It's not there. This is something I don't understand why the translators do this. But it's the same word.

The same. I could not address you as mature. The word is the same form of the Greek word to lie on.

And it really should say until the full hope of assurance of maturity. Of completion. Of being finished.

Not to an end of the time. But to the end of a goal. The purpose of maturity.

We are born into Christ for one purpose. To be finished. To grow to maturity.

To be productive. To bear fruit which brings glory to God. That's what we were called for.

And if we're not careful. Spiritual lethargy will affect and hinder us from reaching maturity. Now notice in verse 11 what the cure for this is.

And we desire that each one of you show this same diligence to the full assurance of hope and to the end. So the answer for spiritual lethargy is what? Diligence. Now you know what the Greek word, if you've been here for a while.

Some of you might remember what the Greek word for diligence is. It's spudeo. Spudeo.

Anybody remember what the English word comes from this Greek word? Speed. That makes sense. God is very plain, isn't he? The answer to being slow is being fast.

Makes a lot of sense, doesn't it? It's not complicated. If your growth is slow. God has a word for you.

Speed it up. Speed it up. Show some diligence.

Be quick to hear. The only thing we're called to be slow to do is we're called to be quick to hear, slow to? Anger. And slow to speak.

But we are to be quick hearers. We are to quickly apply what we're taught. We are to quickly learn the word of God.

We are to quickly learn to walk in the Spirit. And if you don't, it could affect your inheritance. Be diligent.

This is the same word that is used in 2 Peter. Turn there in 2 Peter chapter 1. You're not too far from there. Just back a couple of books.

There's a book of James. 1 Peter, back to 2 Peter chapter 1. As you get there, answer this question. What causes spiritual lethargy? I want to make sure we're grasping.

What causes spiritual lethargy? Dullness of what? Hearing. Spiritual lethargy is caused by dullness of hearing. What's the cure for spiritual lethargy? Diligent hearing.

Being quick to hear. Okay, now let's read this and see if you see it very clearly here. In 2 Peter chapter 1 starting with verse 5. 2 Peter chapter 1 verse 5. But also for this reason, give all what? Now if you have the NIV, I believe it says make every effort.

If you have the King James, I think it says giving all diligence. What does the American Standard say there, Steve? Apply all diligence. And we understand the word, the idea of diligence is speed or quickness.

So here's the answer. Here's what you're to do. If you really want to make sure you're doing well.

For this reason, it says, because God has promised us. Back up with me to verse 3 and you'll see this in context. His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness.

Through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and virtue. By which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises. So that through these promises you may be partakers of the divine nature.

And having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. So in the light of the fact that God has done all His part. And through the promises He's given you.

You can escape the corruption of the world. And you can become partakers of the divine nature itself. For this reason, give all diligence.

Quickly add to your faith virtue. Quickly add to virtue knowledge. Quickly add to knowledge self-control.

Quickly add to self-control godliness. Quickly add to godliness brotherly kindness. Quickly add to brotherly kindness love.

And if you are quickly adding these things to your life. You know what they'll keep you from being? They'll keep you from being ineffective and unproductive. Now all of you gentlemen here believe in capitalism I'm assuming.

Because we live in America and none of us is. I haven't seen anybody advocating communism. In a capitalist society who are the workers that get a raise? The workers that are both effective and productive.

And what do you do to workers that are not effective and not productive? You fire them. So will God. He's going to fire His unproductive and ineffective children.

He's going to fire them. Like what did Jesus say in the parable of the servant of the talents? The first servant came back and saying, Master your talents have produced five more. And what did he say to him? Well done.

What about the one he only gave two to? He produced two. What did he say to him? Well done. What about the one who says, Master I was afraid and I knew you to be a hard man.

That you reap what you didn't sow. And so I was afraid and I hid your money in the bank. And here's your talent back.

What did he say to this man? Wicked first, lazy second. You wicked, lazy servant. He had him cast outside in the outer darkness.

And he said take his talent from him and give it to someone who will be productive. Give it to someone who will be effective. God has not given His grace in Christ for your comfort.

He's given it for His glory. God has not given His grace in Christ for your comfort zone to get you to heaven. He's given it to bring Him glory.

And if you try to take His grace and you make it your comfort zone, you're going to find out when you stand before Him, that's not why He gave it. He'll take it back. I don't know why this shouldn't be understood.

I want everyone here to know your eternal life is secure. And for this reason I bring up these things. Look with me in this passage and find it.

Find it in this passage how you can know your calling in election is sure. I'll give you a hint. Look in verses 9-11.

And you discover to me the real way of being sure you've got a heavenly home waiting, that you've got a mansion over the hilltop, streets of gold, that that's all in your future. How can you make that sure? If you're diligent. There is no promise for the lethargic.

There is no promise for the spiritually retarded, still infant Christian. There is no promise for them. Those who are not diligent cannot have spiritual assurance.

They can sing about heaven all day long, but in their heart of hearts they can't have assurance. That's where they're going. The way you make your calling in election sure is that you give diligence in these matters.

And if you are diligent in these matters it says, if ye do these things, what? You shall never fall. I don't want anyone here to fall. But the only way to not fall is to be diligently doing these things.

Now back to Hebrews and you'll see, we confirm this as we try to wrap this up this morning. As you turn there, I want to bring out the Greek word for if you do these things. We're going to be back in Hebrews chapter 5. I want to mention verse 10 of 2 Peter.

Chapter 1 again. When it's saying, for if you do these things, in the Greek it's poiuntos. It's an aorist participle, meaning the one doing these things.

And you know what English word we get out of it? Practice. Now what are we talking about? What's our goal here? What's the concern of our heart? What are we wanting for each of us? We're wanting each of us to come to maturity, to completion. The Bible has a word it uses for maturity or completion.

It's called being... Someone said it? Perfect. It's called being perfect. Guess what y'all? In English we all know this.

Practice makes perfect. That's what makes you perfect. That's what finishes you practicing diligently your faith.

There is no way to come to a perfection or maturity without practice. Now let me ask you this. There's several here.

You guys, I'm going to put you on the spot. Guitar players. I'm going to put guitar players on the spot here.

I'd like every man or boy here who's been learning a little bit about guitar to raise your hand. Okay, we've got some around. Okay, we've got quite a few.

Let me ask you guys a question. How much progress do you think you would make playing a guitar if the only time you practiced was during the lesson? But you faithfully and diligently practiced every single lesson. Let's say your guitar teacher was gracious.

Usually the lessons are only half hour. But let's say you had an hour every week and you diligently practiced that hour. How much progress do you think you'd make? Little to none.

You see why I don't count coming to church as much? You can come to church all your life. But if you are not diligently practicing these things every single day, you aren't going to make any progress. If you don't have a diligent Bible study on your own, you are retarded as a Christian.

You are diminished as a Christian. You are limiting yourself as a Christian. If you do not have a regular disciplined time of prayer, you are limiting yourself as a Christian.

You are hindering the grace of God at work in you. You are causing yourself to become ineffective and unproductive. And it's not God's fault.

The only way to come to maturity is practicing your faith. Putting these things into practice. Jesus said it this way in the parable.

To him who has, what? More shall be given and he will have an abundance. There is no excuse for those who have been in the Lord 20 and 30 years to not know the word of God thoroughly. There is no excuse.

None. None. I allow for none.

There is no excuse for it. I didn't say 30 years old. In the Lord that long.

And God will allow for these things. That being in the Lord that long and not knowing him well and becoming mature is an indication of negligence. And negligence, the Bible says, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? This is my concern.

I want, when we stand before the Lord, we all want to stand before the Lord and I want for you to be able to stand before the Lord blameless and without fault. Now, you know what one of the major faults I want to deal with right now? Is I don't want God to call you to account for what? Negligence. And there is mercy with him.

There is mercy with him. But he is not going to be merciful to those who have presumed upon his grace. Who have neglected to quickly, diligently, regularly and constantly, by faith, develop their spiritual life.

The Bible says this, now that you've tasted that the Lord is good. It says crave pure spiritual milk so that you can do what? Grow up into your salvation. God is, I'm sorry, babies are cute to us.

But God is not interested in having a bunch of babies in heaven. You know I'm not against babies. But a baby, I mean, I have a baby.

I have a 16 year old baby. And I know it's not natural and I love her. But she can't help it.

That's an altogether different thing. When you are a baby because you have failed to diligently apply. You've not diligently added to your faith, virtue.

You've not diligently added to virtue, knowledge. You've not diligently added to knowledge, self-control. You've not diligently added to self-control, godliness.

If you are not diligently adding these things to yourself. It's going to be limiting to your spiritual life. And I fear for all who allow that to happen.

Now, this is true. Can you swallow me? Am I choking? Cause anybody to struggle? Maybe you haven't heard this before. That's not my fault.

That's not the fault of God's word. That's not the fault of the Holy Spirit. There's an answer for this.

If there's anyone here that is in a state of a retarded, diminished, slower than should be spiritual growth. Right now the Lord wants to grant you repentance. He wants to be merciful.

This message is not to condemn anyone. This message is to bring to light the grave danger of spiritual lethargy. And give you a chance to humble your heart.

And ask God to cleanse you. And to give you a renewal of the right kind of spirit. David himself, the man after God's own heart, got himself in this kind of state.

And he ended up on the... You know when King should have been out to war. He was enjoying himself on the roof of the palace. Kind of living the easy life.

And then while he was doing that, you know the story. He saw a young lady taking a bath. And it went from bad to worse.

Adultery, murder, and a hard heart. And when God's mercy... How did God's mercy come to him? God's mercy came to him at the finger of a prophet. Saying, you're the man.

David just declared, that man deserves to die. And the prophet looked at him and said, that's you. That man's you.

Well all of you would agree that spiritual lethargy... Being ineffective and unproductive is a horrible state. Robbing God of the glory He desires from our being fruitful. And if you said that in your heart, and you are that way... You're the man.

You're the man. And you know what David prayed when he was confronted that way? David said this. David said, against thee and thee only have I sinned.

And done that which is evil in thy sight. And when David admitted he had done evil in the sight of God. God said through the prophet, the Lord had forgiven you this sin.

But not till he said, I have sinned. And done that which is evil. And if you will confess with your mouth this morning.

I'd like you to bow your head. Close your eyes. If this is your case, the only remedy for you is to admit before God.

You've done evil. You have evilly neglected His grace. You've neglected this great salvation.

And humble your heart. And then finish the prayer that David made. He said, create in me a clean heart, O God.

And renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence. Take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation. And renew a right spirit within me. The only right spirit for a son or a daughter of God.

Is described by Apostle Paul in the book of Romans. As never be lagging in spirit. But be fervent in spirit.

Serving the Lord. And so brothers and sisters, wherever you are with God. If you find yourself in a lukewarm, limiting, diminished, retarded state of spiritual growth.

Your answer right now is to humble your heart before God. Confess your sin. And ask for a right heart.

Let's take a few moments and just let people do business with God. I just feel led to say, if anyone desires to pray out loud. If you feel prompted to just call out to the Father.

I want you to be free to do that. Not for us to hear, but still I just want to make that possible to you. I want to help here.

I just want to help, I want you to listen very carefully. You can keep your eyes closed. You can look up this way.

But I want to help people be honest. It says, when He, the Spirit of Truth comes. He will reprove the world of guilt.

Reprove the world of sin. Reprove means to bring to the light. I'm just going to ask, just on several instances.

For us to be honest with ourselves. For example, you young men that are playing guitar. And you enjoy playing.

I'm going to ask you to make a comparison with the amount of time you spend doing that. To the amount of time you spend developing your spiritual walk. Where do you stand? How does God see it? That's all that matters.

How do you see it? How does God see it? What about you young men that love basketball? You know how much you play. I don't. Ask yourself this question.

Does God see you applying the same effort to grow spiritually? That He sees you applying to become better at something as meaningless as basketball? What about you young ladies that may be sewing or quilting or knitting or crocheting? Learning to cook. Does God see you applying the same level of diligence to your spiritual growth as He sees you giving to these things? Nothing is hidden from the eyes to whom we must give account. And how about any of us? Any of us that have the ability to read.

I'm not speaking to someone who has a limited capacity to read. But those of us that have an ability to read. What has God witnessed in your life? How much effort has He seen you putting in to getting very acquainted with His Word? Not much time.

Everyone here, especially from youth on, has the ability to pray. What has God seen? This week and over the last months, how much time have you committed to regularly, diligently spending time in prayer? Because confession is meaningless if you're not saying the same thing that God says. That's what the word confession means.

It means to say the same. And just saying, I'm sorry, but not really dealing with the real issue is not genuine confession. And this is the key.

If the reason you are where you are today spiritually, because you have been limiting God, your confession needs to be, I've limited you. I've neglected your grace. I have hindered your work in my life.

And I want to humble myself and repent. And I want to ask you to change my heart. And cleanse me from this sluggish, dull, lethargic, apathetic spirit of disobedience.

And create in me a clean heart. And renew a fervent, joyful, hungering and thirsting spirit after righteousness. So that we can become fruitful and productive.

That's where we're going. That's the purpose of our being together here, saints. It's not to hold a weekly religious ritual.

It's to make sure that there are in none of us an evil heart of unbelief departing from the living God. But to exhort one another daily. That's what today's message has been about.

It's been about exhorting us on the godliness. Everybody, I would ask you to look up here as we close. Roger, go ahead brother.

Thank you. Thank you. Our desire is to bring God glory.

That's our purpose to meet together. Anybody else have anything to add? Just want to give you that opportunity. Got a few minutes here.

I'll take a minute. Any of the men? The whole key here is not to condemn anyone. God, and actually this is what's precious.

Only God has power to condemn someone. And the only people that God is going to condemn is those people that refuse grace. The grace of God comes and seeks to turn us while there is yet time.

We should all know by now if you've been here for a while. What does God do to the people He doesn't love? He lets them go. Go on, believe what you want.

Deceive yourself. But if He loves you, what does He do? He chastens you. He chastens everyone He accepts as a son.

And we need chastening. And we especially need chastening in the area of lack of diligence. Because the Lord wants us to be fruitful.

Anybody else? Thank you. That's a good point. There's a good word in that.

I shared just recently a testimony as I was witnessing to someone. Do you remember the parable about the vineyard owner that went out and hired different people at various hours of the day? In the morning he went out and hired someone. He agreed them to pay for a day's work for Daenerys.

And then he went back mid-morning and he found others there. And he went back at noon. And he went back at mid-afternoon.

And then he went back with one hour left in the day. Hired them. And said, come.

He said, come work for me. I'll pay you what's fair. That's all he told them.

I'll pay you what's fair. And at the end of the day, he called this foreman and said, OK, call everyone I've hired beginning with those I hired last. And pay them.

And so the guys came up that he hired last. And the owner gave the foreman and said, pay them a Daenerys. Paid them a Daenerys.

Paid them a Daenerys. Whoa. A full day's work.

That just worked an hour. Well, the guys at the end of the line were who? The guys that worked all day. They began to think, Look at those guys getting paid.

We must really going to get it. Boy, this is going to be great. And so when they got up to them, they were giving what? A Daenerys.

And they began to grumble. And they said, wait a minute. It's not fair.

You've made them equal with us who borne the burden of the whole day. And he said, what is it to you if I want to be gracious? I agreed to pay you what's fair. Is this not what we agreed upon? Yes, that's what we agreed upon.

Fine. If I want to be gracious. Let me tell you very carefully.

I know the Lord wants to be gracious. But I guarantee you this. Even those hired the last hour would have been fired if they were standing around.

But if you work, if you only have in your life one hour left to work, you better work. Be diligent with your hour. God will make you equal to those who worked all their life.

I mean, what an offer. That's grace. That's mercy.

So there's no reason for anyone to be despairing. If you're just now waking up to this, fine. God will make you equal with someone who's known this all his life.

Be faithful from this time on. Amen? Amen. All right.

Let's stand and be dismissed. Eric, would you close us in a word of prayer?

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/11/SID11002.mp3>

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