

Crucifixion of Jesus - Part 2

by Art Katz

Art Katz explores the profound implications of the crucifixion of Jesus, emphasizing the necessity of recognizing sin and the power of the gospel for true salvation.

Duration: 1:03:59

Scripture: Romans 1:16

Topics: "Jesus Christ", "The Power of the Gospel", "Righteousness and Sin"

Description

Art Katz emphasizes the profound significance of the crucifixion of Jesus, illustrating how the crown of thorns and the piercings of His hands and feet symbolize humanity's wickedness and the consequences of our actions. He argues that the gospel, despite its scandalous nature, is the power of God for salvation, revealing our true condition of sin and the necessity of repentance. Katz warns against a shallow understanding of the gospel that lacks the depth of true piety and the fragrance of righteousness, urging believers to confront their own ingratitude and the seriousness of sin. He calls for a church that loves righteousness and hates iniquity, recognizing the urgency of proclaiming the gospel to a world in desperate need of salvation. Ultimately, he challenges the church to embody the message of the cross and to confront the moral decay in society with the truth of God's word.

Transcript

that he wore the crown of thorns on his forehead somehow is a statement of the thoughts of men that have been exceedingly wicked throughout the whole history of the human race and his hands pierced because of what we have given our hands to do and our feet have brought us into traffic so these are symbolic penetrations in his very body occasioned by the way in which we have thought spoken, acted, walked, and done but it needs to register I'm not happy with my own understanding and the pity is that it can reduce itself to just a safe doctrinal consent but without the penetration that leads to true piety love of righteousness the hatred of iniquity true praise, worship, and service as servants and in the end adoration adoration the ultimate statement of the deepest respect and reverence

emotionally to which a human being can be brought is yet before us and outside of our experience if we ever get there and we ought it will be through this route or not at all Paul says I'm not ashamed of the gospel as scandalous as it is and it's a scandal religiously speaking I'm not ashamed of it, why? because it itself is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes to the Jew first and also to the Greek so he's not ashamed because the message the account of it is itself a power as you expressed it the impact

of that of the missionary to his hearers it opened their understanding it opened the awareness of themselves as guilty before God in transgression the message itself does that so he's not ashamed of it because it has that inherent power foolish as it is scandalous as

it is the proclamation in the anointing and authority of God has this effect of revealing the truth of one's condition and of the provision made for it no other thing can that's why we Jewish people are without any ability to see the truth of our condition or to have a true atonement because the gospel has not been proclaimed to us though Paul says to the Jew first so have we known that power? have we seen in our own proclamation people affected by it? or do we give an explanation in human terms that lessens the impact if not robs it because the message itself is too crude too bloody too scandalous so maybe we're packaging something that is more humanly acceptable but depletes the power of the gospel itself what is he saying in his introduction? it's for that reason I'm called to be an

apostle this is my reason to proclaim this message so the church is without a gospel which means how is it the church then? it's a social agency for the distribution of certain benefits and enjoyments and entirely without consequence in the world and even to itself ok so if the gospel would be nothing if men were not guilty and in need of the rescue which the gospel alone can't afford you have no need you're not even aware that you need to be saved until you see what it is that has been provided then you can ask what is it that required this about me? that's the revelation of the righteousness of God is the revelation of sin upon which his wrath is set and that there's no revelation except of wrath except through this gospel sin is the measure of salvation only they that know what it is

to be saved know what it is to be lost only they who know what it is to be saved know what it is to be lost you didn't know you were lost until you were saved and then you know from what pit you have been dug and from what hell you have been saved I say to the church the church is correct but it's lacking in fragrance it's not enough to be correct there's a fragrance that is waiting that we can only bring and I think Michael prayed last night or one of these days Lord I don't have an alabaster box and I wanted to interrupt him and say you are the alabaster box you don't come with something you are it and the only way to pour out the fragrance is your own breaking and your breaking is relative to your understanding of the magnitude of what has been poured out for you so our house is yet

without fragrance which is the knowledge the fragrance of the knowledge of him in every place through us that woman's act is remarkable and isn't it equally remarkable that his own disciples were indignant at it that he had to chastise them with those words that she's done a good work upon me the only reference to good work that Jesus ever acknowledged performed by a human being was her act why haven't we come to this breaking of our box which is handsome and chiseled and we want somehow to retain it and serve God with it intact or find a little spritz can where we give a little a teaspoon a little but no this fragrance requires an outpouring of the entire content lavishly that is performed by a woman speaks volumes in itself because the men were indignant at the extravagance of the waste

but what did God do at the cross could anything be more extravagant than the sending of his own son into the earth isn't that indignity enough to take upon himself the form of a man to be confined into a body and have to suffer the humiliation of all that restriction and limitation and in that as a son of Abraham the most despised race the Jew and in that to become a slave and suffer the death of the most scandalous kind can God the father himself be more lavish than that and will you know the hell from which you've been saved by it if we sensed what hell is which is not a polite subject but when you look at the great sermons of old what is it sinners in the hand of an angry God people in the hearing of that sermon which was read

clutched the pillars of the church lest they slip through

into the fire itself which heat they felt at the soles of their feet by the very preaching now when you hear today references to preaching like that which we don't hear they call it hell and brimstone fire and brimstone as if there's something about such messages that are contemptible and that we have graduated to more elevated forms of message no the most powerful and effective messages were to persuade people that they were sinners and unless they repented and saw their condition in need they would surely perish Jesus himself said I read it this morning in John chapter 8 if you will not believe that I am he you shall perish in your sins what a fate that is eternal and irremediable there's no remedy once you descend into that hell, it's just a long and unbroken anguish of soul it's a

horror but it's the just penalty for the wages of sin from which God wants us to be saved but the righteous God provides also the remedy and one of the things he condemns as we'll read in Romans 1 is that people had forsaken God and taken for themselves idols have forfeited the creator for creation and are not thankful that's tagged onto the same statement they have forfeited God and have formed their own idols even of reptiles as well as four legged things and are not thankful somewhere in one of these commentaries the author says the great sin is the sin of ingratitude so are we sufficiently grateful and have we sufficiently contemplated the basis for gratitude it's not only the wrath of God it's the righteous wrath of God his wrath is righteous itself his anger is not some petulance of

the kind that we enjoy as human beings where we get mad or we get ticked off or we're in a huff his wrath is righteous it's a right response of a holy God to that which is willfully calculated against him in the thought and conduct of mankind who have every reason to believe just in nature alone.

Paul says they are without excuse for creation itself reveals the truth of God and I wonder how many missionaries of the kind that we entertained recently going into the jungles of Brazil really have believed the testimony of Paul at the beginning that they are without excuse you're going to a bunch of savages whose condition is their judgment they are thoroughly cursed in their sin, their minds are obdurate, their hearts are black they can murder, they can pillage, they can do because they have already forfeited the revelation of God through creation and they are without excuse, not only have they forfeited the creator but they have taken for themselves idolatries of their own choosing of four-legged things and creatures and reptiles, sneaking things and worship them instead of God and they are ungrateful.

The missionaries need to go what they're coming into this is not people who are just primitive and they need to come to an evolution from pagan primitivism to the acknowledgement of a monotheistic God to the more sophisticated recognition of the gospel and the revelation of Jesus unto discipleship no their condition is already a judgment and many a missionary comes back broken from his failure even to begin to crack this condition because they have not acknowledged that what they're facing is already a judgment for the forfeiture of God and that they are without excuse and that these savage people need to be confronted and accused your condition now is already the statement of your sin and when we go into the other form of rebellion against righteousness what does it take women, Paul says even women give over the natural function of their own bodies and develop a perverse passion for each other, even women why did he say even because women are supposed to be chaste and pure we men of course are another thing but women but even when women will give over their natural bodies to that which is perverse that is the judgment of the forfeiture of the righteousness of God, homosexuality is an effect is an effect and not a cause homosexuality and lesbianism is already a judgment for sins already performed in the rejection of the righteous God and this is its outcome and this is its logic and it is so perverse that if they'll not be

converted in the recognition of the evil to which they have given themselves by which the natural functions have been abandoned and that they're slaves to these passions that torture them and enslave them, how then shall they come to a place of repentance, that the judgment itself is God's provision to be brought to a place of repentance when you see the wickedness of your condition and for which there is no escape and no remedy except through the power of the gospel to save, but how is that being spoken of today in the secular world, well they can't help it, it's a biological thing, it's in the genes, they just have a disposition you know, from birth completely disregarding the testimony of God, when I attended a Lutheran seminary in St.

Paul and there was a discussion on how we ought to relate to homosexuals and after all Christ loves all the world and they ought to be accepted, I in my naivety spoke up and said, you know the scriptures call homosexuality an abomination in God's sight men lying with men and the president of the seminary cried out, who is that man who speaks like that and is in ignorance of the most recent psychological findings that the most recent psychological findings nullify Paul, that Paul was an ignoramus and did not have the advantage of sociology and psychology to understand the complex causes for homosexuality for which we need to be far more sympathetic and not homophobic no, hey listen guys this is the testimony of God this is the apostle of God, he's speaking the truth of God and we need to

submit to his statements as being the description of evil which the present world is unwilling to acknowledge because it's only Paul and the word but Paul and the word is God and part of our submission of righteousness is to submit to its truth or else we would be tempted to kind of go along and say, oh the poor victims well they couldn't help but they had this issue in their upbringing and no their condition is already a judgment that they have allowed themselves to give over the natural function of their own bodies, is already the thing to which God has abandoned them, he has abandoned them to their own illicit lust and this is the logic of its out working, but the sin itself is the rejection of God as God which is what all sin is, that this has become now epidemic perversion

lesbianism, homosexuality is a universal thing that is now seeking for legitimacy and acceptance as being as valid a mode of sexual relationship as and it's just a choice of style of how your fancy and taste is but it needs to be presented to our children in the classroom as an option as legitimate as any, oh saints we're suffering in the world and in all nations for the want of a church that hates iniquity and loves righteousness and has accepted the testimony of God that explains that these perversions are already a judgment that the sin is God rejection and even the rejection of his word which God sets out painstakingly from chapter one in the most authoritative encyclopedic statement of faith given by this great apostle in the book of Romans, you're without excuse, you've ignored the

testimony of creation and nature you've ignored the testimony of the word and now you're suffering the consequence of a willful ignorance when I confront Jews, I don't start them off with, are you saved brother, what do you think of Jesus, I start them off with, how much time have you spent in the libraries of the university knowing from my own experience how much time that is, chasing after some esoteric subject in the requirement to catch your degree so you'll have a route to financial security and success how much time have you spent examining the statement of a man who is purported to be the Messiah of Israel and very God himself who has come into earth at a certain point of time to affect a redemption for the rejection of which there'll be an eternal penalty, how much time have you

spent considering eternity itself how much time have you spent considering God himself, when have you opened the testimony of God, these things are written that you might believe and believing have life, why haven't you once opened, while you've read Jung and Freud and Adler and every half-baked character

and brooded over these books and spent hours in their contemplation you've never once opened the Holy Writ you will be judged for what you have chosen to ignore and would the God that be a church that is confrontive and pushing this into the face of a willfully unbelieving world who is suffering the consequence of their willful unbelief which is Godlessness and unrighteousness and for which the penalty in this life is severe, what of the penalty of the hell to come, we have failed dear

saints, to take God seriously, we're doing despite to the grace of God it's as if he has not suffered what he has suffered and we have reduced it to a little cheapy glib formula and little phrase are you saying brother because the grace of God has given a rudimentary benefit to mankind called conscience but conscience can be seared by a continued unwillingness to be pricked by it and finally to be deadened to it so that it no longer has any effect at all where have we seen this, we've seen this in the history of Nazism a whole nation is robbed of conscience and can perform putting bodies in ovens as if they're dealing with hot dogs or reduce a people to a number and rob them of humanity and go home and have their Christmas dinners and sing carols without any conflict because their

consciences have become seared, God has provided men are without excuse either by the testimony of nature the testimony of their consciences the testimony of the word of God all of which is a willful rejection which is sin itself the willful rejection of God is the essence of what sin is because, well why would men reject God, because he cuts into your lifestyle because he says thou shalt not because he's a God of righteousness and law and because he's established commandments and we don't want to be infringed upon and want to do our own thing as if we ourselves are God I still remember the horrified looks of Dana's brothers and sisters when I spoke at the Pentecostal church in Rondas and while I'm speaking the brother is looking at the catalog on racing bikes, that was his idol and I'm

pouring out my soul and I said something like do you think that this earth is your playground to enjoy this is like coming into someone else's house without even asking and walking right in and trafficking your mud right up to the carpet and going straight to the refrigerator and taking what you want and stuffing your face like a glutton and then not even taking your shoes off, plopping on the couch and leaving behind a mess as if this is your right have you ever considered the earth is the Lord's and the nations thereof and those who dwell therein, this is not your baby you're trafficking and exploiting the world as if it's yours, as if there's not a God who's created for his purpose so what does Paul say in Rome in Acts 17 when he goes to Mars Hill God has made of one blood all nations

of men and established the bounds of their habitation that they might seek after him and be found with him that the whole purpose of your life is to obtain a knowledge of God it's not for your bicycle racing and your pleasure and the exploitation of the world and it's resources you're acting in complete disregard to the creator and his intention for creation and that God has winked in times past but he commands all men now everywhere to repent for he has appointed a day in which he will judge all men by that man whom he's raised from the dead that's preaching and you know what the scholars say, that was Paul's worst performance, he did not establish a church in Athens that his message was somehow lost and vain and I count it as one of the high water marks of Paul's remarkable and acute

perception of what reality is that even the purposes for which nations are created is for the purpose of salvation some have even suggested that Adam was made necessary because of Jesus, God had to bring an Adam who would first fall in sin and bring his taint to the whole human race as the fertile head so that a second Adam would come to lift men out of that fallen condition so that the second Adam justifies the first God brought the first Adam only because he knew that the second Adam would not be understood except

in the light of being a new federal head for the new human race out of redemption through his blood that God would go that far that God has gone so far for creation that men would be without excuse in the way in which he has structured it and what do we read in Ephesians 3

that God has created all things in order that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might be demonstrated to the prince of God of the palace of the air and this is the eternal purpose of God in Christ Jesus what? the whole of creation? just to provide a platform and a stage for the existence of a church and whose character of demonstration is to be made corporately that once and for all defeats the eternal foe of God, the powers of the air and that's the reason for creation that it's not there for industry and mass production and high style of living, it's there for an eternal transaction through the church so we need to align ourselves with what God says is the purpose for creation the purpose for the world the purpose for the church for the neglect and indifference and rejection

of those purposes is sin itself and the church itself is not absolved of that sin while it is using the world for its pleasure, its success its satisfaction, its enjoyment and even saying that the gospel is God's provision for your social elevation and to a better lifestyle and a prosperity so that my first message in Nairobi all those years again ago and the lunchtime prayer service of Christian downtown office workers was inspired by God don't think that the gospel is God's provision for your social mobility that you should have a three piece suit and a ministry and a car and a secretary the gospel has purposes much more earnest than your social elevation you have completely misconstrued the issue of the gospel and it came as a powerful indictment on an African church that looks to

America for its models and wants also to attain to the kind of lifestyle that is celebrated the televangelists exhibit who want you to send them your contributions as seed faith I would be much more respectful if they said send it to some dinky other place but don't send it to us because we need to exhibit our own message by our faith and not by your money and your donations so all dear saints we need much to lament and much to repent for we have paid the bill we have idolized these characters and provided for their cushy lifestyles in which the message of the gospel is completely denigrated and lost as it's ministers so also the church and as the church so also the nation the lord can lay at the door of the church full accountability for the condition of our nation and its drift into

homosexuality and lesbianism and Sodom and Gomorrah standards as being approved and appropriate because Paul says at the end of his statement not only do they do these things but there are those who approve them knowing that they lead to death and yet sanction and approve them as good that's the final statement of evil is the approval of evil as being somehow good so deranges man through his sin and so there's a basis for repentance if we ourselves are rightly aligned with God we need to pray for the church with which we're identified and for which our Jewish kinsmen are suffering the lack of that model that would move them to jealousy that they might be grafted into death and that therefore they are perishing wholesale and the nation itself is in the most pathetic of conditions for the

want of the revelation of God that ought to have been given it by the church in its midst rightly so repenting for our own condition our lack of a proper understanding that was available to us in scripture why haven't we seen it for our own willingness to be satisfied with a reduction of the gospel as a glib formula step one, step two, step three without the deepest understanding of the wrath, the righteous wrath of God for sin that required that wrath to fall upon his son that we might be saved.

Lord my God we're in pitiful condition you know and we've lost that apostolic sense of the gospel and what are we my God without a message that has the power to save and how saved are we who have been inducted into this shallow Christianity by just signing on the dotted line and believing and praying after someone else say this my God it shows we lack the depth, the gravity, the sense the reality of God is righteous and therefore our own conduct is unrighteous and we take liberties and we're not affected by the downward spiral in our nation and in the world we've learned to live with it comfortably and maybe these guys are not all that bad, maybe we are homophobic maybe the problem was with us that we can't acknowledge them and give them full equal access even to becoming ministers

themselves even bishops heads of the church and that somehow we're discriminating against them because we have this hang up homophobic when the fact of the matter is it's evil and the evidence of sin in its worst form as not the thing in itself but as a judgment for sin that already is in the rejection of God as God, so Lord look upon us my God, we don't even know how to cry out, we don't even know how to pray, what shall we say Lord we're battling against upstream we're going against the stream because the stream is human betterment and getting on the best seller list and your large church is not big enough until you get a stadium because the crowds are coming like a wave wanting such an easy and pleasant message of improvement rather than the necessity for a death and a resurrection oh

Lord, oh Lord the best seller list condemns us thank you my God, that Billy Graham in Queens where I went to hear him before coming here for the summer has on the platform Hillary and Bill Clinton in the friendliest exchange of buddy buddy condoning and validating one another as if this man has not been the uttermost disgrace of any president who has ever occupied the White House conducting his orgiastic practices with a Jewish woman in the whatchamacallit room and nearly avoiding being whatchamacallit, impeached and boasted about it that he had done the nation's service by his impeachment trial and if he could there were people who would elect him now and Billy Graham could say you know you make a great preacher you have a way with words your wife ought to be president and you ought to

be preaching and people laughed I went away sick in my soul and I came all the way for the hours to come to that 70,000 people crowded in to hear the great evangelist and to hear them complimenting each other and for him to give a little Pablo message that had no convicting power at all, that's our condition that's our state these are the evangelists that are buddy buddy with presidents people in power in high places Lord Lord, Lord, Lord, forgive us my God precious God and help us help us Lord, what a pathetic scene that this old crock lacking sleep is trying to affect the resurrection of a message that has fallen into complete neglect and has not been known in our time and generation Oh Lord help us my God with a little help to be of service to you in these last days and to be to

the people of Israel what we must not only in word and deed but in what we are in ourselves that would bring conviction because we love righteousness and hate iniquity and will not look the other way and pay them compliments as many Christians do and say to Jews you're more Christian than most Christians that I know when they're so ungodly as even to consider Christ and have disregarded him as some accident of history that need not be considered but they live nicely, Lord my God, my God, my God bring us to the word of God as being the defining statement of truth, however contrary to our subjectivity however contrary to the wisdom of the world as expressed in magazines and newspapers, that homosexuality and lesbianism is not a genetic defect, it's a choice and for which we will be held

accountable and pay the penalty both in this life and the life to come, for no effeminate no homosexual, no coward no liar, need think he can enter the kingdom of God you've made it clear, without holiness no man

shall see God righteousness is the key to the kingdom and we bless you Lord that it is so, for only a righteous God would require it and not be lenient and say well we understand your life, you grew up without a proper father, your marriage blah blah blah and so, no, he requires holiness, he requires righteousness and gives us every provision by the blood of Jesus to attain it and by the power of his spirit to be sanctified, gives us a church to grow up in, in which we can receive correction and rebuke and the prayer that we might be a holy people for his name oh Lord, oh

Lord oh Lord forgive us my God, we have fallen short of your glory we have too quickly accepted every clib alternative my God we've not insisted upon the apostolic standards set forth by Paul from the beginning of chapter 1 of his great book but we want to consider it now, and we're asking a grace and a mercy on your part that we might continue in it and if you'll do it Lord and give it we know, something will be required from us, that will not make us popular, even Christians will be offended by us in our insistence on this gospel in an ecumenical age, where everybody believes in God in his own way oh Lord oh Lord oh Lord that even Muslims believe in God in their own way, so they can saw off the head of a Jewish victim or any other and think that they're doing Allah's service and even

our president is the one who says that they believe in the same God not the God that I know but it's politic in a pluralistic society to approve of all forms of worship, and not to insist on your Christo-centric model, which is a form of narrow fascism that everyone has to believe your gospel and your message, as if it's the exclusive way to God and there is no other, who are you to insist on it, that's arrogance and impotence what's the matter with Judaism, look at how impressive these people are, and how impressive are you, for the insistence on your narrow gospel the fats and the fire saints so my God help us, help us with a little help Lord, my God, we're willing to give up a total night's sleep if you would have the greater possession to bring your passionate and urgent jealousy to

our consideration thank you my God, that we would break our lives as alabaster boxes before you and pour them out for that's the purpose, we have no other purpose for our being, but to glorify God and serve him thank you Lord oh Lord, hear our groanings and our cry for the church and its present condition and that we ourselves are culpable and have contributed to it and have gone along with it hear our cry Lord we're not persuading our own children for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness oppress or suppress the truth, for what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them, ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are have been

understood and seen through the things he has made, so they are without excuse for though they knew God they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened, claiming to be wise they became fools, and they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling a mortal human being or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles, therefore God has given them up to the lust of their own hearts to impurity, to the degrading of their bodies among themselves because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the creator who is blessed forever for this reason God gave them up to degrading passions their women, even their women exchanged natural intercourse for

the natural in the same way also the men, giving up the natural with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind and to things that should not be done they were filled with every kind of wickedness, evil,

covetousness malice, full of envy, murder strife, deceit, craftiness they are gossip, slanderers, God haters, insolent, haughty, boastful inventors of evil, rebellious taught parents, foolish, faithless heartless, ruthless, they know not God's decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, yet they not only do them but even applaud others who practice them.

Thank you for Paul, thank you for apostolic seeing, thank you for truth that is unsparing and clear and incisive two thousand years ago it's as if someone is speaking today right on with surgical precision and exactitude of things as God sees them and gives us the cause, the therefores and the because they willfully have rejected the knowledge of God, they do not want to consider therefore God has abandoned them to the outworking of their own lust in its most degrading forms, thank you that your righteousness my God is like that, you abandon you don't inflict, it's the logic of their own rejection, whatsoever man sows that too shall he reap there's a moral law of the universe that needs to be recognized and we see it being acted out in our day so we bless you Lord, restore apostolic seeing, restore apostolic jealousy for the gospel restore apostolic proclamation of the gospel, may it come to Denmark may it come to Sweden may it come to those places where infidelity, divorce homosexuality lesbianism and every kind of thing is sanctioned as somehow normal and deserving of approval and that there's something wrong with us if we flinch at it we are the problem we should be far more acceptive and tolerant of these varieties of human conduct which are just as valid as the normal use of the body, Lord the age is evil and we have not known it we do not hate that iniquity my God, and we do not speak out against it, we do not love righteousness because we have not understood righteousness so grant us my God that love that you have for righteousness that did not enable you to withhold your only son.

Righteousness required his death and a shameful death of such a kind Lord that is stupefying that you would permit it only evil and its wickedness and your righteous wrath against it will explain it teach us, give us back the gospel in a jealous inheritance and an obligation as Paul saw it as a privilege my gospel he called it that I've been given the stewardship of so great a message that we have allowed to fall into a mere formula step one, step two and that the great evangelists of our days hardly even know it that Oral Roberts applauds a 25 million dollar church building in a lush and posh California suburb as being the issue of the gospel Oh Lord Oh Lord, Oh Lord give us a sense of your grief that we might bear it with you as sons and daughters who do not want you to suffer no more

sober us deepen us my God, we're shallow somebody mentioned Woody Allen today and I said I've been praying for him, we need to be praying for these men who are sailing along with Steven Spielberg and the great culture expositors and their dream factories and all of those who are moving toward an eternal doom and do not know it so that the head editor of commentary magazine Norman Port Horace when I paid a thousand dollars to attend his banquet, greeted me at the door and he heard my name, he said I'm too old to be evangelized I said all the more reason you're close brother, closer than you know one foot is already in the grave and unless you repent and receive a foolish message through a foolish messenger you shall altogether likewise perish I don't want to eternally even to think of the

cry from such a man that he's in a place without remedy who is in a sense ethical moral, concerned with issues in his magazine and yet is himself intrinsically unrighteous in the neglect and rejection of God where are we with regard to the message, how internalized has it become for us, how much real at the grit, the pit and marrow of our own being that we're not just giving a hopeful suggestion, we're speaking words with conviction that men cannot turn, we're not giving them a casual option, it's not just an opinion, it's conviction that demands consideration, lest you perish there's not enough of that kind of witness because we have to become something not just acknowledge something and to become that

something requires the very cross in which Jesus was impaled, because we have shrunk

from that cross, we're not in a place to proclaim it, and if we do make reference to it, it's unctuous, it's just polite, but we've got to be the thing in ourselves Paul was the thing in himself and we need to be so also to be it will require our deaths but eternity is at stake for many because of it we need to ask that unlike Paul, are we ashamed of the gospel maybe instinctively and inwardly outwardly we would say no, we subscribe but is there really inwardly a shame, when it comes to the nitty gritty of speaking to a respectable person whose life is even more impressive than ours morally, culturally intellectually, can we bring the foolishness of this message with conviction, or will we shrink to face the world and all of its esteem and the foolishness of this message with the

conviction that will penetrate and the anointing of God that is given to those who obey him is no small requirement and I'm saying, we'll not attain to that except we receive the deaths that are for us from where we presently are and where we need to become, search the scriptures read the references of Jesus and read the great sermons of Jonathan Edwards, Sin is in the hands of an angry God, read the warnings in Hebrew, in the book of Hebrews for those who have tasted the grace of God and again have fallen back whether they can be renewed again unto repentance, that the prospect of hell may be even a consideration for those who were once saved and allowed their salvation to fall into neglect so there's much to be considered even the prospect of such a fear is sobering for those that

believe and would we be as reckless as we presently are, as my own son presently is divorcing his wife, submitting his children to being ravaged by the courts and being divided between parents in the fulfillment of his own lust for a woman if he had any fear that that would be a way in which he would find himself slipping step by step into hell would he have entered into so cavalier a career as divorce if he knew that by such a means of acting against God who says I hate divorce and putting away, you would have been restrained from your own indulgence because you want to respect what God hates, because if you disrespect it, you disrespect God and how long will it be before the process of your estrangement from him will lead you again to the prospect of eternal separation, for no liar nor

effeminate or homosexual or violent or however God said, need think they can enter the kingdom of heaven, don't think you got it made because you once said I accept you you may be more than you know a candidate yourself for eternal separation and anguish of soul, if that's not so we ought at least to live with the possibility that it may be so and even that possibility would be a factor toward walking more blamelessly before him we need to have the fear of God restored we need to face the question, which has not yet come up in our consideration but now occurs to me do we think that hell is even righteous for God he's the one who has established it is that becoming to God to have a hell in which there's an eternal burning without remedy and an anguish of soul without answer are we

reconciled to a God who is a God not only of heaven but also of hell are we embarrassed by a God who finds such an eternal thing necessary couldn't he have figured out a way for human redemption without the necessity of that threat is it unbecoming to him, or is it the very statement of his righteousness does righteousness itself require it, that there's a moral requirement that if not in this life and eternity men will reap what they have sown and that they will not in one way be an iota in excess of what they deserve for the wages of sin is death, and in exact proportion to what you have sown you will reap I just gave Zach a copy of Spurgeon's sermon on that very topic and I thought it was so important that we had a special meeting at Ben Israel in which I read the whole sermon to the

collected body that we needed to hear Spurgeon's statement that the wages of sin is death that hell is totally a righteous recompense for a reckless life that is not at all an offense to God but is totally in keeping with himself with what he is in himself as righteous have we really made that peace have we wrestled with this some of us are embarrassed that God is even the God of judgment we don't even like it, we like his mercy we like his love, his kindness but that he will judge that he's appointed a day in which he will judge all men, but that man whom he's raised from the dead, why that man? because when we face that judge we're looking at a man with scars that reminds us that he's fit to judge because he's paid the price for judgment, in being himself judged, here's the evidence so

what are you going to say to him, what excuse will you give what justification for your calculated willful offense against God and a failure to heed and to regard him, though he's made many efforts at speaking to you and saving you from the course which you had long flung yourself in obstinate disregard to his warning what will you say to him on that day you ought to be fearful just for the day of judgment that's why Paul said I press on for the high calling of God that I might be raised in that first resurrection that when the Lord comes those that are dead in Christ will rise first and those that remain barely surviving will rise with them otherwise if you don't rise then you'll have to wait and linger in the grave for another thousand years to the general resurrection of all the dead

because you didn't make it with the first the second resurrection is called a death and there the books are opened the book of life and to see if your name is written therein, why because Revelation chapter 3 says it may well have been blotted out your reckless and indifferent life even as a believer can block you out of a book in which you were once inscribed and in that day when that book is opened your heart is beating like a trip hammer waiting to see whether it's there or not because if it's not there it's bye bye baby and a Jewish Christian theologian now got on to me and said nothing more reveals the radical content of the gospel than it's confrontation with the synagogue there's a reason to God's madness why he gives the priority to the new first why Jesus said go ye into all the

world to preach this gospel to every creature beginning at Jerusalem and up to Judea then to the outermost corners begin where I was crucified, begin where the prophets were stoned, begin where the opposition is most acute in every way and once you can whether that by the power of the message itself then you can rightly go to the Greeks, why are we in our depleted condition, we have ignored the priority as if God had not spoken through Paul at the very beginning to the church at Rome which is the paradigm of the church everywhere to the Jew first, we will not know and understand the magnitude of this message and it's foolishness which requires the power of God until we will face them, so we need to pray for church to be obedient to the priority in it's every community because have you

noticed there are Jews in every community Omaha, Nebraska Oshkosh, Idaho Copenhagen, it doesn't matter where you are, they're there and they're there as a presence waiting for our obedience try it sometime it's death, it's humiliation, it's the door slammed in your face, it is utter a contemptuous disregard as if you are not an entity and not worthy of even the faintest consideration total absurdity all the more if you're a Jew who proclaims it to Jews so there's a reason why Paul gives that priority from the first because nothing else will bring forth the gospel in it's power than in it's total absurdity when you bring it to the epitome of civilization itself, the Jew so let's be obedient the issue of eternity is so great it is not too extravagant for God to bring a holocaust and to

bring a second holocaust in order to occasion a repentance because it's through repentance that faith comes repent and believe ye the gospel if you're hardened and you're unrepentant you cannot believe

though people would give you the most majestic exposition of the gospel repentance is the key to believing and so unless we ourselves come to them in our own brokenness in the memory of our own salvation out of so great a death that we were equally guilty in sins of their kind how shall we rightly speak a word that can foment repentance rather than indignation at our moral and spiritual superiority because we have it and you're not with the program we've got to come to them in a certain way that is yet wanting and waits upon the recognition of our own depravity which we share with them and

only by the grace of God have we had this revealed to us and we can avail ourselves what was intended initially for them to the Jew first so Lord again we pray for mercy there's not a righteous stand upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not and if God were to mark iniquity who can stand where are we in any way superior to our Jewish kinsmen Lord that there's a grace and mercy that came to us totally undeserved and the reason that it came is that we should move them to jealousy by the gracious exhibition of what we have obtained that was totally undeserved so my God help us to this we pray that you might honor that witness Lord and bring us into actual confrontation with this people we don't have to look far they're in our community we've not encountered them because we've not prayed

for them but start praying that we want opportunity to fulfill the mandate and the priority and see how long it will be before God will show you that your dentist or your lawyer or the neighbor around the corner or your kids teacher is in fact a Jew and that you would have opportunity to share with him in proportion to your prayer so we bless you Lord there's something very alive before us today that has not changed one whit from the moment that Paul wrote it in his epistle to the Romans help us from being cop outs and circumventing your priority and obligation we want to rush off to exotic places to witness but to this people who are before our noses we are indifferent and in ignorance we're moral cowards and we know that to confront them will reveal our inadequacy it will test us in

ways that we're not prepared to face so we're asking Lord for grace, for mercy for ourselves to be what we ought to this people and then also because of that to the Greek we thank you we praise you Lord for this message, this gospel our privilege to be its bearers and expositors righteousness is an issue of faith and faith cannot be righteous without faith for as many as will believe that our witness is an issue of faith also because it's obeying the mandate and the priority of God as it is written that obedience is faith and the ability to perform that obedience is the faith that believes for an enablement by the Holy Spirit that is given to them that obey him so God has established the whole remarkable saga in the context of faith, faith to believe unto salvation, faith to commend the

gospel to others in obedience to the word for the just shall live by their faith serve by their faith and without faith it's impossible to please God, faith is obedience to the word of God unbelief is a sin because it disregards what God has said and will not believe him for it so faith is righteous and only by faith can we please God so we thank you my God you've given us the faith to believe this message grant us the faith my God to commend it to others and as we walk in our conscious inadequacy, especially coming to the Jew, it will find us out, will be revealed for the numbskulls that we are who have barely graduated high school and whose grammar is imperfect and will trip all over our tongues and stutter when we stand before their worldly composure that we can believe that you give

us a grace and an anointing that shreds and reveals the paucity, the fraudulence of their earthly credentials that a word of God anointed is more powerful than academic credentials and that in the foolishness of our choked and spluttering presentation men can be brought to faith and to believe because there's an intrinsic power in that message that you have imputed and that we're willing to trust you for that

even at the cost of our embarrassment, thank you Lord and if we'll not face that, how do we go on to anything in God, in the realm of faith, in the last days in sanctification, fulfillment of anything if we miss it here at the first that's why it's given at the beginning, not just for our academic contemplation but for our obedience seal that note Lord I'm pleased with the way in

which you have unfolded the subject today precious let nothing be lost my God in the way in which you have made these points and because your words will not return to you void when we return to our places remind us again of what we've heard and what you've said obedience is faith your requirement your mandate to this people the epitome of the world and all of its arrogance and all of its ability and all of its intimidation to us whose lives are imperfect and yet we're required to preach and to speak this foolish message we bless you my God because we're willing to bear some measure of the humility that you bore in much greater proportion in nakedness at that cross what is it for us to catch a little flack from a Jew and to be told that we're jerks and upstarts and how dare we in our

impudence to suggest that they're lost, what is that to us to suffer that their indignation when you have suffered what you have totally in degradation humiliation, nakedly even before your own people we're without excuse Lord, if we shrink from our small humiliation in view of yours and because you bore that God has exalted you and given you a place above every name both in heaven and earth and a throne higher than the heavens because you were willing to be brought into that humiliation down he has exalted you up and given you a name and to that name every tongue will confess and every knee will bow to the glory of God the Father you exalt those who are willing to be humbled and so our eternal place and our eternal reward is altogether proportionate to the humiliations we are willing to

bear in this life in obedience my God to your call and to you and Jesus himself is the evidence that he who was abased is now exalted and that Israel itself will be abased and it might be exalted as the head of nations and that we will be willing to suffer abasement and humiliation in view of the exaltation that will be ours eternally in heaven thank you Lord put a seal on all this my God, let nothing fall to the floor, let it affect our every future consideration at this school that something has affected us modified us touched us in our deeps and therefore we will see and consider everything that you will be pleased to give in that modification we don't want to lose it Lord, may it temper our souls permanently we thank and give you praise for how you have been pleased to express

yourself today for our benefit in your so great mercy in Jesus name, Amen

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