

Accounting to the Almighty God

by Bill McLeod

The sermon emphasizes the inevitability of giving an account to God and the importance of living a life aligned with His will to avoid judgment.

Duration: 48:19

Scripture: Matthew 25, John 4:35-38, Romans 14:12, Hebrews 12:6-9

Topics: "Accountability"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of recognizing the coming judgment and being prepared for it. He refers to three parables in Matthew 25 that Jesus told, all of which highlight the fact of the coming judgment. The first parable is about the ten virgins, where five were wise and five were foolish. The second parable is about the talents, where the servants have to give an accounting to the King upon his return. The third parable is about the separation of the sheep and the goats when Christ comes. The speaker also mentions that the Father has entrusted all judgment to the Son, emphasizing the need to honor and believe in Jesus. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the uncertainty of life and the importance of making the most of the time we have.

Transcript

Romans 14 and 12. It's a very simple statement, but has profound implications for every one of us in this building, for all people everywhere. So then, every one of us should give account of himself to God.

Do you believe that? Do you believe that someday, on bended knee, you will give an account of yourself to God? Well, that's what it says. You either believe it or you don't. I believe it, because this is not by any means the only place in the Bible where we have this particular truth set before us.

It's found in many places in the Old Testament, as well as in the New. But in the New Testament, it's in sharper focus than it is in the Old, and that's understandable, because all things really are in sharper focus in the New Testament than in the Old. In Matthew chapter 25, there are three parables Jesus told.

All three of them had to do with this fact of coming judgment. The first one, the ten virgins, five were wise, five were foolish. While the bridegroom tarried, the bridegroom was Christ, and he still has not returned, as he said he would someday.

While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. Then there was that midnight cry, the bridegroom was coming, those that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. Now the five foolish ones did not have oil to keep their lamps burning, and you may know that in the Bible, oil is a symbol of the Spirit of God.

The book of Jude, the second-last book of the Bible, talks about certain people, and it says they do not have the Spirit. They may have everything else, but they don't have the Spirit of God. And in Romans 8, the Bible says, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

You don't belong. You're not a member of God's family unless you have the Holy Spirit living within you. These five foolish virgins did not have, and so they were shut out from glory, God's glory, and from heaven.

And then he told a parable about the talents, and then there came a day of reckoning, when the King came back, when Jesus returns, and his servants have to give an accounting to him. And then later on, the last part of the chapter is occupied with what happens when Christ comes, and before him are gathered all the nations, and then he separates them one from another, as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. All three of these stories or parables in Matthew 25 then have to do with this coming judgment time.

Now in John chapter 5, the Bible says, the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment unto the Son, in order that all men might honor the Son as they honor the Father. He that honors not the Son, Christ, honors not the Father who has sent him. You don't honor God unless you honor Christ.

But notice what he says there, the Father, God the Father, will not be the judge. He has committed all judgment unto Jesus Christ the Son. Now Paul says the same thing in Romans chapter 2. He tells us that there's a day coming in which God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, by Jesus Christ.

Someday, God will judge the secrets of men. Do you know that I read somewhere a while ago that in the United States there are 250,000, 250,000 unsolved murder mysteries, and there are thousands of those in Canada also. In some cases, no doubt, the blame has been put on the wrong person.

But in God's coming judgment day, all those wrongs will be made right. The crime will be laid at the proper door. And people say, that's going to take a long time.

Oh yes it is. But you know something? Nobody's going anywhere. Nobody has any other plans, because it's God's day.

And he will be there. No matter how long it takes, God will rectify every wrong, and clear the innocent, and charge the guilty. And he's one judge that can't be bribed.

He can't bribe him. He can't buy him off. I notice a little phrase in Matthew 25.

Then shall the King say. Then shall the King say. The King's speaking, and we have to listen.

All right? Then, in Romans 14, our text, it simply says, so then, which takes you back in the context. He was quoting actually from Isaiah 45, I think 23, where it declares that there's a day coming in which every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess to God. And he quotes that, Paul does, and he says, so then.

He's drawing a conclusion from what Isaiah said. So then, every one of us should give account of himself to God. Then, in 2nd Corinthians 5, we read these words.

We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body. According to that he has done, whether it be good or bad. That's a simple statement.

2nd Thessalonians chapter 1 puts it differently. The Spirit of God writing, of course, speaking through these men. And here's what it says.

To you who are troubled, and the Christians of Thessalonica were greatly troubled at the time. To you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in the saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. When Jesus returns with the mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on the world that has neglected him or rejected him, that can return.

To neglect is to reject. I remember years ago when I was a shantyman missionary to logging camps, talking with a certain man about receiving Christ. Well, he said, I see it, I need Christ.

Christ died for my sins on the cross. But he said, I'm not going to receive him now. I said, then you are rejecting Christ? Oh no, he said, it's too strong a term.

I'm just neglecting Christ. And I quoted that verse in Hebrews, and how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? The Bible says they shall not escape. At such great, such infinite cost, God provided salvation for you and I through Jesus Christ, the forgiveness of sins and a home in heaven.

And we reject, we neglect, we say no, that's an awful thing to say no to God. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God. That's in Hebrews.

Then in Revelation chapter 20 we read these words. John said, I saw a great white throne and him that sat on it, before whose face the earth and heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

And I saw the dead, small and great. I think God put this in, you know, because the small man figures on me. I was just a little guy, you know, I didn't do much.

My name was never in the newspapers. I wasn't anybody. So God isn't going to judge me.

He won't even bother with living me. And the great man says, oh, my name was in the newspapers. You know, I had my biography in six of America's who's who.

And I did a lot of great things and gave a lot of money to charitable causes. So God sure isn't going to bug me. So God said, I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God.

And the books were open. God's books. And another book was open, which is the book of life.

And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. And it says, and the sea gave up the dead which were in them. And death and hell gave up the dead which were in them.

And they were judged every man according to their works. And he says this, and whosoever, whosoever was not found written in the book of life, in God's book, was cast into the lake of fire. People, what an awful thought.

What a solemn truth. That if my name is not written in God's book, I will someday be cast into the lake of fire. It's hard to think about.

But it's the ultimate reality for those who reject Christ. All right, what we've been saying is this, there's judgment for all. Our text says every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

I mean, I was a kid on the farm. There were four boys in our family, no girls, so there's no influence to kind of soften us up a little bit, you know. We did a lot of things that we shouldn't have done.

One day we took our cat, I hate to tell you this, but we took our cat, stuck it under an old-fashioned butter box with his tail sticking out and chopped its tail off. Now the cat had been screaming into the house, and of course our mother came flying out of the house to ask what happened, and we all lied and said, well, it got its tail caught in a wolf trap out in a haystack. And mother believed that.

We got away with it, see. And the years rolled by, and when I was in my 20s, we were reminiscing with my mom and my dad about old times on the farm, and I told my mom what really happened to her cat. And she said, you rascals, if I had known, I would have torn you limb from limb.

And my mother was Scotch, and boy, when Scotch people get mad, they get mad. Right, Doug? I'll tell you, I don't know how we did it. We might never have told her, but dear people, God will judge the secrets of men, and every one of us will have to give an account and confess.

And I know there's a difference here between the saved and the unsaved. I realize that. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

No condemnation. In John 5 and 24, Jesus Christ said, Verily, verily, which means in truth, in truth, a double emphasis, I say unto you, he that hears my word and believes on him that sent me has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. But still, even for the saved, there is judgment in the sense of our text.

Every one of us should give account of himself to God someday. That's why, when we understand this truth, we will want to let Jesus Christ live and love through us. Now, the second major point I want to make is this, that for the Christian, actually, judgment begins in this life, now.

The day you become a Christian, judgment starts. Really? Well, Peter puts it this way, he says, The time has come that judgment must begin at the house of God. And with this begineth us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ? And if the righteous scarcely, it doesn't mean, you know, we're going to get into heaven with our coattail caught in the door.

It doesn't have that meaning. It has this meaning. The righteous with great difficulty are saved.

Dear people, think of what it costs God to save your soul, to provide salvation for you. Think of it. Christ, the mighty maker, we sing one of our songs, Christ the mighty maker died, the man, for creature's sin.

Just one thought here. Our son is so much bigger than the world, that you can hollow out the center of the sun with a digging machine, if you could, and then leave a crust a hundred thousand miles thick. You

could still put the earth and the moon inside that hollow at the same distance they are from each other right now.

And yet, our son is one of the smallest stars or suns in the universe. There are suns in the universe that are not hundreds, nor yet thousands, but there are millions of times larger than our sun. And Christ made them all.

And when men kneel Jesus Christ on the cross, that's who they were kneeling in the cross. That's why, dear people, it's an extremely serious thing to reject Christ. We better know what we're doing.

And as a Christian, it's a very serious thing to not serve Jesus Christ with all my heart. We need to know what we're doing, alright? Judgment begins at the house of God. In what sense? When we first go through this chapter 11, Paul talks about this, and when I say Paul talks about it, I mean the Holy Spirit speaks through Paul, because that's more accurate, to put it that way.

He's talking about the Lord's Supper. We call it the communion table, or whatever you call it. And he says, we are to judge ourselves before we come to the table.

Because, he says this, if we come in an unworthy way to the table, the Lord's table, we eat and drink condemnation to ourselves, because we don't understand what we're doing. We don't discern, he says, the Lord's body. Because when we sit at that table, we're commemorating the body and blood of the Son of God.

So here's, he tells us what happens. That person who comes to the Lord's table and does not first judge himself, to make sure there's no unconfessed sin in his life. What happens to that Christian? He tells us something very serious.

He says, for this cause, or because of this, because some Christians come to the Lord's table and don't judge themselves first. For this cause, many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. One translation says, quite enough have died.

Does God actually do something like this? Notice the next verse. Here's what it says. If we would judge ourselves, that is before we come to the table, we should not be judged.

God wouldn't have to judge us. But if I come to the Lord's table without first judging myself, and dealing with my own sin, then God will have to judge me. And that judgment of God may take the form of weakness, or sickness, or death.

Why? He explains why. He says, if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged, but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we Christians should not be condemned with the world. No Christian would be condemned with the world, but a Christian may be judged by God, because he himself would not judge his own sin.

All right? Does it say that anywhere else? Yes, Hebrews chapter 12. Then it appeals to Christians, and he says, don't get weary because of God's rebuking, and God's scourging, and all this. Whom the Lord loves, He scourges.

You know, He chastens every son whom He receives. If you would be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, but are you illegitimate children, and not sons? Then He says, furthermore, we have had

fathers of our flesh, who corrected us, and we gave them reverence. Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live to God, to Christ, and live? Even when God spans you, don't turn against Him.

It says about Israel, Israel turns not unto him that smites him. She turned her back on God, and that's why God threw the nation off. Now, for 19 centuries, they've been wandering among the nations of the world, because they turned their back on God.

When God spanked them, and sent them into captivity, and God did other things, they didn't turn back to God. Don't ever turn your back on God. No matter how serious the punishment is, because God loves you.

Whom the Lord loves, He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives. Yes. Then in Job chapter 36, here's one of the truths of the Bible.

Here's what it says. It says, God never takes His eyes off the righteous. Now, isn't that comforting? God never takes His eyes off a Christian.

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. God's eyes are always on His people. He says, we're graven in the palms of His hands, which of course is a reference to the cross.

Our walls, He says, your walls are continually before Me. God is always watching us. Okay, here's what it says in Job 36 then.

It says, He never takes His eyes off the righteous, but with kings are they on the throne. Yes, He does establish them forever, and they are exalted. And then comes an if.

And if they be bound in fetters, and be held in cords of affliction. Does that happen to Christians? Oh yes. And there are Christians in this crowd tonight that are in that exact condition and position.

If they be held in bondage, affliction, cords, tied up, not free. Then what? Then He shows them their work. He shows them why.

And their transgressions that they have exceeded. And He opens their ear to discipline. And He commands that they return from iniquity.

Maybe God's going to say that to you tonight. Maybe God's been saying it to you for months. Maybe He'll say it to you tomorrow.

He opens our ear to discipline, and He commands that we return from iniquity. God hates sin in the Christian. Because we are His people, and we represent God to a lost, a fallen world.

We are God's right to the world. And that's why God hates sin in a Christian. That's Job 36, and Lamentations chapter 3. He asks another question.

Why does a living man complain? A man for the punishment of his sins. Well why do we complain when God punishes us for sin? He tells us rather what we ought to do there. He says, Let us search and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord.

Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens. Do you do that? Sometimes we lift up our hands, but not our heart. And so if God is visiting me for sin in my life, Isaiah 125, God said, I will turn my

hand upon you, and purely purge away your dross, and take away all your tin.

All that's cheap, and all that's worthless. All the dross in the Christian life, God will unceasingly, year by year, work at it to purge it out, so we may be the kind of person described by Paul, fit for the Master's use. Fit for Christ to put His hand to my life.

That's what God is seeking in you and I. Live and love through me, Lord, yes. But in order for Christ to live and love through me, I have to deal with my sin. And with the sin factory, which we call self, that's even more difficult to deal with.

Every one of us, every one of us, every one of us, shall give account of himself to God someday. Micah said, chapter 7, verse 9 of his book, he said, I will bear, I will put up with, I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him. He knew why God was angry.

I mean, not just a question of putting up with it for the Christian, but even of thanking God for His wonderful faithfulness in spanking us when we sin. It's no kindness to allow a child that's sinning, that's erring, to be undisciplined. That's no kindness to the child.

And God knows that more than we know it. No doubt it's very difficult for God sometimes to apply discipline to His people, but He does it faithfully because He loves us so much. Alright? Judgment for the Christian begins now.

And may I just say this, because it says this in Hebrews 12, if you sin, and God doesn't visit your sin, that is, God doesn't chastise you for it, then you are not a Christian at all. If you be without chastisement, whereof all, that is, all Christians are partakers, then are you illegitimate children, and not sons. See? You wonder sometimes how some person who professed a Christian faith can grow off into adultery or something else, can get along fine for years, nothing ever happens.

That tells me clearly that that person was never born again. Never born again. He never knew Christ.

He knew the language. I remember during the revival back in 71, when the meetings were still in our church in Saskatoon, and a teacher from one of our Canadian Bible schools came to me and said, Bill, do you mind being laid on the platform tonight? And I said, no, why? He said, because I want to be saved. I looked at him, saved? What do you mean you're teaching this Bible? I have never been saved.

He said, my parents were Christians, I've known the language. All these years. But I have never had the assurances of the forgiveness of sins.

And I had the joy of praying with him and leading him to Christ. And when he walked out of my office, he was just rejoicing in God. But supposing he died in the meantime, a teacher in one of the best-known Bible schools in Canada, not born again, and not ready to meet God.

But, Christian or non-Christian, we must all appear. We must all stand. We must all be there.

One day, God said so, and you better believe it. It's true. Don't let Satan talk you out of it.

And right now he's trying to shut your ears off so you won't listen. Because Satan doesn't like this kind of preaching. It's a little too direct.

He doesn't mind if a preacher throws cream puffs at the people, and they go home saying he's a great guy. He told them all kinds of funny stories. I hear that sometimes about preaching, that they have the people just rolling in the aisles with laughter.

And it pains my heart. I have a sense of humor. That's not the problem.

But this is a solemn and serious thing. Now, what is God going to expect from me when I, unbended me, render an accounting to him? What's he going to think about? Well, let's start here. In 1 Peter 1.22 it says, Seeing you have purified your souls and obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned, that means a genuine, a non-hypocritical love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart, fervently.

And in 1 Peter 4.8 he says, Have fervent love among yourselves, for love shall cover the multitude of sins. So I ask you this question. Do you as a Christian believer live that way? Do you have fervent love for the people in your assembly? Do you have fervent love for people in any assembly? Any born-again believer you meet, do you love him? I was standing in a street corner in Shoal Lake, Manitoba many years ago, thirty years ago, with a Christian worker friend of mine who had spent years working among Indian people and he loved Indian people with all his heart.

And we were standing there talking when all of a sudden an Indian walked by. And my friend turned to me and said, Oh! He said, My heart hurts. I love that man so much.

He said, Every time I see an Indian, my heart just about leaps out of my chest. I love those people. But deaf people, listen.

That's how we should feel about everybody we meet. Because that's how God feels about everybody. And God lives in you.

And God is trying to live and love through you. And through me. And certainly we're going to be, we're going to have to give an account concerning this.

You know, many Christians, they're cranky and they're cold and they're critical and they're carnal. You know, they've got four C's after their name. Christian, that makes five.

But four of them wipe out the one almost, don't they? What kind of a Christian am I? A loving person? Well, God wants me to be that way. Loving to all I need. So you're saying to me, you don't know the situation in my home.

Or in my church, I don't have to. Because no matter what the situation is in your home or in your church, God lives in your heart if you're born again. Do you think it's any great trouble to God? Doesn't God have shoulders wide enough to carry any burden? Yes, He has.

But we try to carry them and then we crack up. We should give them to God. Commit your way unto the Lord.

The Hebrew language says roll your way unto God. It means roll your burdens onto God's shoulders. He's got wide shoulders.

All right. Concerning love. He that covers a matter seeks love.

You know, many Christians are gossipers and some Christians are terrible gossipers. They can hardly wait to tell a little story that they heard about some Christian. Shame on you.

Don't ever do it. If anything grieves the Spirit of God, it's a gossiping Christian. The Old Testament says, Thou shalt not go up and down as a tailbearer among the children of thy people.

Because, you know, when you do that, you're doing Satan's dirty work because he's called the accuser of the brethren. He that covers a matter seeks love. Love shall cover the multitude of sins.

Judge nothing. Hey, wait a minute. Nothing? Judge nothing before the time when the Lord come who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels of the heart and then, then what? Then shall every man have praise of God.

Praise of God. The weakest Christian will be something in him that God can praise. I read a little thing on the wall and it was done, I understand, by an Indian and it simply said, Don't criticize your brother until you have walked two miles in his moccasins.

Well, we usually can't do that, but most of us have heard that saying before. Don't. Judge nothing before the time until the Lord come.

You're not the judge. God is. The judge stands before the door.

Who are you that judges another? To his own master he stands or falls. Yes, he shall be held up for God is able to make him stand. You know, really, the Christian who is a gossip, who criticizes others, is exposing himself.

He's crying loudly to the world, I'm not walking in the Spirit. And that person who's not walking in the Spirit, his conscience is hurting him, so he spends a lot of time looking for flaws in other Christians so he can, you know, say, Well, look what she's doing, look what he's doing. And it makes him feel better.

In an old coldness. That's basically why people do it. Because they're so much aware of sin in their own life.

Alright, judge nothing. Love one another with a pure heart. Fervently.

Fervently. And you know when it talks about loving the brethren, it doesn't say love the Midnight Brethren, or the Baptist Brethren, or the Alliance Brethren, or the Nazarene Brethren, or the Pentecostal Brethren. It says love the brethren.

Love the brethren. See? Many Christians haven't learned that lesson yet. And I'm sure there's lots in this building that haven't learned that lesson yet.

You may be loving the people in your own church, but you don't love the people in other churches. You just can't. You don't quite understand how come they don't see things doctrinally the way you do.

And so you kind of write them off. And it brings God. Now Paul said in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, he said, concerning brethren in love, he says, you have no need that I write unto you, for you are taught of God.

You yourselves are taught of God to love one another. Taught of God. By precept, by command, by example.

In the Bible. Everywhere. Alright, we're taught of God to love.

We're certainly going to have to give an accounting concerning that. If you're one of these Christians that tolerates, but doesn't love, you may have a serious, a difficult time when you get on your knees to confess to God. When Jesus forgave all your sin, freely, everything? Everything? Everything.

And you can't forgive some little thing, some little deal, you know? If you don't forgive, everyone from his heart, your brother, your heavenly Father, will not forgive you. Don't ever forget that. So you get yourself into a real serious situation when you refuse to forgive others, or you have this critical spirit.

Satan spirit. So, in James chapter 4, here's what it says, among other things, pardon me, in James chapter 3, he says, If you have bitter envy and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descends not from above, it's not from God, it's earthly, it's sensual, it's carnal, it's natural, it's demonic.

Demons are behind it. He says, Where there's strife and confusion ending, there's every evil work. Then he says this, The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without hypocrisy, and without partiality, and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace, are them that make peace.

What kind of wisdom do you have in your heart? The wisdom that's from demons, from a carnal nature, from down below here, or the wisdom that comes from God, pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy, without hypocrisy. All right, see what God wants. It'll be in the light of this book that Mary judged in the coming day.

Jesus Christ said, I will be judged by my word, he said. All right. Then, concerning talents, and you know, sometimes Christians feel this way, well, you know, I don't know, I can't preach, I can't sing, I can't teach a Sunday school class, I can't usher, I can't do anything, so, you know, I guess the Lord missed me when he passed out the talents.

No, he didn't. You'd like to think so, because you see, the human heart's very deceitful here. We'd like to think that God missed me.

God didn't miss you. It says he divides, that is, he imparts or gives to every man, to every man, and severally, and severally there in old English doesn't mean several gifts. It means your own personal gift.

Your own personal gift. Every Christian in this building tonight has his own personal gift from God. It may not be much, but the Bible talks about the gift of helps.

A man came to me one time, he said, very keen, oh, just a great looking kid, about 20 maybe, and he said, Pastor Bill, I want to ask you something. I said, OK, fire away. He said, I've witnessed hundreds of people about Jesus Christ, but I hardly ever seem to be able to win anyone to Christ.

So I talked to him. Are you walking in the Spirit? Is there any sin in your life? No. He was walking with God.

He loved God, loved Christ, loved God's people. I said, OK. Jesus in John chapter 4 talked about sowers as well as reapers.

He said to his disciples, I sent you to reap that while you bestowed no labor. Other men labored, and you were entered into their labors. And here is it saying true, one sows and another reaps.

I said, you have a gift of sowing. Well, he says, praise the Lord, I never thought of that. Not everybody has the gift of reaping, but I think we can sow with one hand and reap with the other, and that's how most of us live.

But some people are tremendous at sowing the seed of the word of God. And someone else may be rapes. But when God hands out the rewards, He'll make it right.

You can't have a harvest if you don't sow, and we all understand that. And it's also truly Christian life. Well, it may be that, it may be a gift of help.

So many things I mention, we don't have time to go into that tonight, but you do have a talent, no matter who you are. 5, 2, and 1 in the Bible, in Matthew 25. And you notice, it was not the fellow with the 5, the highly gifted person, or the fellow with the 2, who's got moderate gifts.

It was the fellow with the 1 that failed. He was the one that failed. He said, Lord, I was afraid, and I went, and I hid your talent.

What did Christ say to him? You wicked and slothful, lazy servant. You see, his problem was, he was lazy. He didn't want to get involved in the work of God.

He didn't want to spend any time at it. Well, God's going to ask us. We're going to have to give an account.

What did I do with the talent God gave me? Small talent, or large? Doesn't really matter. He gave a talent that just suits you. Dividing to every man.

The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man for the common good, one translation says. For the good of all. For the profit of all.

Alright? That's another thing. And then, time. What a valuable commodity time is.

How do you spend your time? There's an old saying that some people sit and think, and some people just sit. They don't even think. Redeeming the time, which means making the most of life, of every opportunity that you have.

A man was asked, he was dying, a Christian. Are you afraid to die? No, he said. But I'm sure ashamed to die.

I wasted so much time. I'm ashamed to meet God. So, how about you? Redeeming the time? Walking wisdom towards them without redeeming the time? Colossians chapter 4. Ephesians 5 otherwise.

Redeeming the time because it is an evil. Now it's high time, it says in Romans 13. He said, it's high time to wake up to sleep for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Listen, if the night was far spent 19 centuries ago, how much is left now? How much is left now? And even phasing that out of your mind completely, I mean the doctrine, the teaching of the second coming of Christ. Let's forget about that.

Who in this building tonight knows when we're going to die? I don't. You don't. Nobody does.

You walk through a cemetery and you see people all ages, little children, babies, and people 95. Who knows when? How much time do I have yet? how much time do you have? You don't know and I don't know. So, redeeming the time.

Making the most of time. Never mind what other people think. A missionary went years ago to a foreign country and she'd made up her mind that she was going to have a vital prayer life and she was going to spend much time in secret along with God.

So she did. But it used to bother her because, you know, she'd be up at 4 o'clock in the morning or later on when she was still reading her Bible and praying, she'd hear the feet of the other missionaries going out down to the marketplaces to start evangelizing and the devil would bore and say, Oh, look, you see, you're lazy. You're just sitting in your room and you're just lazy.

And God said, Stay with her. At the end of her first term, she had led more people to Christ than all the other missionaries in that particular center put together. They did far more evangelizing, but she won more because she came out from the room full of God.

Dr. Oscar Lowry used to call this the sin you're afraid to mention. Guess what it is. What's the sin you're afraid to mention? What do you think it is? It has to do with money, with what I have.

Will a man love God? Oh, yes, he will because God won't put him in jail. Sure he will. The Bible tells us that one-tenth of all people say, Wait a minute, man, that's Old Testament stuff.

No, it's not. In Matthew 23, 23, Christ said, You pay tithe of mint and anise in common, but you have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, faith, and then the parallel account in Luke 11 adds the phrase, the love of God. But Christ said, These ought you to have done and not to leave the other undone.

Tithing is right, but there are weightier matters you should not have neglected. And moreover, Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek and Abraham was a picture of the believer and Melchizedek, as we all know, was a picture of Christ. There you have a believer paying tithes.

It says he gave him tithes of all. And you say, This is lovingly, but as directly as I can. If you're a Christian believer and you're not giving God one-tenth of your income, you are robbing God.

Yes, you are. Please pardon the personal reference, but when I first went out preaching, I was paid \$10 a month. That was my salary.

I had a little church way up in the north. I got a check for \$30 every three months and after six months I got nine, so two of us had to live on it. People say, Well, back in those days people were earning about \$100 a month.

I was getting \$10. So what do you do about the \$90 it lacks? Well, surely God wouldn't expect me to tithe. We tithed right from the very beginning.

We gave God at least \$1 out of \$10 and we gave an offering whenever we felt we should. And let me tell you something. I've been on the road now preaching over 40 years and God's never failed to pay the bills.

He'll do it. He said, Then that honour me I will honour. Honour the Lord with your substance and with the firstfruits of all your increase.

So shall your vines be filled with plenty and your presses shall burst out with new wine. People say, Old Testament. Okay, New Testament.

Look at chapter 6. Christ said, Give, and it shall be given unto you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over shall men give unto your bosom. For with the same measure that you meet with all it shall be measured to you again.

You'll get what you give, but don't give for that reason. That would be wrong. Give because you love God.

I nourished him in one of my churches. He was my treasure. Boy, what a treasure.

He was fantastic. He did love giving, you know. And if he got an extra, he worked in the CNR in Winnipeg.

I was starting a church there. And if he got an extra \$50, he wasn't expecting none. He would jump about 16 feet in the air and click his heels together four times.

What do I do with this? He meant for God, you know. He just loved to give. And he was a great treasure because, you know, when it came to money, he just had a shining face.

And he used to shame people into giving. It was beautiful. Oh, preachers shouldn't talk about that, should they? No, of course not.

No, because I'm a crook, see. I'm robbing God. I mean, who wants to have their sin exposed? But it'll leave me alone.

You don't know my financial condition. It's raining a lot and I can't give. You can't afford not to give or it'll get worse.

You can't afford not to give. Let me tell you something. In 2 Corinthians 8, Paul used this phrase to prove the sincerity of your love.

He also used this phrase, the proof of your love. And in both cases in 2 Corinthians 8, he was talking about giving being the proof of your love. So Ezekiel said, with their mouth, they show much love, but their heart goes after their covetousness.

Robbing God. Charles Fee, the great revivalist, said, I never knew God to bless a stingy church. And I never knew God to bless a stingy Christian either.

The blessing halts at that point. And here's what he says, and I'll get off this subject in a minute so you can listen again. Okay.

In 2 Corinthians 9, it says, Thus I say, he who sows sparingly, and he's talking about giving, he who sows sparingly shall reap also sparingly. He that sows bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man, according as he purposes his heart, so let him give.

Not grudgingly, not of necessity, for the Lord loves a cheerful giver. Then he says this to back it all up, a promise. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency, he's talking about money, remember, that you always having all sufficiency in all things may abound unto every good work.

You'll have money to give, if you're willing to give. But why should God give me money if I've got glue in my fingers? Why should he? You know what people say? Boy, if I had the money, R.G. Letourneau had, you know. You know, one time he stood there with a check in his hand for \$35,000,000.

He sold a couple of factories or something. And he stood there with that check, \$35,000,000. It was his.

So what did he say? He closed his eyes and prayed and said, God, what do you want me to do with this? He lived in a very modest home. A friend of mine stayed in there overnight. A very, very modest home, down in Winona Lane, in the States.

And God gave him millions because he could trust him with it. It went right through his hands out to the ends of the earth. See? And one of the reasons why God doesn't give us is because he knows when we get our hands on it, we're going to hold on to it.

You know? What does it say? Have I been robbing God? So what does it say in Ephesians 4? Let him that stole, steal no more. But rather let him labor, working with his hands, a thing which is good, that he may have, remember not to put in the bank at 14% or, you know, invest at 14%, that he may have to give to him that needs. And you can complain all you want.

You can say all you want, but you better say it to God because he said it, not me. I'm just telling you what God said in the Bible. We Christians, like Wesley said, make all you can, save all you can, and then give all you can.

It's part of the revival message. And the reason why some Christians never know the fullness of God is because they have a stingy heart. And they're not concerned nor do they even want to know about needs in a foreign country because it bothers them.

I showed a film on India one time and some people told me they wish they'd never seen it because they didn't sleep that night. Wow. Every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

There's one last thought here. Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. By thy words thou shalt be justified and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, but you're not befitting, but rather giving thanks. What does it say? Romans 14, verse 12.

So then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Listen, if you're born again, if you're God's child, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, lives in you. And he wants to love others through you.

He wants to live in you and love others through you. That's the goal God has in mind. That's why he leaves us here on earth.

That's why he doesn't take us home as soon as we're converted. He wants to love the world through you. You and I. But for that to happen, I've got to deal with sin in my life.

I have to become transparently honest, as we sometimes say, about my sin. And I also have to be willing to deal with that greater problem called self.

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