

The Unrelenting Humility of God

by Carter Conlon

The sermon highlights the unrelenting humility of God, who comes down to humanity despite their sin and rebellion, and challenges us to respond with humility and reverence in our worship and daily lives.

Duration: 56:35

Scripture: 1 Samuel 6:12, Jeremiah 33:9, Ezekiel 36:26, John 12:14-15, Revelation 4:5-7

Topics: "Humility"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the scene of worship described in Revelation chapter 4. The worship is directed towards the God of all creation, with thunderings, lightnings, and voices emanating from the throne. There are also seven lamps of fire representing the seven spirits of God, and a sea of glass before the throne. The preacher emphasizes the importance of maintaining a proper perspective of God's greatness and righteousness, as well as the need to ascribe greatness to Him. The sermon also references a song given to Moses in Deuteronomy 32, warning about the people's tendency to backslide and urging them to ascribe greatness to God.

Transcript

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This is something the Holy Spirit has been opening to my heart and I don't think anybody can adequately preach on this topic. I think when we get to heaven it will be the first time that we finally realize how humble God really is. The incredible distance that he bridged between himself and his own fallen creation.

To come and retrieve fallen man and to let fallen man even beat him and kill him in the form of his son. It's something that the Holy Spirit is just starting to open. I do know I'm speaking from heaven this morning.

I have no doubt in my heart whatsoever. Psalm 113 please if you'll turn there we'll pray together as you're doing that. Father I pray God with all my heart for the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Lord if you don't come this is an exercise in uselessness. We will accumulate knowledge but there will be no inner change. I'm asking for a quickening of the Holy Spirit in my mind and physical body.

I'm asking Lord that you take me far beyond any natural ability. That you just open heaven to my mind and spirit. Give me the ability to be animated by the Holy Spirit.

I ask you Lord that even the intonations of my voice would come from your heart. I want to be an expression of your heart. Especially in this last days that we're living in.

I pray God that you today Jesus would find open hearts among your people. That you can go into the inner temple challenge the testimony. Encourage those that are weary.

Lord straighten that which is crooked and that which is failing. Give it strength. Lord let your life become ours today.

I ask it in Jesus mighty name. The unrelenting humility of God. Psalm 113 beginning at verse 1. Praise ye the Lord.

Praise oh you servants of the Lord. Praise the name of the Lord. Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and forever more.

From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. The Lord's name is to be praised. The Lord is high above all nations.

And his glory above the heavens. Who is like unto the Lord our God who dwelleth on high. Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth.

He raises up the poor out of the dust and lifts the needy out of the dunghill. That he may set him with princes. Even with the princes of his people.

He makes the barren woman to keep house and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the Lord. Now the psalmist says about the Lord God.

Of course that praise is due to him not only in time but for all of eternity. There's nobody like our God. There's nothing in creation that could even remotely begin to compare with the Lord God.

The psalmist says he has to humble himself to look upon the things that are in heaven. Can you imagine? Created beings in heaven that are worshipping this very day around about his throne. He has to humble himself.

That is the exceeding greatness of our God. To even behold things in heaven which is created of his own hand. Even though they have not sinned against him.

He still has to humble himself to behold them. And in the earth. And in his mercy he comes and humbles himself and begins to manifest his glory among men.

Moses said in his psalm in Deuteronomy 32 verse 3. He said ascribe ye greatness to our God. How do you see God today? So many people have a little g God. They see great big problems and a really small

God.

And they come into the prayer closet and they say oh little we God. Look at this great big problem I have. And that's the problem of the entire prayer life.

They have it all in the wrong perspective. It's all out of balance. When you finally have heaven's view of who God is.

Heavens are his throne. The earth is his footstool. All things that are made he has made.

He made them all for his own honor and for his own pleasure and for his own glory. John tells us if you'll keep a marker in Psalm 133 and go to Revelation chapter 4 please with me. And 113 rather.

And John tells us. He describes a scene of worship. And this particular scene of worship is worship as it is rightly due to the God of all creation.

Revelation chapter 4 beginning at verse 5. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices. There were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne which are the seven spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal.

And in the midst of the throne and round about the throne were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion. The second like a calf.

The third beast had a face as a man. And the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the fourth beast had each of them six wings around about them.

And they were full of eyes within. They rest not day and night saying holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty which was and is and is to come. You wonder why when we sang that song this morning about Oprah's day I think it's called.

When we sang it and we sang those words holy, holy, holy. We enter into something. We don't fully even understand it.

But we are joining the multitudes in heaven as it is giving worship as it is supposed to be. And it is rightly due to the God of all creation. When you and I finally stand before the throne of God, I'm sure there's a lot of things that you'd like to say when you finally stand and see the risen Christ in his full splendor and his full glory.

But I want to venture guess that there's nothing else you'll be able to say. Then these created beings are able to say right this very moment at the throne of God. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty which was and is and is to come.

You've always been. Before anything was created you were. While all things today exist you are.

And when everything today around us is gone you will still be there tomorrow. You are holy beyond anything I've ever understood, beyond anything my mind ever was able to comprehend. You are holy.

Paul says our God is a consuming fire. This incredible holiness of God, the incredible otherness of God to everything that we see around us. Oh, folks, I've often believed that all the church of Jesus Christ really needs to live for God with a full passion.

It's just a glimpse of him, just to see him, just for a moment in the full holiness of who he is and to understand this incredible majesty of God. And when these beasts, verse 9, give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne who lives forever and ever. The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne and worship him that lives forever and ever.

And cast their crowns before the throne saying thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power. For thou has created all things and for thy pleasure they are and they were created. Amazing.

We realize it one day when we get to the throne of his power that he has the right to demand that all that he has created worship him. Finally, the revelation comes. You've created all things and they were created for your pleasure.

They were created by you. They were created for you. Everything that we see, everything that exists was created for God, was created for his pleasure.

And finally one day you and I are going to be there and we're going to have this full revelation literally explode inside of our minds. Now we see through a glass darkly, the scripture says, but then we shall know even as we are known. And I don't know about you, but I long for that day with all of my heart.

I long to be delivered from the confines of this world and this natural body and to be clothed upon with the supernatural body that Jesus Christ has promised all who have trusted in him. To rule and reign with him for all of eternity, whatever that means. Beloved, I don't know the extent of that and neither do you, but I do know it will be glorious.

I do know there will be an explosion of the knowledge of how things are created, why they were created. There will be this incredible revelation of Jesus Christ like you and I have only longed for on this side of eternity. This is an incredible view of God.

We look in the book of Revelation and we have this view of who God is. But yet there's another perspective. Beginning in the book of 1 Samuel chapter 6. Here's where we start to look at something which the Lord's been speaking to my heart.

It's very necessary that we start in Revelation. That we start at the end as it is. Where he is rightly worshipped in the manner that he deserves to be worshipped.

But then in 1 Samuel chapter 6 in verse 12. We see that which then represented the presence of God among men. Now this was the ark of the covenant.

Now under a ministry of a high priest called Eli. There developed sons who were greedy and immoral. And they were standing at the doorway as it is into the access of God's presence.

And their greed and their immorality and their lack of the fear of God and the understanding of God. Produced in the people an abhorrence for the sacrifice of the Lord. For giving first of all to the work of God.

Just the whole sense of coming into his presence was marred by this ministry that had so misrepresented him. The people under this type of priesthood had become very casual in their dealing with God. They were in a battle with the Philistines.

They called after a seemingly initial defeat. They called for the ark of the Lord. They shouted as it is the way their forefathers had always done.

Even the Philistines trembled. And they said, whoa, be to us. The ark of God has come into the camp.

The devils believe, James says, and they also tremble. But yet the shout was only tradition. There was no heartfelt sense of this honor and glory of God.

Or bringing the glory to his name that he is due. They were not fighting as David did later on. Going into the valley as it is and saying, is there not a cause? These evil powers are defying the armies of the living God.

And they shouted and they had the ark and they went into battle. And the scripture tells us that Hophni and Phinehas, this priesthood, were slain in this battle. And the ark of God was taken into captivity.

The Lord, as it is, let that which represented his presence be taken by the enemies, his own enemies. And the enemies of God's people. Seemingly captivated this ark that represented his provision, his life, his protection.

And his virtual presence among the people. That was a representation. But a very real representation because he moved in unison with this that represented him.

And of course the ark went into the cities of the Philistines. And you know the story. Or you should if you've been in the Lord any amount of time.

That they put the ark in the temple of Dagon. And he came in the next day and Dagon was gone in a sense. Ended up with no head really and no hands.

Laying down on the ground and they moved the ark to another place. And everybody started to be physically afflicted. And you see because God will not let his glory be captivated by his enemies.

He simply will not. There's something in him. He's always moving towards having a people.

There has been a yearning in the heart of God. Even though he sits in heaven. Even though he created all things.

The day he lost Adam there was a yearning. Came into his heart to be renewed in fellowship with his own creation. That had fallen short of his glory because sin had gotten into the hearts of all men.

And God had every right and has every right today to fold up the earth and the universe and just recreate it. But there's something of love in his heart that you and I can only scratch the surface of. John 3 16 says God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.

Now you can take the world out of there and put your name in there. The only reason why the earth still exists today is because God knew you were going to be born. And has loved you from eternity past with a passionate love that caused him to become a man.

And to die a horrible death on a cross. We see now the ark of God coming back down the road. Into the coast of Israel in humility.

The Philistines made a wooden cart for the ark of God. They put it on this wooden cart and they attached two milk cows really to it. Because the scripture says they had calves.

The calves were nursing on these cows and they put the calves away in another place. And they attached these two milk cows to the cart. And they sent the cart.

Well they didn't really send it. They just let it go and followed it. And God let it.

And the cows instead of turning back to their calves. Which I spent years on a farm next to a dairy farm. You can't separate a nursing cow from its calf.

It will go back to that calf. It will hear the calf calling to it. And it will go back.

But there was something stronger. You see God had initiated. He was going back into the heart of his people again.

But he was coming back in humility. He was not coming back in a flaming chariot. He was not descending from the clouds.

With angels blowing trumpets on all sides. Of him saying to the people. You've misrepresented me.

You've forsaken the righteous ways that I have prescribed that you should live. No. If you can see this.

This is the God who sits at the throne. That created beings cry holy, holy, holy. Day and night.

They don't stop. The elders cast their crowns at the feet of Christ. But here he is.

Down in this particular season. On a wooden cart with two milk cows. Some chariot.

Pulling as it is the very heart. And the very presence of God. Back into the middle of his people again.

And the scripture says the cattle were lowing. Now lowing is. It's a noise.

That cows make when they're troubled. When something is wrong. When they're afraid.

Or especially if they are separated from their calves. I do believe in some sense. At least anyway.

That God said if you can see this. If you can see the groaning. Imagine you're an Israelite.

And you're standing there now. Here comes the ark of God. And it's on a cart made by the Philistines.

And here are two milk cows pulling this thing. And they're making this moanful kind of a low noise. That when they're distressed they make this noise.

When they're longing for something. And it was a representation of God's heart. At least in some measure.

Why does he keep coming back to his fallen creation? What is it about God that we can neglect him days on end. Yet he will still return to us. What is it? There was a longing in God's heart.

And everything that he does is a type of himself. Of course people in that generation were blinded. And many today are blinded to it as well.

Romans 8.12 Paul says. The whole of creation groans and travails. In pain together until now.

The whole of creation longs for the restoration. Of all things according to the will of God. Actually it says for the manifestation of the sons of God.

The whole of creation. Has this inner groaning. Waiting for a people.

To be redeemed who will walk with their God. Talk with their God. Love their God.

Understand who their God is. Give him the glory and praise that is due unto his name. It represents as I said earlier this inward groaning of God.

All men back in right relationship with him again. John 11.33 says that Jesus groaned in the spirit and was troubled. Now John heard this.

This was an audible groan. You have to assume from the passage. Because all around him Lazarus was dead.

And all around him was weeping and unbelief. He had been declaring the truths of his heart. He had been giving the people a sense of the essence of his mission.

And he came and all he found in this place of death. Was unbelief and weeping. He saw Mary weeping.

He saw the Jews weeping. Even those who had sat at his feet were weeping. And John says he groaned in his spirit.

It must have been an incredible groan. It is something of the heart of God. For you and for me today.

Now 1 Samuel 6.19 tells us that the men of Beth Shemesh had lost the fear of God. And when the ark came back into their presence again. They were so casually treating the holy things.

They handled his presence with a familiarity that had been expressly forbidden in the scripture. Here comes the holiness of God again as it is represented by the ark. Now the scripture clearly defined the methods by which this ark was to be carried.

Who could touch it and under what circumstances it could be touched. But the people under a backstabbing priesthood had so lost the sense of the awe of God. That they carelessly handled the holy things.

And I think sometimes, I wonder sometimes. Are we in danger of walking this way? We become so familiar that we start to casually handle the things of God. The offices that he has given us.

The opportunity to come into his presence. The incredible opportunity just to pray. And just to come in fellowship with him.

But yet we begin to casually handle these things. And because of this casual handling of the ark. There was a plague that broke out among the people.

And many died because of it. I think of when the apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11. He warned about the communion table.

He said he that eats and drinks unworthily. Eats and drinks damnation to himself not discerning the Lord's body. And he said for this cause many are weak and sickly among you.

And many sleep. You see even in the Corinthians church. There were many who were embracing the presence of God.

But they were casually holding the great truths of his life and his mercy. By failing to minister to the poor among them. They were divided.

The rich were fellowshiping with the rich. And those who had with those who had or had more. And those that were poor.

They were pushing to the sides of the temple. And they were casually handling the holy things of God. And Paul says you fail to discern what it means to be part of the body of Christ.

The body of Christ means we walk humbly before God. And humbly before one another. We consider every man better than ourselves.

We have this inward nature of Christ. This new mind that Jesus says I'm going to give you. That causes men to walk humbly.

So many people think the new mind is what gives us ability to rule and reign as it is on this earth. And to take authority over kingdoms and such like. Well it may evolve in some measure into that.

But it begins with the ability to walk humbly. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. Now God gave Moses a song in Deuteronomy chapter 32.

If you'll go there please with me. He gave Moses a song after he told him. He said after you're gone Moses.

He said that the people are going to backslide. They're going to walk away from the things that they have been taught. And they're going to begin to deal very casually.

Now of course we started with in some measure the fulfillment of that. And Moses was given a song. And he gave this song to the people.

In Deuteronomy 32 verse 3. He says I will publish the name of the Lord. He said ascribe ye greatness unto our God. Ascribe greatness to God.

Oh beloved if we could just stop here for a moment. And ascribe greatness to our God. Ascribe greatness to God.

He is worthy of my life being given to him. He is worthy of my praise. He is worthy that I should come to his throne.

And bring my petitions with thanksgiving before him. He is worthy that I should allow him to dwell. In the midst of the testimonies he has established within my life.

And challenge everything within me that is unlike him. I should ascribe greatness to God. Morning by morning I should be seeing new mercy.

I should be saying God yes I have this failing in my life. I have this problem in my mind. But you are greater than this failing.

You are greater than this problem. You are greater in me than he who is in the world that comes against me. You are greater than every demonic power I will ever have to face.

You are greater than every contrary argument to truth that will ever try to invade my mind. You are greater than everything that has ever been spoken over my life. And every curse of hell that the enemy has ever tried to bring my way and bring me into bondage.

You are greater than all of these things. This is half the reason why people backslide. They just simply lose perspective of who God is.

God is great and greatly to be praised. God there is none other greater than him. Verse 4 says he is the rock.

His work is perfect. All his ways are judgment of God of truth and without iniquity. Just and right is he.

The things he says are right. The way he works is right. Everything he does is right.

But listen to verse 5. They have corrupted themselves. Their spot is not the spot of his children. They are perverse and crooked generation.

Do you thus requite the Lord? Verse 6. O foolish people and unwise. Is not he thy father that hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee and established thee? And Moses is speaking now prophetically into the future and says, Is this how you will repay God? Is this how his greatness will be manifested through you to the world? You will repay him by dealing casually with him. You will repay him by losing the sense of awe of who he is.

You will repay him as it is by not allowing him to live his life through you and to make you a testimony to all the world that there is a God. His name is Jesus Christ and there is no other name beside his name. And God cries out through Moses and says, Is this how you will repay him? I wonder today, how is the church of Jesus Christ repaying Christ in our generation? God has every right at any moment to withdraw.

He would be just if today he just said enough. I have strived enough with people who don't want to hear me. They don't want to really walk with me.

They don't want to honor me for who I am. I've striven enough and he would be just. There would be no error or wrong in this.

And the only thing that keeps him coming to this world and to you and to me is an unrelenting humility. That means a humility that just is who God is. A humility that we know nothing about.

We can't even hardly forgive somebody that snickered at us in the office or taken our newspaper from before our door in our apartment building on Monday morning. We can barely bring ourselves to talk to them for the rest of our lives. And that is so insignificant in comparison to what we've done to a holy God and what we do to a holy God every day.

But yet he has an unrelenting humility. We spit in his face. We tell him to go away.

We say, No, not today. I'll talk to you tomorrow. We slam the door in his face time and time again.

And still he comes back. And as a true gentleman that God is, he knocks on the door. Said, I'd like to come in.

I'd like to sit down with you. I'd like to open an incredible banquet to you. I'd like to give you this marvelous strength if you'd like to have it.

I'd like to show you who I am and why I've come. Paul says in Philippians 2, verses 6 to 8, Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But he made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men.

And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself. Incredible. This unrelenting humility of God.

Look at him throughout Scripture. Folks, just think with me for a moment. Look at God in Christ throughout Scripture.

He's continually returning, though often rejected. He continues to speak, though frequently ignored. He continues to walk among men, though largely unrecognized and unwanted.

Even to his own, John says in chapter 1 and verse 4, He came to his own and his own received him not. Look at him today, walking among men who are about to fail him. John 13, verses 4 and 5, say at the Last Supper, He rose, he took off his garments, he girded himself with a towel, he took a basin and he began to wash the feet of men who had made great boasts about all the things they were going to do for him.

He knew they were going to fail. He knew Peter was going to deny by cursing himself with an oath that he'd ever known him. He knew John was going to run out of the garden naked, stripped of his clothing, fleeing in terror.

He knew they would fail. They all had boasted of their bravado and their dedication, but he knew it. But because there's an unrelenting humility in God, he took a towel and he stooped down and he washed their feet.

I do believe that was the only thing, perhaps, that would have kept them through their season of despair that they were about to come upon. Folks, you and I go through times of failure. We go through times of difficulty.

We go through times where there's a deep inner awareness that we have failed God. So therefore, how do we get back to Him? If we see Him only on the throne, then it can be almost impossible mentally to come back to this holiness because we realize we've fallen so far. We also have to see Him with a towel on His knees, with that basin, willing, willing, willing, willing to wash our feet when we have failed and walked in places we shouldn't walk and done things we shouldn't do.

See Him in John 12, verses 14 and 15, riding on a colt into Jerusalem. Remember the ark coming in on a cart back into Beth Shemesh again in the Old Testament. Now we see the living Christ, God Almighty, embodied as it is in the human body in His Son called Jesus Christ.

We see Him again in humility. He doesn't come in on a stretched limo. He doesn't come in with an entourage.

There's not seven priests with trumpets blowing horns before Him. He's on a colt. Unrecognizable to those who are living in pride and are self-obsessed.

Here He comes riding into Jerusalem. Oh God, help me. When I read this I say, God, help me.

I feel sometimes just reading this so far from this heart. God, you've got to help us. You've got to help all of us.

We can't do this without the power of the Holy Spirit within us. We can't do it without the new mind of Christ. The moment we get a gift, we're all like a pile of peacocks in the house of God, strutting our feathers and letting everyone know the wonderful things that God has done through us, forgetting that we're just beggars that God is working through.

That's all we are. I see Him after He's risen from the dead, walking. Now, He's an incredible conqueror.

After He died, He said, It is finished. He destroyed the power of sin, the grave and the devil. And here He is now as the risen Christ.

You'd expect now His appearance to be with a crown, with white horses, with magnificent armies that the Bible does say. He's coming back with, but that's as a conquering king and a judge one day. But here He is now.

Two men are walking on the road to Emmaus, and they're confused. They had hoped, and they were spiritually disheartened because the Savior they had hoped in, they saw as crucified, buried and gone. And Jesus, Luke 24, 13-15 tells us, He came beside them walking, just like an ordinary man.

But He's now the conquering king. This unrelenting humility that I'm speaking about today, it's humility that just never ends. He's victorious.

He's won. He had the right to appear in magnificence as it is. He had the right to have another mount of transfiguration appearance and saying, Behold me, King of kings, Lord of lords.

But He just simply walks with these men. Begins opening the scriptures and talking about Himself, the Bible says, from the book of Moses and onward. He would have kept on walking, but they compelled Him to come in and abide with them.

He broke bread with them. And as He broke bread, their eyes were opened, and they saw that He was the Christ. See Him standing on the seashore after His own disciples, said, Well, what are we going to do now? Well, Peter said, Let's go fishing.

And they all said, Well, that's a great idea. Let's all go fishing. We've worked with Christ.

It's been three years. We watched Him crucified. We're aware He's raised from the dead.

So let's go fishing. And that's the way all of us are folks. There's a great commission these men have been given to go into all the world.

And we see Jesus standing on the seashore. And what's He doing? He's serving breakfast. This unrelenting humility of God calls out and says, Have you caught anything? He doesn't chastise them for their lack of understanding.

He just says, Have you caught anything? I want to ask you a question this morning on God's behalf. Where have you been fishing? Have you caught anything? Where have you been heading as a Christian? What have you been doing? Has it satisfied you? Is your boat full? Do you have enough to give to others who are hungry all around you? Have you caught anything? And they said, No, we've been laboring all

night, but we're fairly empty. And He said, Well, cast your net on the right side of the ship.

I'm not necessarily convinced that that meant the other side of the boat. We just need to cast our net on the right side. And so they finally come to shore.

They loved Him. You know, folks, we all make mistakes. But I know that you love Him.

Most and hopefully all here. I hear the way you worship. I know you love Him.

But do you know He loves you? And the men made their way to shore. And here they are looking at the risen Christ, the God of creation, the one who has every right to demand even the trees to worship Him. He could bring the fish out of the water if He wanted to, and they could all sing His praise.

And here He is standing on the seashore making biscuits for His own disciples with only one question on His mind. See, that's what's been in His heart from the beginning. Do you love me? Do you finally love me? All that I've done and every way that I've manifested my life to you, do you love me? He's speaking to Peter, who's a type of a failed Christian.

And Peter knows he's a deep failure. Do you love me? To the person today who really doesn't know Him, and you've not had a balanced view of who God is, and the Lord says to you today, I love you. Do you love me? You see, one day He says, I have to sit as either your judge or your friend.

And that day, folks, is coming very, very soon. You will stand before God, as I will. When you stand before Him, you're going to see Him finally in His holiness.

And I do believe there'll be an explosion of understanding of who He is and why He came to the earth. And the incredible passion in His heart for you that is not able to be comprehended fully by the human mind. And you'll finally see it.

But He will either sit on that day as your judge or your friend. You see, because the decision to receive Him as Savior is made on this side of eternity, not there. Once you're there, it's too late.

It's all over. The decision is made here. He says, I've done everything possible to win your heart.

Everything possible. The Lord will be fully justified when people stand before Him and they're cast out of His presence for eternity. Because He didn't just stay where He has a right to stay.

He became a man. And He has walked in continuous humility. I believe for those who are here today and will make the foolish decision to reject Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you're going to have a panoramic view of every time God came to you.

Of every time He walked beside you, speaking into your ear, irrespective of what you were doing or where you were going. Of every opportunity you had to hear about His love. There's going to be a full view.

That's why I believe in many cases your arguments are going to be all gone. He is completely just. He is completely right in everything He does.

He will give you an opportunity to receive Him. If you refuse Christ, this service will come back before you. You will see me again standing in this pulpit, pleading on Christ's behalf for your soul.

You'll see it, you'll hear it all over again. And tell me then, what argument will you have? How will you be able to say, I didn't know. You never came to me.

I would have, had I had the opportunity. But you see, the problem is now that you have the opportunity. And it's not just a preacher standing up with a message, as nice as that may be, but I have been in prayer.

I have something from the heart of God. And God knew you would be here today. You're not here by chance.

The annex. And you may have rolled in 45 minutes late into this service. You may not even have wanted to be here.

Somebody invited you. But you're not here by accident. God brought you here.

And you're hearing a message now that determines whether or not you will spend eternity in heaven or eternity in hell. Who could take issue with God? What have I done? He said in one of the Old Testament prophets. What more could I have I done that I've not already done? How much more could I have pleaded with you? How much more could I have shown you my willingness to receive you and to forgive your sin and to bring you to myself and to become the source of your life and strength? And all I wanted was for you to love me.

I just wanted you to open your heart and understand that I have loved you with an everlasting love. I engraved you on the palms of my hands. He said to Isaiah the very day that your forefather Adam and your mother Eve fell in the Garden of Eden.

I knew you were coming into this world and I engraved your name on the palms of my hands. And I said in my humility, I'm not willing that you should perish. I'm not willing that you should be cast out of my presence for all of eternity.

So I will come down and I will manifest myself to you over and over and over and over again. You may spit in my face, but I will knock on your door. You may wound my back, but I will come back to you time and again and speak to you.

You may curse my name, but I will walk with you, whisper to you, talk to you, plead with you all the days of your life. Folks, do you know how much God loves you? Do you know the depth of His love? Do you understand you're the only reason why this world still exists? There's no other reason. It's not just because He wanted history to fulfill itself.

There's no other reason the world exists than you. God wanted you from before the foundation of the world for all of eternity. He wanted you.

In Jeremiah's day, Israel had become a spiritual mess. But the Lord said through Jeremiah, Thus saith the Lord, the Maker, that formed it, to establish it. The Lord is His name.

In other words, God says, I made you, I formed you, and my intent has been to establish you as the man or woman that I destined you to be from before the foundation of the world. And in verse 3, He says, Call to me, and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things which thou knowest not, or that means that you've not known yet. Call to me.

How do I get to God? Call to me. I'm not far away, God says. I'm not in the heavens.

I've been where you are. Call to me. I'm as close to you as the mention of my name.

You don't have to persuade God to save you. Think it through. Why would He come? Why would He become a man? Why would He go to a cross? Why would He let people spit on Him and rip out His beard and slap Him and put a crown of thorns on His head and a robe of unrighteousness on His back? Why would He let this world crucify Him naked? It was for you.

Call to me, He says. Just call to me. You might be a million miles away in your mind, but I'm not a million miles away from you.

Just call to me. He says, I'll cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return and build them as at the first. He says, I'll restore you, in other words, to what I intended you to be.

I'll cleanse them from all their iniquity where they have sinned against Me. I'll pardon their iniquities where they have sinned, where they've transgressed against Me. He says, if you'll trust Me that I took your place on a cross, I will forgive your sin.

I will cleanse you from the power of sin and the stain of sin, and I will erase heaven's record. I will forgive you. And it shall be to me, says the name of joy and praise and honor, before all the nations of the earth, which will hear of all the good that I do to them.

And they shall fear and tremble for the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure to it. The Lord said, I will do such a work in you that people around you will begin to tremble. They will know this is a supernatural work.

They know you didn't have the power to change like I will change you. I will give you a new mind. Give you a new heart.

Give you a new spirit. Verse 10, he says, Thus saith the Lord, Again, there shall be heard in this place which you say shall be desolate without man and without beast, even in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate without man and without inhabitant and without beast. Now God says, this is your report of yourself.

You stand here, you say, I'm empty. You say, there's no hope. You say, my life is a mess.

You say, I've done too much wrong. He says, now this is what's going to happen. There's going to be heard again the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good and His mercy endures forever.

And of them that bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of God, for I will cause to return the captivity of the land as at the first, says the Lord. The Lord says, I'm going to give you a voice of praise and you're going to come into the house of God and you're going to go into your prayer closet and you're going to get up in the morning and you're going to join those created beings around the throne of God saying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are filled with His glory.

Your cry is going to be, God, fill me with Your glory. Let the life of my Christ be my life. In the power of the Holy Ghost, God Almighty, make me a miracle in my generation.

Hallelujah. I will trust you. Through, Jesus said in the book of John, Come to me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I'll give you rest.

Come learn of me. I'm meek and I'm lowly at heart. And you will find rest for your souls.

Please don't go to hell. I beg you. I beg you in Christ's name, please don't go to hell.

Don't be a foolish person. Don't hold out in the stubbornness of your own ignorance and resist a God who so passionately loves you. Scripture says today, if you can hear His voice, don't harden your heart.

For people here today, the annex, I can't see you there, but the Lord sees you. You can say, Pastor, I am moved in my heart. And I've not realized the depth of God's love for me.

Yeah, I'm a mess. But the Lord came for messes like me. He paid the price for my mess.

And I'm willing to take it and give it to Him. And He says if I'll give Him my mess, then He'll give me His righteousness. That means His cleanness.

He'll take away the stain, the power. He'll take away the everlasting penalty of sin, which is separation from God forever. He'll take away the penalty of sin.

And with His own blood that He shed on the cross, He'll wash away the record of it. That when I one day stand before the throne of God, He sits as my friend. Hallelujah.

Not as my judge. He sits as my Savior. A wonderful God.

And if I have such a thing as a crown, I'm going to be, He'll say I'll be among the first to get that thing off of my head and throw it at His feet. I know I'm not worthy. Hallelujah.

Imagine the humility of God even to want to give us a crown. I want to ask for an open profession today. This takes a bit of courage, but I can't make any excuses.

I can't make it any easier than it is. But if you're here today and you're willing to say, Pastor, I'm a sinner. I'm a mess.

I need a Savior. I see that Jesus is willing to come to me. He is willing to cleanse me and wash my feet and give me strength.

I'm going to ask you just to raise your hand wherever you are. All through the sanctuary. Unashamedly, just raise your hand.

Just do it. Balcony. Education.

NX. Just raise your hand. And we're going to stand in a moment and I'm going to ask those of you who did raise your hand, would you slip out of your seats, please meet me here.

And we're going to pray a simple prayer together. And at the end of this prayer, if you truly believe, the prayer I will lead you in. I'm just praying a prayer to help you to come through to salvation.

You will know that if you walk out of this church and get run over by a car at the corner, you're going to go to heaven. You will know it. Let's stand, please, if you will.

And in the NX, too, as well, you can make your way here. We'll wait for you. I just want people who raised their hand.

Would you slip out and make your way here, please? We're going to pray together. Those who have said, I'm a mess. I need God.

I'm coming to be saved. Would you make your way here, please? I want Christ as my Savior. Just come right forward.

Come right in. I want Jesus Christ. Come right in.

Don't be embarrassed. Step in. Young people, old people, just make your way here.

God bless you. Make your way here. He loves you so much.

Don't go to hell when heaven could be yours. Don't be a fool. The Bible says that the fool says in his heart there is no God.

In other words, it's not that he doesn't believe in God. He said, but there's no God who has a right to be God in my life. Don't do that.

Make your way to Him. Join these that are coming. There's young here.

There's old here. There's people who've had some church experience but maybe never a living experience with God. I see children coming down.

Just make your way here, please? And then we're going to pray together. See, this is a holy moment. Not only because you're about to be saved.

And by saved, I mean you're not going to go to hell when you die. If this is truly in your heart to receive Him as your Savior and to walk with Jesus Christ. But it's a holy moment because you being here has met a deep need in the heart of God.

He has waited for you. He's longed for you. The Bible says there's joy in heaven over one sinner that repents.

The whole of creation around about the throne of God knows this is the work of God. Knows that this is what God in Christ is all about. It's about you coming back.

And there's a celebration about to take place around the throne of God because of you. Your name is going to be spoken in heaven for the first time perhaps. Around the throne as Jesus whispers your name to His Father and He says this man, this woman has trusted in me and He whispers your name and the Father says I receive them then.

I receive them as clean as you are my son. I receive them as the same level of righteousness that you have. I give to them because they've trusted in you.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Pray with me please.

Lord Jesus I am a sinner. I've sinned against truth and my disobedience to your word put you on a cross because of your love for me. I'm sorry for my sin and I don't want to live in sin anymore.

This day I open my heart to you. Jesus I invite you to come into my life and live in me and be my Lord and my Savior. I yield the rights to my life and to my future into your hands.

I ask you Lord to do your work in me that your life may be seen through me that your work in me might be a praise to your name in my generation. I believe Jesus Christ you are the Son of God. I believe that you died on a cross to pay the penalty for the wrong things that I have done.

I believe that on the third day by the power of God you were raised from the dead as living proof to me that my hope and my trust in you is not in vain. As Jesus was raised from the dead I believe that I too will be raised by the power of God out of all death and brought into the life that God has for me. I believe that at this very moment

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