

# When God Is Exalted in Judgment

by Carter Conlon

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*Carter Conlon's sermon calls for the church to recognize the importance of God's judgment and to faithfully represent His character in a self-centered world.*

**Duration:** 53:12

**Scripture:** Genesis 19:16-17, Luke 17:26, Acts 17:10-11

**Topics:** "Judgment"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of Belshazzar and the writing on the wall from the book of Daniel. He highlights how the religious party in the banquet hall was blind and unable to see the impending judgment that was about to come upon them. The preacher emphasizes the importance of not being deceived by religious activities and decorations, but rather seeking the truth of God's word. He also references the story of Lot and his family being taken out of Sodom and Gomorrah as a reminder that there are times when judgment must come. The preacher concludes by pointing to Luke 17:26, where Jesus describes the days of judgment, suggesting that we may be living in those times or very close to them.

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## Transcript

I'm speaking now, today, the tenth message in the series on the Corinthian problem. The Lord's shown me there's going to be twelve messages. There's two more to go after this one, this morning.

I'm going to be speaking from Isaiah, chapter five. And for those who have not been following the Corinthian series, it's really about a church that lived in a very affluent and central society that never really fully made a break from the selfishness of the world around them. And a lot of the characteristics of that fallen society were still in the church and it was opening the doors in their fellowship to things that the apostle Paul knew were eventually going to take away the testimony and lead them away from Christ.

Paul was a proficient fighter for truth. And he was passionately in love with the church of Jesus Christ. He had so many things going, he could have easily turned his back and walked away from the Corinthian problem.

Gone to other places, other churches that were alive and moving forward with great grace and understanding. And yet, the scripture bears witness that three times Paul came to this church. He wrote letters.

He had a constant burden in his heart that this church survive. And we're very wise to take heed to the things that are in this, these texts of scripture. We're going to begin in Isaiah chapter 5. Please, if you go back in the Old Testament, Psalms, Proverbs, and then Song of Solomon, Isaiah.

Chapter 5, when God is exalted in judgment. Now, it's not as heavy as it sounds. And you will rejoice when we get to the end of this.

Father, I thank you, Lord, for this word today. I thank you for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. I thank you, Lord, that you are saying something so profound now to us, to my heart.

To this church, to all who can hear. I pray, God, help us to hear this. Help me to embrace it.

Help us to walk in the truth that you're speaking to us. God, we give you praise for this. I thank you, Lord, that I've never had to stand alone ever in the pulpit.

Lord, you've always come. You've always been with me. You've always expanded my understanding and you've always given me a very real largeness of heart.

I thank you for this today, Lord. I thank you for the courage to speak this. And I pray you give us the courage to hear it.

And I ask for the grace to embrace it. And to walk in these truths in Jesus' mighty name. Isaiah chapter 5, beginning at verse 8. Now, keep in mind, these are the words of a prophet of God, Isaiah.

And to a people, in that generation, the people of God, they're going into judgment. And Isaiah, the Lord through Isaiah is telling them why and what the judgment is going to look like. Isaiah chapter 5 and verse 8. Woe to them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth.

And basically he starts by saying this in this particular verse. Woe to them who are completely given to selfishness. Who all they're thinking about now is themselves.

And reaching out and even making allegiances and joining field to field and house to house until nobody but themselves is in any place of security in the earth. In mine ears, saith the Lord of hosts, of a truth, many houses shall be desolate. That means empty.

Even great and fair without inhabitant. And if you look in the New Living Translation, it says something to this effect. Some of the finest houses, some of the most wealthy, will be left empty very, very shortly.

There'll be nobody to occupy them. Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah. Again, what it means is ten acres of vineyard will not produce even six gallons of wine.

And ten measures of seed will yield only one measure of grain. There'll be no harvest. There'll be labor, but very little coming back.

Woe to them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink, that continue until night, until wine inflamed them. In other words, they're led by the intoxicating foolishness of their own human spirit. Woe to them.

All they're doing is seeking one new high after another. One new place of self-satisfaction after another. Verse 12 says, And the harp, and the vial, and the tabret, and the pipe, and wine are in their feasts.

But they regard not the Lord, neither consider the operation of His hands. Now you have to keep one thing in mind, beloved, as we read this. This is written to the people of God.

This is not written to a heathen nation. I know people outside of the Lord behave like this. But this is written to those who are supposed to know God.

They're walking in His covenant promises. Therefore, he says in verse 13, My people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge. And their honorable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.

Therefore, hell has enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure. And their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoices shall descend into it. Oblivious, Isaiah said, to where they're headed.

This is Israel. Oblivious to the judgment that historically came. And we know it came.

And Isaiah knew it was coming, but the people refused to believe it. And the mean man shall be brought down. And the mighty man shall be humbled.

And the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled. Verse 15. Verse 16 is my text.

But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment. And God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness. God says basically this.

If you will not exalt me, I will be exalted anyway. If you will not judge this, God said to Israel, I will judge you. And one way or another, I will be exalted.

One way or another, people will know that I am a righteous God. And a God of truth. There's a season, folks, where the selfishness of those who are called God's own people, it so obscures His glory.

You see, we are called to be representatives of God in the earth. We are called to stand, and the Holy Spirit should be able to point to you and to me in the marketplace and say, this is my church, and this represents Christ. If you want to know what Jesus Christ was like, this is my church.

Look at my church. And there's a glory in this. There's supposed to be this inward life of Christ.

That's what the word means in the Greek, doxa. This inward life of Christ that brings Him to reputation. In other words, people look, and they're not looking at us.

They're looking at something that is supernatural. They're hearing words that don't come from the human mind. They're seeing things manifested in people's lives that don't come from the natural man.

But there's a point where the only way that He can be brought to reputation is to bring it into divine judgment. So that others may know that this type of behavior is not a manifestation of who He is. There's a season, folks, where selfishness finally reaches its end.

Where God says, enough. I can no longer walk with this. I can no longer allow my name to be proclaimed through the nations and believed as if I am this type of a person.

There is no delight in the heart of the Lord in allowing Assyria to swallow up the northern part of Israel and Babylon to conquer Judah. That which is closest to His heart. To see Jerusalem time and again overrun by heathen nations.

To see the temple where His glory came brought down and destroyed to nothing. There's no delight, no secret delight in the heart of God. But God finally comes to a point where He says, I can't walk with this anymore.

I can't allow this. This is such a gross misrepresentation of my name. Now folks, you wouldn't allow it either.

I know there are probably victims in this sanctuary of identity theft. And what are you doing about it? You're probably taking every legal means possible. You may have tried reasoning.

But if reasoning doesn't work, you've got to use whatever you can to... Because you have an identity. And nobody else has the right to that identity. How much more when we take the identity of God and walk through the nations as it is and we're not representing that identity.

Now we do that in small measure every day. But the Holy Spirit will come when we are misrepresenting God. And it's called conviction.

And the genuine church of Jesus Christ walks in this humility before God. And God can speak to my heart and speak to your heart. And say, no, that was not a proper way to speak.

Or that was rather selfish of you. Or no, you shouldn't be thinking that. No, you shouldn't be walking in that direction.

And the true church is always brought back into line. But there is a point where God's people become so religiously stubborn. They've so embraced some other image of Christ.

They're so exporting it as it is. Outside of their homes, their sanctuaries and even their own countries. That the Lord says, no, I've got to bring all of this down.

I've not been glorified in this. And I've got to be glorified. And the way I will be glorified is I will bring it all down.

I will expose it to be completely bankrupt of who I am. And Paul knew this. Psalm 46 10 says, be still and know that I am God.

I will be exalted among the heathen. I will be exalted in the earth. I will be exalted.

God says, one way or the other, I will be exalted. Now, go ahead to 1 Corinthians chapter 11, please, if you will. In your Bibles.

And this is where Paul is pleading with the Corinthians. Because he knew this truth. He knew that these things were unchallenged and unchecked.

What they would lead to. In 1 Corinthians chapter 11, verse 27. He's talking about communion coming together.

And he says, wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, verse 27. And drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.

For he that eats and drinks unworthily eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause, Paul said, many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

But when we are judged, we are chastened to the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world. Now, Paul said, if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. If we would allow this book to be a mirror to us as it is.

And to prove us and to try us and to examine our hearts and to make sure that the pathway we're on is a pathway that's truly bringing honor to God. Is the image of Christ that we're embracing, is it truly the Jesus of the Bible? The Christianity we're espousing, is it truly the word of God? Has it been written by his pen? Has it come from his mouth? If we would judge ourselves. Now, you'd ask me, well, how do you do that? Acts 17, just don't turn there, verses 10 and 11.

The scripture spoke of some persons in a place called Berea. And they tell us that they were more noble than other people. They're described actually in the book of Acts as a more noble people than I think the people of Thessalonica.

And because they received the preaching of Paul and Silas with an open mind. But they searched the scriptures daily to see if the things they were hearing were indeed true. And folks, I'd love it if you'd do this.

I'd love it if you'd go home and say, listen, Pastor Carter's been speaking this series on Corinth. I'd like to know if this is right. I challenge you, go home and study it.

Get in your Bible, dig it out for yourself. I'm not asking you to blindly agree anything that comes from this pulpit or any other pulpit. You shouldn't.

You should be a people who go home. You should be a noble people. But you have to have a heart that says, God, if this is right, then I'm going to have to walk in this.

You've got to show this to me. I want to see this. And if you simply ask the Holy Spirit, the scriptures will open.

You'll begin to see it yourself. And you'll see your own profession of Christ in the light of the scriptures. Now, history has proven that there are times and seasons when judgment must come.

Now, go back, please, if you will, to Luke chapter 17 with me. Jesus himself begins to describe these days when judgment must come. Actually, he describes what I believe to be our day.

And if we're not in it, we're very, very, very close to being in it right now. Luke chapter 17, verse 26. But as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man.

They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage until the day that Noah entered into the ark and the flood came and destroyed them all. Now, folks, none of these things are wrong in themselves. It doesn't make you holy if you don't eat.

Matter of fact, it'll make you dead after a while if you choose not to eat. They did eat, they married wives, they were given in marriage. These things are fine.

All of these things have to happen. But that's not what Jesus is talking about. He's talking about a season that's going to come.

It's a season of self-preoccupation which will so blind the people that they will not be aware of the hour they're living in. Amazing. Christ will be coming.

And people will be just out there. They'll be just carrying on regularly. They'll be far away from them the day that is coming and everything that's coming with this day of Christ.

If you look in the Scriptures, you study it carefully. The day of the Lord is going to be a difficult day on the whole earth. Oh, folks, read it.

Find it for yourself. Check it. Now, I want you to picture Daniel, for example, in Daniel chapter 5. This King Belshazzar was having a party and they had taken the vassals that were captured out of Solomon's temple in Jerusalem.

And they're drinking and eating in these vassals. And they're throwing this religious party with all of these things that were supposed to be holy. And all of a sudden, a hand appears in mid-air and writes something on a wall.

To the point where the Scripture says the king, literally his joints were loosed. He was so afraid his knees were knocking together. And he called all of the magicians and the astrologers and the soothsayers, which are always part of this religious party.

And nobody knows what the writing means. And finally, he calls in Daniel, a man of God, who's not compromised. Right from the part of his youth, the point of his youth, he's not compromised his walk with God.

He's not partaking of the things that have produced this form of spiritual blindness in this particular society. And Daniel tells them, God has looked upon this kingdom. And yes, it was used for a season and for a purpose.

But there's a wantedness in it now. You're playing with the holy things and that's where the line is crossed, folks. That's where the line is always crossed.

God will endure a lot of things. Babylon was an ungodly nation. It had been a nation used to discipline God's own people.

And there's always mercy. We saw mercy in Nineveh. Nineveh was part of the Assyrian capital that actually conquered the northern part of Israel.

We saw that through Jonah. There's mercy for all. But there's a flashpoint with God.

When the holy things are played with. When there's no reverence anymore for the person of God. And everything that represents godliness.

And Daniel stood there and he says, Belshazzar, you should have known these things. You were schooled in these things. He said, your father or grandfather, as it was, came under this great discipline of God.

And knew that there was only one God in heaven. He says, now you knew this historically. You knew that God is holy.

But yet you chose to play the fool. And drink and party with all of these holy things. And because of this party mentality now that's come into your court.

The hand of God has appeared. The writing is on the wall. God has numbered your kingdom and he's finished it.

And he's given it to somebody else. Another nation is going to take over the place that you had been destined by God himself to occupy. Now picture this if you will for a moment.

Daniel has just told the king, Belshazzar, it's over. The writing says it's over. Belshazzar stands.

He's so spiritually blind now. The people in that room are so spiritually blind. What do they do? He commands.

He says, put a fine robe on Daniel. And put a golden chain around his neck. And he has his herald come out.

And I'm sure a trumpet is blown. And a scroll is unrolled. And he says, now I pronounce you third ruler in the kingdom.

And Daniel is standing there. Incredulously he has just told him it's over. It's over.

And here they are decorating Daniel. That would have been a good name I guess for this message. Decorating Daniel.

It's over. And how foolish. You look at that scene.

And here they are pretending in a sense to really appreciate this man. We really value you Daniel. We really, really do love what you have to say.

As a matter of fact we're going to make you third ruler in this kingdom. The kingdom that Daniel had just said is over. It's finished.

In that night, that very same night Belshazzar was killed. The enemy was already at the gate. They were already pounding through the gates of the city.

And while this is happening, this whole scenario is going on in the banquet hall. This religious party. But you see the religious party has become so blind.

They couldn't see anymore. They couldn't hear anymore. And we're living in a day when we're decorating Jesus Christ all over America today.

All of the books about Jesus Christ. And all of the accolades. And all of the God bless America being sung all over the place.

And folks here we are decorating the very God whose hand has written things on the wall. That we had better stand up and take notice of in our generation. We'd better listen to it very, very quickly.

Because the time is short for many. Peter says in 2 Peter chapter 3 verses 3 and 4. In the last days there's going to be scoffers arising. Walking after their own lusts and saying where is the promise of his coming? Now these scoffers are not outside the church.

They're inside the church. Peter is never speaking outside the context of the church. These are scoffers inside the house of God.

And there are going to be voices that say don't listen to those. That are talking of justice and talking of the coming judgment of God. Oh they've talked about this for thousands of years.

And everything carries on just as it always has. Now join us. Find your pleasure and satisfaction in the things that you clearly see all around you.

Look at us. We're being blessed. Look at us.

We're moving forward. In influence and power and anointing and authority. Don't listen to these voices that are telling you that the enemies are at the gate.

Again in Luke 17 verse 28. Jesus says likewise also as it was in the days of Lot. They did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built.

But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom. It rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

In that day he which shall be upon the housetop and his stuff in the house. Let him not come down and take it away. And he that is in the field let him not likewise return back.

Remember Lot's wife. Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it. And whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

I tell you in that night there shall be two men in one bed. The one shall be taken and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together.

The one shall be taken and the other left. Two men shall be in the field. The one shall be taken and the other left.

And they answered and said where Lord? And he said to them wheresoever the body is there thither will the eagles be gathered together. That's an incredible question. Jesus is talking about the last days and he says.

In these days one will be taken and another will be left. And he talks about at home one in the home will be taken and one will be left. One in the field will be taken and another one will be left.

And in the journeying one will be taken and another will be left. And then they asked a question and the question was where Lord? Where? Now there's different ways to look at this. Because he was making two statements.

It's possible that they're asking where will they be taken. And it's also possible they're asking where will they be left. And the third possibility is they're asking for both.

Where will they be taken to? And where will the others be left? Now if the question is where will they be left? Verse 37 says wherever the body is there will the eagles be gathered together. And when you look this up in the original text. It means wherever the carcass is there will the vultures be gathered.

Those that are left are going to be left in a place of self indulgence feeding on death. Folks people are going to be caught in our generation unaware. They're in a place of death.

They're in a place where they're feeding on death. And in many cases even thinking that somehow this is the provision of God. Not realizing it's taking away their spiritual vision.

If the question is where will they be taken? Remember that Jesus was speaking in the context of Lot and Sodom. And in Genesis chapter 19 verses 16 and 17 it shows us. Lot his wife and his two daughters were taken by the mercy of God.

They were taken by the hand. They were taken outside of the city. And they were given a message.

Escape for your life. Do not look behind you. Escape to the mountain lest you be consumed.

Where will they be taken? The mountain is Calvary folks. I do believe in our generation just as in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. There are some that were left there.

And they suffered the judgment of God. But the messengers of God there was a message raised sent into the city. And by God's mercy even though Lot was reluctant there was something in him.

He loved this place and he found it hard to leave it. Even though the message had come that it was going to be destroyed. But God's mercy took him and his wife and his daughters by the hand.

And led him out. Oh folks. If you can hear what the Holy Spirit is saying.

God in his mercy is taking you by the hand in this hour. Leading you outside Corinth. Leading you outside of the value system of a city.

That is going to be nothing more in the years to come. As history unfolds as it is finished. It is going to be nothing more than the sand upon that it is built out of.

And the cement. There is nothing lasting. There is nothing eternal in any city in the world.

And God's mercy is taking the people now by the hand. And saying get out of the thinking of this city. Get out of looking for satisfaction in the things of this life.

Get out of the theology that is blinding thousands and thousands of people. And sending them into a place that is not going to survive the justice of God in the day of Christ's coming. Escape to the mountain.

Now the mountain is Calvary. The mountain is the place where Paul says this is the Christ in 1 Corinthians chapter 11. He says this is the Christ that was presented to me.

On the night he was betrayed. Took bread and broke it and said take eat. This is my body which is broken for you.

And he said he did the same with the blood. Paul is telling the Corinthian church this mountain. This place of escape.

This place of authority and power. Is in a place of being given for others and not taking from others. It is that simple.

That is what Paul was trying to get through to the Corinthian church. And he was having such a hard time getting through this door. With the simple word that the Christ of the Bible gave himself.

We are called to give ourselves for other people. We are not called to take from others. We are not called to live for ourselves.

We are not called to take the holy things and bring them into a banquet hall of self indulgence. There is writing against this. God has already written.

His hand has already put the writing on the wall against this form of religion. We are not called to do this. Therefore in the grace of God and in the name of Christ.

I feel the Holy Spirit saying get out of this city. Get out of the thinking of this city. Get out of the self consumption.

Get out of the lust for money. Get out of the lust for fame. Get out of the me first and everyone else last.

Thinking of a society that has walked away from God. Get out of all religion that promotes this. And takes this same spirit and brings it in.

And takes the holy things into the house of God. And makes an ungodly party of it. Get out of these places because the handwriting of God.

Thousands of years ago was written against it. Paul says it is a place that he describes in 1 Corinthians chapter 12 and chapter 14. Where spiritual giftings are not used for self promotion.

And self gratification. But rather to build up others. Remember in the Corinthian church.

Everybody was like popcorn on the stove. Everybody is popping up with a word of knowledge. Word of prophecy.

Everybody is speaking in tongues at the same time. It was creating this incredible confusion. And the root of the confusion was self.

It is every man for himself. Every woman for herself. Everybody wanted to be esteemed as spiritual.

Nobody much cared about the others. And it was evidenced in chapter 11. When they were pushing the poor and the disadvantaged.

And those who seemingly had nothing to offer this feast to the sides of the temple. That is why Paul said this is not the Christ. This is not the Christ I have received.

This is not the Christ that I have preached to you. He was coming against this selfishness. That manifests itself in all types of ungodly behavior.

That can be disguised as something spiritual. When in fact self promotion is at the root of all of it. In first Corinthians 13.

He speaks expressly. That if we have this love of God. Within our hearts.

We do not promote ourselves. We do not bear grudges against one another. We do not push ourselves first before others.

But we bear, believe, hope and endure for all men. Oh folks. I don't know how else to say it.

I want to give you an example. In Genesis chapters 32 and 33. There were two brothers.

Jacob and Esau. Now both of these brothers had access at some point. To the blessing of God.

The life of God. That is obviously the lineage went through right to Jesus Christ. You see Esau.

After Jacob has gone into this land. And he's spent time there. He's coming back in by the call of God to the place of blessing.

And Esau comes galloping out to him. He's got 400 men with him. Jacob has stolen as it is the blessing of his brother Esau.

And I can see Esau coming to meet him. And Jacob is very afraid of meeting this brother. He's afraid of what's going to happen.

When I'm walking in the true blessing. And what if he sees me as having stolen this blessing from him. And I can see Esau coming in.

He's got 400 men. Which is kind of an intimidating welcoming committee for his brother. And you can see him coming in at a full gallop.

And Jacob tries to appease him. He gives him gifts. And what's Esau's testimony? He says, I have enough.

Amazing. He says, I've achieved. I've gathered to myself power.

He had 400 men influence. And I have provision. He's the type of the soup bowl Christian I call him.

Remember Esau sold his birthright. His birthright is the Christ. The lineage of Christ would flow through him.

Would come through his veins as it is. That was his birthright. He didn't want that birthright.

Perhaps it didn't look attractive to him at some point. Why would I want this? Look at my father. All he does is wander all over the place.

And talk about this God I can't see. And talk about this day of visitation that's going to come. And talk about the land of promise.

And one day we're going to occupy. And he began to disdain. The scripture bears witness to it.

This birthright. And one day he comes in from hunting in the field. His brother is making stew.

And he says listen. Give me a bowl of that. And I'm starving.

I feel I'm so hungry I feel I'm going to die. And his brother says well. I'll trade you your birthright for the soup.

And he trades it folks. That's how much he valued it. And I see a generation that are trading this birthright in Christ for soup.

They've got their face stuck in the soup bowl. As long as my belly is full. As long as I'm happy.

As long as I don't have any personal need or personal want. This is the blessing of God. This is what I want.

Let the truth of where this is going to lead. Let this be not part of my life. I'm not interested in this.

Just the way many say. Don't talk to me about the cross. I don't want to hear about the blood.

Don't talk to me about sacrifice. Don't talk about judgment. And don't talk about personal commitment.

I want to hear about soup in the house of God. I want to know what's on the menu. I want to know what I can fill my belly with today.

I want to walk out of here. And I want to be satisfied. That's the religion.

I want men to know me. I want them to follow me. I want to be recognized.

That's the soup bowl Christian. And Paul wrote about it in Romans 9.13. He says, As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. I can't make it any more simple than this, folks.

There's a great difference between these two brothers. When they meet and they're momentarily reconciled in Genesis 33.12 He says, I will go before you. You see, this is Esau.

That's what's in his heart. I'll go before you. But Jacob says to him, No, you go ahead.

I'll only travel as fast as the youngest and weakest among us can go. Genesis 33.14 Paul says, If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. Now Jacob had been judged.

Jacob had judged himself. He had an encounter with God. And in this place where he encountered God, he had come to the end of scheming and planning and pushing and promoting himself and all of these things.

And he said, God, I want your blessing. And the Lord asked him and says, Tell me your name. What is your name? And Jacob said his name, Jacob, which means supplanter.

And you know what supplanter means? Here's what it means. I want to be first. Remember, he was the second born son, but he wanted to be first.

I want to be first. And that had led him into lying. It had led him into a pathway that honestly, I feel God could have said, You're so dishonored the blessing that I wanted to place in your life just simply because it's been in your heart to be first.

But he agreed with God. And he said, That's my name. You see, that's what it means to judge ourselves.

Paul says to the Corinthian church, Look, you're pushing the poor and you're indulging yourself. You're using this relationship with God for self-indulgence. And he says, If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.

If you can get to the point, Paul is saying, It's in me to be first. I want to be first. I want to be seen.

I want to be known. I want to be loved. I want preeminence.

Even in the church, I want people to say, Master, Master, I want the one that is mine. I want to be the first. I don't want to arrive here and find a visitor in my seat.

I want my seat. I want to be first. That's my name.

That's selfishness, folks. That's the very root of it. It manifests all over the place.

In the house, you go home. I want to be first means I want to be right. I have to be right.

My opinion has to be the one that counts in spite of the fact that I might be wrong. There's a part of our life when that Jacob nature is still in us. But there had to be an awareness come to Jacob that this was wrong because Amos 3.3 says, God says, I will not walk with a man that doesn't agree with me.

There had to be an awareness that this was wrong. There had to be something in Jacob at that very moment that wanted everything to change. He needed something supernatural to happen to put others first and God first in his life so how does it happen? Jacob simply says, look, if this is my name, I want the blessing, but my name is I want to be first.

And I feel, I know, there had to be something in his heart that agreed with God finally. This is not right. Everything I've done, it's not right that I've promoted myself.

It's not right that I've tried to push into something that has to be given to me of God. And so how does God respond? He touched him and put in his body an inability to outrun the weak. It's as simple as that.

See, Esau comes stampeding in and stampeding out. I've got enough. I'm out to get more, but I've got enough.

I've got what I feel the blessing of God is. I've got money and influence and power. And Jacob is standing there and says, no, you go on ahead.

I'm not going any faster than the youngest and the weakest and have a great time. But I'm going to travel with this body. I'm not leaving this body behind that God's given to me.

Praise be to God. Oh, praise be to God. I don't know if you can see it or not, but Jacob now cannot run anybody.

He walks with a limp and that's how God responded to him. I can see him walking with these little kids saying, hey, wait up for me, because he can hardly keep up with the little kids around. And the withered and those that have a hard time keeping up because he has a hard time keeping up.

And the mark today that God puts in the man or woman is compassion. It's this compassion that God places in our heart that we simply can't walk away from those who need us to be there for them. We simply can't embrace a religion of selfishness.

We simply can't walk a walk even in God's name where the central focus of what we're doing is about ourselves. And that's the mark of God I want in my heart. I don't know about you, but I want it.

I want it desperately. I want this mark in my heart, this mark of compassion that says, no, I need everybody that's called by the name of Jesus Christ of every denomination, of every race, of every language, of every nation. We need one another.

We are a body. We're not called to be individual superstars. We're walking together as a body through this earth.

We're walking in fear and in much trembling. Paul says, no, I didn't come to you full of myself. I came to you needing God.

I came to you needing the touch of God every day. I came to you and was able to stand in my own weakness because I had a heart that God's given me for you. Paul said, I will love you even though the more I do, the less I seem to be loved.

But it's in this weakness of Jacob and Paul that the power of God was known and Christ was glorified. Praise be to God. We need the mark of compassion.

We need it, folks. That's the only way and that's the one thing that needs to be judged. That's how you know.

Lord, if I'm sitting here and in my mind today, it's what's in this for me. You're dangerously close to Esau. If my whole thinking is about how can I grow? How can I advance? How can my agenda be deepened? How can I have more influence, a better security, a greater future? If it's all just about me, then something is wrong.

But if in your heart you're sitting here and say, God, there's 3,000 people in this church today, including the annex. Oh, Lord, there's got to be somebody here who needs me. There's got to be some people who need an encouraging word.

There's got to be somebody that's walking slow that needs somebody as slow as them and encourage them along this road so that nobody gets left behind. Oh, God Almighty, I pray for a baptism of compassion to touch this congregation. A baptism of caring where we're looking out and the things that we're asking for, like Paul says to the Corinthians, the giftings of the Spirit is not for ourselves.

The giftings are for others. It's to edify the body. Paul made it so very clear.

And this baptism of God's love is not about ourselves. It's about this love that can be manifested through us so others might know. So we might have the power to bear with those that are slow and to believe for those who are frail and can't believe for themselves and to hope for those that have lost hope and to endure those that never seem to be able to get up and start walking with God.

We need this grace of God as He has given it to us so too. He says, I'm willing to give it through you for others. This is the church.

He broke it and said, this is my body which is broken for you. When our position is not as strong as we thought it was, our motives are not as pure as we hoped them to be, when our hearts condemn us, and I know just even sitting under this message today, there's some here that your heart might be condemning

you right now. Oh God, I fall so far short of hearing it, so little of it worked in me, but that's a fulfillment actually of the scripture in Corinthians.

It says if we would judge ourselves, if we would measure ourselves against Christ and say, Lord, I've fallen short of the glory of God. I'm not a person who's bringing you to reputation in a sense, the giving of yourself, this willingness of God to be poured out for all of fallen humanity. If my heart condemns you, the scripture says that God is greater than your heart.

Praise be to God. God is greater than your heart. If my heart condemns me, 1 John 3.16, hereby perceive we the love of God because he laid down his life for us, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Then in verse 17, it says, how do we say if we have this world's goods, and I'm not talking just about material things here. If we have this life of Christ in us that the world needs and we shut up our bowels of compassion, we close our mouths, we close our eyes to human need, we close our hands to the tender touch of God. How do we say then that the love of God dwells in us? And then in verse 20, John goes on and he says, but if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart.

If we live under a condemned heart, those that choose to stop at this place are just realizing that we fall short of the glory of God. God says, no, don't stop there now. Don't stop there, Jacob.

Let me touch you with compassion now. Let's walk together. You're going to enter into something of my life that you've only ever dreamed you could have.

We're going to begin to move together, live together, walk together, have our being together. You're going to be open to the supernatural. You're going to find grace that never existed.

You're going to find strength and ability that you never had and could never attain in anything that comes from your own natural mind. God is greater than our heart. I remember driving one day to a Bible study when I was a new Christian and I was brand new to the Lord and I was a very, very selfish man.

I'd really made a mess of my own marriage at that time. And I remember driving and I read Ephesians that morning. Husbands love your wives Oh, isn't that just terrific? As Christ loved the church, I'm thinking about Calvary, I'm thinking about the spitting and the hitting and all the rest of that stuff.

How am I going to do this? My heart was condemning me. I knew I was far away from this. But somehow, a spark of hope came into my heart knowing I couldn't do this but the Christ in me could.

The Christ in me could teach me how he loved me. The Christ in me could open to me to love my wife as he loved the church. And I have to say, I'm still growing in this grace, but he's been faithful to me.

He's been faithful to me. He's been faithful to teach me these things. So I could stay at the place where my heart is condemned or I could move into the God who's greater than my heart and say, Lord, okay, I can't do this but you can do this.

Jacob could easily have said to God, I can't care, I don't care, I want to be first, that's my nature. The Lord says, no, let me touch you now and we're going to change everything. I'm going to bring you to a place where you can't be first anymore.

Praise be to God. And that place is the compassion of God placed in our hearts. James 2.13 says it this way, Mercy rejoices against judgment.

Praise be to God. I could have been judged, should have been judged and would have been judged, but by God's grace I came to him and his mercy has rejoiced against judgment. Praise be to God.

Rejoiced against it. Thanks be to the Lord. Oh folks, I would say in this generation, let's let mercy rejoice against judgment one more time.

Let's ask God for this baptism of compassion. That's the only way I can see that people are going to represent Christ in this generation. You and I need a baptism of the compassion of Jesus Christ.

It means a mark. He's got to put a mark in us. It's a supernatural touch of God.

When we're willing to agree. The very root of human sin is wanting to be first. Satan wanted to be first.

He was not content to lead the choirs of heaven as some say. He was not content. He wanted to be first.

And when he fell, he brought that into the Garden of Eden with him. And he took God's creation, Adam and Eve, and says, no, you can be first. You don't have to be the way you are.

You can be as God. You can be first. And that was sown in the hearts of fallen men and it is the root of all sin.

This desire to be first. Excuse me. Excuse me.

Excuse me. Excuse me. Excuse me.

Excuse me. Me first. Me first.

Me first. Me first. Me first.

Me first. Me first. Excuse me.

Me first. Me first. And it is the root.

It's the root of the fallen nature. And Paul knew it was going to destroy him. the Corinthian Church.

Praise be to God. The Lord, I was praying yesterday, I said, God, how do I close this? How do I bring this? And He spoke to me very clearly. He said, only compassion takes this out.

I have to care for you in my heart, or I will outrun you. I have to care. But you see, the problem is I can't.

But God says, the solution is I can't. If you will let me put that mark in you. All I require, Jacob, is agreement.

And so Jacob had how many years past kneel had he walked this road until finally gets to a place of just saying, I want to be first. That's my name. And realizing it's not right anymore, and God says, okay, I'm gonna touch you so you can't be first.

And I do believe, well, if it takes a limp, it takes a limp. But I do believe it's compassion. It's compassion.

That's the mark. That's the mark that says, no, you go first. Are you doing okay? How's it going in your walk? Can I help you with that? Would you like, would you need a seat? It's compassion.

Have you been here before? You look sad. Is everything okay? Compassion. Compassion.

Compassion. It's the mark of God. Praise be to God.

Praise be to God. I'd like to sing that song when the orchestra comes back. Everyone, it starts with everyone needs compassion.

If, if you feel the Holy Spirit speaking to you today and say, Pastor, I want this. This is a supernatural work of God. I want this compassion.

I want to stop thinking about myself all the time. I want to have a mind that cares. I want to have a heart that cares.

I want to see with the eyes of God. I don't want the spirit of this city. You look outside the city, nobody walks here.

Everybody runs. You ever notice that? And if you, if you, if their minds, if what was in people's minds was being, you know, if they had a megaphone on top of their head, it would be going me, me, me, me, me, me. Get out of my way.

Get out of my way. Get out of my way. Me, me, the cars, me, me, me, me, me, me on the horn out of my way.

That's the spirit of the city folks. It can't be in the church. It can't be found in you and mine.

It can't be about me. And I know that there's a death process involved in this. We don't just walk to an altar and all of a sudden we walk out and we are, now some people might, but in most of us it's a, it's a process.

It's line upon line, scene upon scene, brick upon brick. Sometimes we walk away, we make a mistake of it. Other times we get it right, but we are growing in grace.

We do start this walk. I love that fact that when Jacob's nature was changed, he said, no, he said, you go ahead, wherever your, your next conquest is and your, your next soup bowl is, you go ahead and find it. God's speed, but I won't go any faster than the youngest and the weakest can travel.

That's the heart of Christ. Praise be to God. Father, thank you Lord for this time together.

Lord, truly you are speaking to us. You're speaking to me and I pray God give us the grace to hear this. This is a desperate hour, Lord, and you want to bless the city through people.

God, thank you for this with all our hearts today in Jesus name. As we worship, let's stand together in the annex. If you want to respond, you can step between the screens.

The Holy Spirit is speaking to you today. Balcony would either exit main sanctuary. You want that compassion? Just come, just come.

Young people, you need it in your work environment. You need it in your schools, your campuses. Just come.

We'll pray together. What a powerful word. Folks, that is, there's, there comes nothing purer, nothing cleaner, nothing straighter than what you've heard today.

And we've all walked it. All of us have, you know, most of us have walked it. Just talk with Pastor Carter now.

We've, we've both walked this in measure. We're not there yet, but this is what God is wanting to work in our hearts, a deep seated compassion. It resonates in my heart.

As he was preaching, I could just see people. I know in the past how many times I've, it's been me, me, me, me, me. And God has had to deal with that.

And while he was preaching today, God was just bringing people to my mind that, that need just the compassion, the love that we can offer. Amen. What a powerful word.

Thank you, Pastor Carter. That is a word straight from heaven. Awesome.

Straight, direct. It doesn't get any clearer, any cleaner than that folks. Amen.

And God is leading you as well. You may walk with the limp, but it's, it's a God given limp. It's not a devil condemned limp.

It's a God given limp that he's working inside of us, a compassionate, deep seated love for people. Just raise your hands at this altar today. If you, this is what you want.

Father, we thank you that your word has, has made a mark on us. It's making that mark. We're not there, but Lord, you're leading us in exactly what was spoken today.

This is your voice through your word, guiding us as a congregation in a city that doesn't care. They step over anybody and everybody to get to the top. But Lord, here in the heart of Manhattan, you've got a place where you're leading people into that, which you're speaking.

Now, God, take us, take us into that place. We, we cast condemnation down when the enemy tries to ride us. Lord, we throw that down and we say, God, thank you that you're working into us a deep seated love for those roundabout in the mighty name of Jesus.

We receive it. Now, Lord, we receive it by faith that you're working into our hearts. Wives for husbands, husbands for wives, mothers for children, children for mothers and fathers, for aunts, uncles, Lord, you're working it in us all around us for bosses on the job.

You're working a compassion. They're on their way to hell. Give us the compassion to love them and we give you thanks.

Thank you for what you've done in this house. Lord, thank you that this house walks with the limp. It walks with the limp.

This house is a house of compassion. We see the testimonies today. Lord, you spoke through the testimonies.

This is a place of compassion and we want to give you thanks in Jesus' lovely name. Amen and amen. Give him, give him thanks today.

What an awesome God we serve.

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