

# False Conclusions

by Chuck Smith

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*The sermon warns against drawing false conclusions about God's patience and judgment, emphasizing the importance of repentance and the certainty of God's judgment.*

**Duration:** 39:43

**Scripture:** Genesis 6:3, Psalm 50:1-15, Psalm 50:21-23, Ecclesiastes 8:11

**Topics:** "Christian Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the patience of God and how it relates to the presence of evil in the world. He references Ecclesiastes 8:11, where Solomon declares that because punishment for evil deeds is not executed immediately, people are emboldened to continue doing evil. The speaker ponders the extent of God's patience in the face of a morally declining world and wonders when God will intervene. He also mentions the story of Noah and how Noah preached righteousness to the people, warning them of the impending judgment of God. The sermon emphasizes the importance of not being deceived by the apparent lack of consequences for evil actions, as God is aware and will eventually bring judgment.

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## Transcript

Shall we turn now in our Bibles to the 50th Psalm. I'll read the first, the outnumbered verses. Pastor Brian will lead the congregation in the reading of the even-numbered verses, and shall we stand as we read God's Word.

The mighty God, even Jehovah, has spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come and shall not keep silence.

A fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may gather. Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

And the heavens shall declare his righteousness, for God is judge himself. Hear, O my people, and I will speak. O Israel, I will testify against thee.

I am God, even thy God. I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings to have been continually before me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds.

For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all of the fowls of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof.

Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High. And call upon me in the day of trouble. I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing that thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief, then thou consented with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.

Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother. Thou slanderest thine own mother's son. These things have you done, and I kept silence.

And you thought that I was altogether such a one as yourself. But I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.

Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me, and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God. Let's pray. Father, we do thank you that you are a very patient God, long-suffering, full of kindness, full of truth.

And Lord, we thank you that you have forestalled judgment that should have come. We ask you, Lord, though, that you would help us, that in the postponing of the judgments that we so readily deserve, that we don't make the mistake of drawing false conclusions and thinking that perhaps we've escaped the judgment of God, because maybe you didn't see, or you didn't know, or possibly didn't care what we did. Show us, Lord, just how intricately our lives are bound together in you, and how, Lord, when we do that which is wrong, your heart is grieved.

And Lord, if we persist, we can come to that place, Lord, where we will be facing the judgment of God. So, Lord, open now our hearts as we turn to your Word, and teach us, Lord, out of your Word, in Jesus' name we pray, Amen. Amen.

This morning we want you to look with us at Ecclesiastes chapter 8 verse 11. Here Solomon declares, because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil. One of the great characteristics of God's nature is his patience.

God is so patient with us. God is so patient with the world in which we live. As I see this world in its moral freefall, I often wonder at the patience of God.

How is it that God can be so patient and allow evil to dominate, and evil to be in control? And as the Lord said, evil days waxing worse and worse. How long will God let it go? How long can God let it go? When will God finally step in and intervene? He is so patient. When God revealed himself to Moses, as Moses was sort of there in the cleft of the rock, and the Lord passed by and he proclaimed, Jehovah, Jehovah God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth.

And so God revealed as a part of his nature, long-suffering. Now one of the reasons for God's patience is that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. And so God gives

man many opportunities and much time to repent from his evil, because God's not willing that any should perish, but that all might come to repentance.

But there comes a day when you can actually sin away the day of grace. And rather than experiencing the mercy and the goodness of God, you will face the wrath of God. As Paul the apostle said in Romans chapter one, For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of man that holds the truth of God in unrighteousness.

The wrath of God. Jesus in addressing the Church of Thyatira in Revelation chapter three, said that they had that false prophetess, the woman he called Jezebel, who taught the Lord's servants to commit fornication and idolatry. And Jesus said, I gave her space to repent.

But because she did not repent, I will cast her and those that commit idolatry with her into the great tribulation. But those words, I gave them space to repent. For many of you today, it could very well be that you are living in that space that God has given to you to repent.

He wants to make sure that you've had every opportunity to repent from your sin. Way back in the time of Noah, God said to Noah, my spirit will not always strive with man. That God's spirit does strive with man is indeed a great blessing.

But in that statement, there is a warning. God's spirit will not always strive with you. If you are rebelling against God, there will come a day when God will no longer strive with you.

But God will say, I've given them up. And what a tragedy when God says to the prophet, pray no more for their good. If you do, I won't hear your prayer.

The patience of God. But yet there comes the day when we have expended the patience, when we have had the space to repent, but refused to repent. There in the days of Noah, God gave the people space to repent.

He gave them a hundred years. Noah is called a preacher of righteousness. And as he was building that arc, that big boat out there more like a barge as he was building it out there in the desert, I'm sure it became quite a novelty.

They probably had guided tours to see this old man building this huge barge out here. And I'm sure the nightly commentators were making a lot of jokes about this old crazy guy building this big barge out there in the middle of the desert. But as they would come in the tour groups, Moses would lay down his hammer, I'm sure, and he'd start to preach.

He was a preacher of righteousness. He was warning the people of the evil that they were doing and how that it would definitely bring the judgment of God upon them. That God's grace would soon be expired and they would be destroyed with a great flood by which God was going to destroy the world.

When God had safely gathered Noah, his family, and the animals into the ark, he shut the door. They had actually gone beyond the ability now to repent. And now there remains only the judgment of God for their evil.

We read that in the time of Noah, there was a population explosion. We read that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth. We read that the imaginations and the thoughts of men's heart were only evil

continually.

And that there was violence filling the land and corruption. Sounds an awful lot like the day in which we live. Population explosions, man's hearts and imaginations on evil things continually, violence and corruption filling the earth.

Interesting, Jesus, as he talked about the coming day of judgment, said, as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the time of the coming of the son of man. And surely we are seeing the same kind of conditions that provoked the judgment of God in the destruction of the world that was. Peter wrote in the last days, there would be scoffers.

They would say, where is the promise of his coming? Things just go on as they were from the beginning. But Peter said of this, they are willingly ignorant that God did bring the judgment and destroyed the world that then was with a flood. Peter then went on to affirm the day of the Lord will come.

And just to count that the long suffering of God is salvation. It's giving men and women the opportunity and the space to repent. There is a proverb.

I think it's 29 one that declares he that being often reprov'd and hardens his neck will suddenly be destroyed. And that without remedy, God's declaration often reprov'd, but harden your heart, stiffen your neck. Don't bow before God.

The Lord said suddenly destroyed and that without remedy. There is a time we know not when a point we know not where that marks the destiny of man to glory or despair. There is a line though by man unseen that crosses every path, the hidden boundary between God's mercy and his wrath to pass.

That limit is to die, to die as if by stealth. It does not quench the beaming eye or pal the glow of health. The conscience may still be at ease.

The spirits light and gay, that which is pleasing still may please and care be thrust away. But on that forehead God has set indelibly a mark unseen by man for man is yet is blind and in the dark. And yet the doom man's path below may bloom as Eden bloomed.

He did not, does not, will not know or feel that he is doomed. He knows that he feels that all is well and every fear is calm. He lives, he dies, and he wakes in hell, not only doomed, but damned.

Oh, where is that mysterious born by which our path is crossed, beyond which God himself hath sworn that he who goes is lost. How close are you to that line where to go over the line God will say, that's it. All who go are lost.

In Psalm 37, David wrote, fret not thyself because of evildoers, for evildoers shall be cut off. Those that wait upon the Lord will inherit the earth, but in time the wicked shall be destroyed. You shall diligently look for his place and it will be gone, but the meek will inherit the earth and the soul delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

The wicked plots against the righteous and mocks at him, but the Lord shall laugh at the wicked for he sees that his day is coming. Note, the evildoers are going to be cut off. In time, he said, the wicked are going to be destroyed.

The Lord sees that their day is coming. You know, we often fret because of evildoers. As today we see the wicked flourishing, we fret.

And I have to admit, I fret over that. When I see the liberals enacting their legislation, that is in open defiance to the laws of God. When I see the judicial system, again declaring that the laws of God are not legal to be posted in a public place.

When I see the liberals wanting to force their wicked agenda on all of us, including our school children. And this past week, the Santa Ana school board went ahead and voted to go ahead and invite the homosexuals and lesbians to become teachers. And one of the spokesmen for that group did declare that it is their agenda to start teaching our children from kindergarten, the acceptance and all of homosexual lifestyles.

That's their announced agenda. And then he talks about the hatred and all that he observes by those that are against their agenda. I fret when I see the school districts bowing to this kind of pressure, but God laughs.

God sees that their day is coming, that the evildoers will soon be cut off and the wicked will be destroyed. But as our text said, because the sentence against an evil work is delayed, people often draw false conclusions. One of those false conclusions is that God doesn't really know what you are doing.

In Psalm 73, Asaph, the psalmist said that they say, how does God know? Is their knowledge in the most high? And because God has not executed speedily the punishment, the judgment for their sin, they begin to feel that God really doesn't know. He is so busy with the universe that he doesn't really look after us as individuals. But surely Jesus taught us that he is infinite and that there's not even a sparrow that falls to the ground, but what our father isn't observant of that.

And if God is interested in the sparrows, how much more in you? The psalmist said, he who has taught knowledge, does he not know? God who gave to us wisdom and knowledge, it is folly to think that God doesn't know. But because the sentence against the evil work is delayed, people often think, well, God doesn't see what I'm doing. In Psalm 94, the psalmist said, O Lord God to whom vengeance belongs, show yourself, render a reward to the proud.

Lord, how long will the wicked triumph? How long shall they utter and speak false things? They do wicked things and then they say, the Lord does not see, neither does he care. But then the psalmist said, consider this, you fool. He that created the ear, do you think that he cannot hear? He who created your eyes, do you think that he cannot see? But yet these are false conclusions that people often draw, because seemingly they are getting by with their evil.

They can speak blasphemously, contemptuously against God. They can stand out there and shake their fist and say, if there be a God in heaven, let him strike me with lightning. And then when lightning doesn't strike, they can say, aha, you see, there is not a God in heaven.

I challenge him and all the foolish things. And the foolish conclusions that man draws, because God is so patient, and God is so long suffering, and he does not sentence the evil work speedily. Sometimes people say, well, God is too weak to bring judgment.

Paul wrote to the church in Rome, but we are certain of the judgment of God, and that it is according to truth against those that commit evil. Do you think that you can escape the judgment of God? Or do you

despise the riches of his goodness and long suffering? Do you not know that the goodness of God is intended to lead you to repentance? But through your hard and impenitent heart, you're just storing up into yourself wrath, so that when that day of wrath comes, God will render to every man according to his works. No, God is not too weak.

God is just loving, and he is patient, and he's long suffering, and he's not willing that you should perish. But what he is saying is that all of your evil is just sort of being like a dam being held back from the judgment. But one day, the dam will break, and God's wrath and judgment will be poured out, and that without remedy.

People sometimes think that they've actually gotten by with their sin. It's been a long time now, and nothing has happened, and so I really got by with it. David had sinned with Bathsheba.

He had an illicit affair with her, and it resulted in her becoming pregnant. And so David devised a scheme by which he could sort of cover over his guilt. Her husband, who happened to be fighting against the Ammonites, David called him back to inquire concerning the battle.

David figured that he would go home and spend the night with his wife, and so later when she informed him that she was pregnant, that he wouldn't know the difference, but figured it probably happened when he was home on leave. But he didn't go home to his wife. He spent the night at David's porch.

And so David sent him back into the battle with instructions to the general to put him in a place in the battle where he would be certain to be slain. And when David received word that Uriah was slain in battle, he then took Bathsheba as his wife. Now as far as the people were concerned, they were all talking about what a wonderful, magnanimous king they had.

When a man, one of his men, falls in battle, his wife is pregnant, look, the king graciously takes his wife and is going to bring her up and let her become a part of the palace. Oh, what a wonderful king. And when people would sort of congratulate David for his wonderful kindness, what do you think was going on in his mind and in his heart, knowing what he had actually done? But he thought, nobody knows the difference.

I've gotten by with my sin. But the prophet Nathan came to David. And the prophet Nathan revealed to David that God knew his sin.

God knew what he had done. And David cried out, I have sinned against the Lord. The prophet said, God's forgiven.

You see, God's not willing that any should perish. But then the prophet told him what was going to happen. The prophet said to David, why have you despised the commandment of the Lord to do evil in his sight? God saw you, David.

You've killed Uriah the Hittite with a sword and you've taken his wife to be your wife. You've slain him with the sword of the children of Amman. Now, therefore, shall the sword never depart from your house because you have despised me, saith the Lord.

You've taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite as your wife. Thus saith the Lord, behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house. And I will take your wives before your eyes and give them unto your son.

And he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this son. You did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all of Israel and before the son. And the child that is to be born shall surely die.

David, the Lord saw you've done this evil in the sight of the Lord. And you're going to have to pay a price. There'll always be a sword in your house.

Your children will rise up against each other and one of your sons will rise up against you. You don't get by with it because the sentence of an evil work is delayed. Don't think that you've gotten by with it.

One day you'll have to pay the price. Perhaps the worst of all foolish conclusions that a person sometimes derives because of the patience and the long suffering of God is that God actually approves what they did. Some people can actually so deceive themselves that they think that God is approving.

If God didn't approve, why didn't he do something? Why didn't he strike me? Why didn't he take something away? Why is it that I'm still going on? And look, I've got blessings and so forth. And they interpret that as God approving their evil. But in the Psalm that we read this morning, Psalm 50 verse 19, the Lord said, you spoke evil and deceitfully.

You spoke against your brother and you slandered your own mother's son. These things you have done and I kept silent. And then you thought that I was like you, but I will judge you.

People think that God is like them, that God approves. But God said, no, I'm going to judge. Because the sentence against your evil has not been executed speedily, don't jump to false and foolish conclusions.

Don't think that you're getting by with your evil. Moses said to the men from the tribes of Reuben and Gad, when they were ready to go in to take the land, these men came to Moses and they said, you know, we don't really want to go into that land. We're very happy right here.

We're cattlemen. This is great cattle country. And we're content to just stay here on this side of Jordan.

Moses was upset. He felt that it would demoralize the rest of the people when two of the tribes are not willing to go into the land. And so he tells them that don't you realize that we turned back once before and we've been in the wilderness for 40 years and you know, you can't do this.

And they said, oh no, no. We didn't mean that we won't go in with you and help conquer the land. All of the men who are of fighting age, they will go with you until you've conquered the land.

But then once the land is conquered, it's our desire to return to our families here and we will then just raise our cattle here in this cattle country. Moses said unto them that that's fine if you will do that. But behold, if you will not do that, you've sinned against the Lord and you can be sure that your sin will find you out.

You can always be certain of this. Your sin will find you out. Sooner or later, your sin will catch up with you and you'll have to face the consequences of your sin.

You can be sure your sin will find you out. God has seen, God does know, and God will bring judgment upon every transgression. But here is the message of the gospel.

Jesus took your sin. He died in your place. When he was upon the cross, God laid on him the iniquities of us all.

God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. And thus God has provided the means whereby he can righteously forgive you your sin because of the substitute, Jesus Christ, who took your sin and took the penalty and the punishment for your sin upon himself. And that if you will confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Saved from the coming judgment of God that is going to come against all of the unrighteousness of men and the ungodliness of men who have held the truth of God in unrighteousness. God has given you space to repent. But the door of salvation will not always be open.

As with in the days of Noah, when Noah was in the ark and God shut the door, there remained only for those that were outside that certain fearful looking forward to the judgment of God by which God destroyed mankind at that time. God is gathering those within the body of Christ into the safety of that faith in Jesus. And the door I feel is about to shut.

The patience of God is about exhausted. And once the door is shut and you're left outside, you will have only that fiery indignation of the wrath of God, whereby he devours his adversaries to face. And you will discover, as we are told in the book of Hebrews, it's a fearful thing to fall in the hands of a living God.

Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Don't get caught up with the folly of the world and the misguided concepts of the world and thinking that you're getting by with the evil. God doesn't know, God doesn't see, God doesn't care.

He does. He has just forestalled the judgment to give you the opportunity to repent. Know this, that the grace of God is intended to bring you to repentance.

Father, we thank you for the grace, the mercy, the long-suffering that you have displayed unto us. And Lord, we thank you that you did not execute speedily the sentence against our sin, but you gave us the opportunity to repent and to receive the cleansing and the forgiveness. And we thank you, Lord, that there is therefore now no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus.

Lord, though there are those here today that are walking the path of sin, who have deceived themselves into thinking that it really doesn't matter to you how they live, because you've been patient, you've let them get by. They've mistaken, Lord, that long-suffering as tolerance, as weakness, as blindness, or as approval. But Lord, lest they be destroyed when your judgment comes, we pray that today they will hear your voice and not harden their hearts, but will turn, Lord, to you and find your forgiveness and your pardon and your cleansing.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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