

# A Change of Mind

by Dennis Kinlaw

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*The sermon emphasizes the need for a change in thinking, from self-interest to a personal relationship with God, in order to experience true intimacy and boldness.*

**Duration:** 1:07:55

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Mark 8:27-33, John 12:29-32, Philippians 2:5

**Topics:** "Mind"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker explores the question of how people could have missed recognizing Jesus as the Messiah. He highlights four scenes in the Gospel of John that provide glimpses of Jesus as the expected king. The speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding Jesus' teachings through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. He also discusses the profound sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, noting that no other religious literature depicts a god kneeling before his worshipers. The sermon concludes with a reference to Jesus' statement about being lifted up from the earth to draw all people to himself, indicating the kind of death he would die.

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## Transcript

I'd like for us to look again at the passage we read last night, and then I would like for us to read a second passage. Reading from the Gospel of Mark, Chapter 8, and reading from verse 27, Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, Who do people say I am? They replied, Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and still others one of the prophets.

But what about you? he asked. Who do you say I am? Peter answered, You are the Christ. Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter, Get behind me, Satan! You do not think the way God thinks, but the way men think.

Then he called a crowd to him, along with his disciples, and said, If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole

world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.

And he said to them, I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power. Turn with me also to the gospel of John, chapter 12. We now are in those last days of Jesus' life immediately before the cross.

Verse 20 of chapter 12. Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the feast. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request.

They said, Sir, we would like to see Jesus. Philip went to tell Andrew. Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

Jesus replied, The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me. And where I am, my servant also will be.

My Father will honor the one who serves me. Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour.

Father, glorify your name. Then a voice came from heaven, I have glorified it, and will glorify it again. The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered.

Others said an angel had spoken to him. Jesus said, This voice was for your benefit, not mine. Now is the time for judgment on this world.

Now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself. He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

Last night we were speaking about the witness in the Gospel of Mark to Jesus, and the fact that the crux point in his ministry with his disciples came in this chapter 8 where Caesarea Philippi, he looks at them and asks them if they know who he really is. And they said, Yes, now we know. We've watched you for three years, the better part of it, and we know you're the one we're looking for, we know you're the Christ.

And so he said, Good, now you know who I am, let me tell you why I came, and let me tell you what comes next. And he began to speak to them about the cross. And as he spoke to them about the cross, Peter turned to him and began to rebuke him.

Now it's astounding, isn't it, that the one breath the person can confess him as the Christ, the hope of the ages, and God himself among us, and then in the next breath he can rebuke him. But we're masters at rebuking God, aren't we? And so Jesus turned and said, Peter, you don't think the way God thinks. Now the same verb is used that is used in Philippians 2, which is translated in our earlier versions, let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

So what he is saying is, Peter, you don't have the mind that my father has, you have the mind that men have. Now it's obvious as you read the story that Jesus and Peter had completely different mindsets, because Jesus moved ahead inexorably to the cross, and the next six months are the dreariest, saddest six months in the Gospels, if you're interested in the picture that we get of the disciples. Last night we dealt

with some of those events during that six months.

You will remember that they were arguing about who was going to be the greatest while he was headed for the cross. They were arguing about which one would have the right hand and the left while he was headed for the cross. They didn't have any time for children, because they didn't count.

They were interested in more worldly significant things. And when they found somebody who was not one of them who could drive out devils when they couldn't, they rebuked him because he was not one of the select circle. Interesting picture of the disciples.

It's not surprising that on that last night before the cross they all forsook him. And when you get to Calvary, there's not a disciple according to Mark anywhere in sight. Now I know that John's Gospel tells us there was one there, but Mark is trying to labor something with us theologically.

They could not handle the cross. It didn't fit anything that they believed about what God was going to do and how he was going to do it. Now they had their own notions about how God was going to save the world.

And it's interesting we have our own notions about how God's going to save the world. It would be interesting to check out your church program in terms of your way and his way, wouldn't it? It would be interesting to check out my personal career goals in terms of his way and in terms of my way of doing it. I suspect there is nothing that can more authentically be said about the contemporary church than the fact that we are in a pre-Pentecost frame of mind as to how the world is going to be saved.

So they believed that Christ was going to reign, but they believed that he was going to reign by power. And that's possible. You know, I think sometimes, I know that for a long time I thought that what God really wanted out of me was obedience.

And I thought it won't be easy for him to get it. But I thought that's what he wanted. But you know, God would have no trouble getting me to obey him.

We have two daughters that are in France. One of those daughters and her husband had been through a period of rather difficult times, and so they wanted some time to get away and refresh their spirits and spend some time with the Lord and with each other, with their kids. So they traveled down into the mountains of southern France.

And they found themselves in a very beautiful, exquisitely beautiful country. And they said it was just like sort of balm and healing for your spirits, for your soul. There was one area that they were in which was a place that the government had spent funds in to make it just exactly that kind of sort of a refreshing paradise kind of picture in those mountains.

And they said we were relishing everything about it, when suddenly we were on a mountain road and we just kept going. And as we kept going, we got out of the area that had been cultivated, and we got into an area that had never been touched for those purposes and that really nobody ever expected outsiders to ever go in. And they said as we kept going, suddenly we were aware we were in something very strange.

And slowly we began to realize we were in an old, unchanged, the unchanged remains of a concentration camp. So we moved from paradise into the remains of a concentration camp. One the symbol of life everywhere, beauty, aesthetics, and the other the symbol of death.

She said, you know, we stopped and we walked the paths in that old concentration camp. And those paths led us to the oven. And she said we stood there in absolute horror as we realized people just like ourselves had walked down these paths and walked into gas chambers to their own death.

Intelligent, many of them highly educated people, without a complaint, because it was somebody who had the power to make them do it. You know, as I listened to her tell that story, some of my theology changed. Do you know I've decided that hell is going to be more obedient than heaven? Because God's interested in something infinitely more significant than obedience.

If God wanted me simply to obey him, you remember when Jesus turned after Peter and clipped the guy's ear off and said to him, Peter, that's the way this world works. My kingdom doesn't work that way. Don't you know that if I wanted to, I could call my father and he'd send 12,000 angels down here? They wouldn't have any problem with these Roman soldiers, with these temple police.

I think if all God wanted out of me was obedience, all he'd have to do would be send one authentic angel to my house. And if one authentic angel showed up at my house and said, Ken, this is what I want you to do, I'd be saying, yes, sir, yes, sir. But he wants something infinitely more subtle than that.

He wants me to serve him because I love him. And he wants me to do his will because I trust him. He's not interested in just pure, sheer obedience because you can have that on a totally impersonal basis.

But God is a person and he wants a personal relationship with me, not the relationship of a tyrant to a slave, but he wants the relationship with me of a father to a son and of a husband to his spouse. Now, those are two totally different things. Now, how was he to get it? They said, well, he's going to have the power.

He can straighten everything out. And so when he began talking about the cross, their whole intellectual world was threatened and was shattered. You know, recently I found myself working away at something that I had never done before.

It's interesting the analogies, the metaphors that the Scripture uses of our relationship to God. One of them is the courtroom where the judge sits on the bench, the policeman is there, the lawyer is there, the prosecutor who represents the textbook law. And then there you are and you've got to stand in the presence of the police and in the presence of the law and in the presence of the judge and get yourself through.

And if you do, when you're through, you walk out. And so that's the major metaphor that was used in the Reformation, justification by faith to get past the judge. You know, I'm glad that that's not all there is to the Gospel, because when you walk out of court, that's the end of your relationship to the judge unless you break the law again.

But there's another metaphor that is used in Scripture. And that second metaphor is of the family. And you've got a prodigal who's a long way from home and in deep, deep trouble.

And he says, even the servants in my father's house have better existence than I've got. I'm going to go back and see if my father will hire me to be a heroine for him. And when he gets there, father said, I'm not interested in servants, you.

I want you as my son. And the father runs to meet him, puts a new robe on him, you know, new shoes on his feet, and prepares a feast for him, and takes him into the bosom of the family. But you know, the astounding thing is, there is another metaphor.

And that's the metaphor of courtship and marriage. Now you think about the relationship of the person who's cleared it in the courtroom. That's one thing.

It is a radically different relationship when a son is restored to his father. He can go home now. But it is an infinitely more intimate relationship when a woman gives herself to her husband, and a husband gives himself to his wife.

A spousal, marital, love relationship. Now that kind of intimacy, that kind of personal relationship, is what God wants out of us. And look at the mass of Scripture that is there to support the second and the third metaphor, as well as the first.

Now what he is after is something that it isn't easy to get. You pay a price for that kind of intimacy. It doesn't come easily.

And what is it that's the essential thing that hinders that kind of intimacy and relationship? It is pure, unadulterated self-interest. And the longer I live, the more convinced I am that the best definition of sin is just self-interest. Where the self is the center of it.

And that is exactly what it means to push God out of his office throne, and put ourselves in his place. Where what's in it for me is the most important thing. Now the interesting thing is that the whirling doesn't ever even think about that.

That's no problem for him. He gets up in the morning, the unregenerate person gets up in the morning, and starts out and he's after what he wants. That's the controlling factor.

But when you're born again, something happens and there's a division inside you. You've tasted of him, and now you want, you like what you've tasted. But you're not cleansed and you're not set free from that self-interest either.

And so James talks about a double-minded man and the conflict that is within us. And that's what you get in the disciples those last six months before the cross. Can you imagine the desolation in the spirit of Peter on Friday evening of Holy Week? Can you imagine what Saturday was like for him? I'm sure that Sunday evening when Jesus suddenly appeared in their midst, half of everything Peter said, let me out of here.

I cannot face him. But there was something in him that said, where will I go? Everything I want is in him. Now I think that is a picture, a pretty good picture of pre-Pentecost Christianity.

And what is it that creates the problem? The self-interest has an intellectual effect. Did you know that the central thing in you is not your brain? Now I've spent my life a good bit of it in academics, and we don't believe that in academic circles. But the reality is the brain is a tool.

Human reason is an instrument that God has given us. And the human brain can be used for one, the human brain looks for a master. Human reason looks for a master.

And so I can use my brain to rationalize, or I can use my brain to reason, if you'll let me play on those two words. Same brain can be used to rationalize my way through, or it can be to seek so I can follow the

truth. Now who makes the difference? Who makes the decision? It is the eye behind the brain that does it.

Now one of the problems with sin is not only what it does to your appetites, where it creates what we speak of as fleshly lust, but one of the problems of sin is that it brings intellectual confusion and darkness, so that we think wrong. And so Peter was thinking his way. And look at those six months, and look at most of the history of the church, and look at a significant chunk of your life and mine when he has not been supreme within us.

Now, you know, it's interesting. We have, our generation has looked at Pentecost, the 20th century, and seen all sorts of things there. We've seen the gifts.

We've seen the power. We've played with all of those things. But do you know the most significant thing that happened to the disciples at Pentecost to me, is they thought differently, because their motivation had been cleansed from that duality where it was contented by self-interest.

Now let me illustrate, let me mention the things in the book of Acts that now are much more impressive to me than, you know, the rushing mighty wind, and the fire, and the tongues, and the other things. Thank God for all of God's manifestations, but those are not the essential things. The difference is, you will remember that you read chapter 20 of the Gospel of John on Easter Sunday evening after the cross.

They're all in a room like this, and they've carefully locked the doors, because they don't want any of the temple police in there. It won't be safe. For whom? They are protecting themselves.

Now, after the spirit came, the doors are unlocked. And when they realize the crowd has assembled, they go rushing out the doors into the arena of massive personal danger. Something has happened to Peter.

Peter, who can't face a girl and say, yes, I belong to him, can now face the temple police and the chief priest. Now, I don't think it's in his courage alone. I think the courage is a result of something else.

I think his thinking has changed, and what is right, his understanding of what is right has changed. And so, he leads the way right into the battle. You will remember that the battle was enjoined, and the first thing you know is that he's standing in front of the chief priest and the representatives of power there, the very ones that had Jesus crucified.

And now, you're not looking at a maid in the high priest's house. He's looking at the chief priest. And the chief priest says, well, now, if you'll just shut up and keep your mouths closed tight, we'll leave you alone.

And Peter looks up at the chief priest and says, sir, I know how important you are, but ought we to obey you or the one you report to? Now, there's a change in thinking there. There is an emotional change, too. I don't want to miss that.

You see, one day, the chief priest and the temple police are the biggest power, most threatening thing in the world at Peter. Now, Peter's seen something else. He says, wait a minute, there's somebody bigger.

And he's told me they're wrong. And in that change of mind, he begins to find resources within him to challenge the greatest power in Jerusalem, the one he quailed before, prior to that. And you remember, they threatened him within an inch of their lives, and so Peter goes back to the disciples and to their friends, and they say to Peter, what shall we pray for? He says, pray for more boldness.

There is a radical change that has taken place. Now, I don't believe it is God in the Spirit just dropped courage into their hearts. I think he changed the way they thought.

Martin Luther, on the day after he capitulated, said, here I stand, I can do no other, trembled while he did it. He's not a symbol of courage, but he's a symbol of a guy who sees where the realities are. And if you see where the realities are, weak people, cowardly people, if they see where the realities are, are transformed.

I give thanks for that. I don't think I've ever done a noble thing in my life because I was courageous, and none of it me. I'm the pacifist of pacifists.

But when you know the path in front of you is death, even the coward shies away from it. Now, there is an intellectual change, a mind change that took place with the fullness of the Spirit in these disciples. But the one I laugh about the most is, it was a totally different understanding of the Old Testament.

You read those speeches of Peter in Acts 2 and Acts 3 and what he has to say in 4 and so forth, and you can almost find him looking at these guys and saying, well, don't you know what's taking place? And a few hours before, he didn't have the Volgius Notes. But he says, this is the thing all the prophets told us was going to take place, that the Messiah would suffer. And for six months, every cell within his being had thought that and denied it.

And the Spirit comes and he looks at these doctors of the law and says, you mean you don't understand? Let me tell you about your book. And he begins to teach them about the Old Testament. And you remember, Acts tells us, they noticed that he was unlearned, uneducated, and ignorant.

But he understood the Old Testament better than the chief priest did. Now, are you going to tell me that's not intellectual? I'm not interested in intellectuality for, you know, to place a halo around it. I'm only interested in the fact that God wants us to see reality the way it is and to see the truth for what it is.

Now, how did Peter get that change? He simply got it by getting to the place where the Spirit filled him. And when the Spirit filled him, something happened to that self-interest in him that blinded him before that to God's way and to the fullness of eternal truth. I noticed something in preparation for this I had never noticed before.

Earlier this morning, I sat down and read 1 Peter through. And a very interesting little thing. In the New Testament, what are they, 220-some chapters in the New Testament? The Greek word pascho, which means to suffer, appears in 200-some chapters 42 times.

And it appears 12 of those 42 in the 5 chapters of 1 Peter. He's talking to his friends who are believers. He's talking to the church.

He says, are you surprised that there's suffering in life? Are you surprised that there's suffering in following the Messiah? You read 1 Peter and notice the emphasis on suffering. Do you know why I think it's in there that way? Because he spent so many months fighting. I noticed that preachers usually preach against their own sins more than any others.

And so Peter is saying, don't you understand? It's interesting that the Greek word for suffering, the noun, occurs 16 times in those 220-some chapters, and a fourth of them are in the 5 chapters of 1 Peter. What he lived fighting, he now is embracing. I wish I knew how to say that so like we'd communicate.

I think the thing that the Holy Spirit does when he fills us is that he enables us to embrace. You notice the way I said it, enable. I don't believe Peter enjoyed suffering any more than anybody else.

I think Peter was as uncomfortable standing there in front of the high priest and saying, which one are we going to obey, God or you? I don't think he did that flippantly or arrogantly or chauvinistically. I think he said, I'm sorry, we don't have any option. And do you know there's infinitely more strength in the witness of the person who says, I'm sorry, I don't have any option.

I've got to do what God wants me to do. There's infinitely more power in that than there is a person who can say, say what you please, I'm going to do what God wants me to do. The power is when the other guy knows you are paying a high price for what you're doing and you know it.

And if you could have your options, you wouldn't do it, but you don't have any option because God has spoken. There's nothing cavalier anywhere in anything noble in the gospel. Now, so I think there's a sense in which we've profaned Pentecost.

Will you hear me on that? I think there's a sense in which we have profaned Pentecost because it brought a group of people to where they could follow Jesus in his self-giving sacrifice of himself. And I think they came to see that it wasn't death, but it was a way to life. That it was not the way to marginality, it was a way to significance and fruitfulness.

Because there is something about it when I begin to defend me and my interests that death slowly consumes me. Through my experience at the college, I got to know some of the Salvation Army's literature. And they have a massive hymnody that nobody else knows anything about.

And some of it is not bad. Some of it is very good. Now, some of it is like some of the rest of our hymnody.

It's nothing glorious from a musical point of view or a poetic point of view either. But they had one general who was called the Poet General. His name was Orsburn.

And he wrote some great poetry. He wrote some great poetry on this subject. If you've never looked at his Spirit of Eternal Love, guide me or I blindly rove.

Set my heart on things above, draw me after thee. Earthly things are paltry show, phantom charms that come and go. Give me constantly to know fellowship with thee.

That's just the beginning. I dare you to chase it down. It'll make a difference in your spiritual life.

But he wrote one that is one of the most poignant bits of poetry I've ever heard. Savior, if my feet have faltered on the pathway of the cross, if my purposes have altered and the gold be mixed with dross, oh, forbid me not thy service. Keep me yet in thine employ, pass me through a sterner cleansing, if I may yet give thee joy.

Is there a preacher in this crowd who hasn't wanted to pray that kind of prayer sometime but you weren't poet enough to say it? Savior, if my feet have faltered on the pathway of the cross, if my purposes have altered and the gold be mixed with dross, oh, forbid me not thy service. Keep me yet in thine employ, pass me through a sterner cleansing, if I may yet give you joy. I don't know about you, but I can lay claim.

There are days I've been able to lay claim to that and say, Lord, that's a cry in my heart. But you know what it was that caused that poem to be written? He was a young captain in the center of London. He had

a number of corps under him, and God was moving and everything was moving great.

And he found out that the brass was going to split his division. And the men under him said, we've just gotten this thing working, and God is blessing. People are being saved.

We think you ought to fight it. So he said, my superior officer called me in and sat down and told me they were going to divide the division. And he said something entered into me and I began fighting.

I protested, but I did more than just say. I thought it was a mistake. He said, I began to fight for us, and it was I doing the fighting.

And he said, when they divided our division, I became bitter. And he said, with the bitterness came darkness, because he said, the light's all in him. There's none in you or me.

And he said, when the spirit grieves, the spirit leaves. I heard a tape of his witness on this, and when he said it, he thundered. When the spirit grieves, the spirit leaves.

And he said, he's the source of light. And he said, darkness filled me. He said, I went on through the motions, performing perfunctorily.

Then he said, one day in the goodness of God, I was in an accident and was badly injured and found myself in the hospital for a while, and then they put me in a recovery home. And there he sort of wallowed in his emptiness, in his sterility. He said, one day as I lay there in the bed, I heard in the next room a group of Salvation Army officers with somebody else, and they were singing some Salvation Army hymns.

And he said, something broke in my soul, and I repented, acknowledged my sin. And what was it? Self-injury. Self-injury.

He didn't violate any of the Ten Commandments in the sense of adultery or murder or theft or slandering anybody, except in his heart, in his attitude toward some other people, and in his attitude toward God. And he said, the Spirit came again. And it was in that period of restoration, lying there, that he wrote, Savior, if my feet have faltered on the pathway of the cross.

And what makes our feet falter? We turn this way instead of that way. We get interested in ourselves and begin to defend. Now, I want to labor the fact that Jesus said to Peter, Peter, you don't have the mind of my Father.

You've got a mind like men have. But I want to give you a mind like my Father has. And I want you to have that kind of mind.

Now, only the Spirit of God can put that kind of mind in you and me to where we think that way. And when we do, we will be very different from the world around us. You know, the interesting thing is, we will be very different from the Christian world around us.

Now, let's be careful how we say that. Because if you begin to say, we're the select few, then you're done already. You're done already.

But the reality is that if there had been a single disciple in those last six months before the cross that had been able to think the way Christ had thought, the way Christ thought, he would have been out of step with the rest of his colleagues. And if you come to the place where you think the way God thinks, you will be

out of step with many true believers. And you need to be compassionate because there was a time when you were there.

And if you've come out of that, the only reason you're out is because of grace and something he's done for you. And so there's no room for us to do anything except say, I've been there, I understand. We need patience and prayerfulness for them.

Now, I have another 40-minute lecture I want to give in the next eight minutes or whatever time we've got. That's sort of Mark. There's almost a sense as you do this kind of thing that you begin to place a premium on suffering.

You begin to place a premium on self-abnegation. And so you can get, I'm not a psychologist, but is this what you call masochism, where you're going to choose the cross and glory and that? Now, I'm glad that we have the Gospel of John and the book of Revelation because both of these have a witness on this same subject. And let me see if I can spin that out.

We don't have time to go into it in detail, but let me just give you the major picture here. It really is sort of an unbelievable thing that Jesus should have been rejected, isn't it? A person who comes along and heals the sick, cleanses lepers, feeds thousands of people. His whole life is an expression of unbelievable goodness and mercy and grace.

Never touched a life that he damaged. Every life that he touched within the intimacy, he transformed. Never been anybody like him before in human history and there's never been anybody like him in human history since.

He was morally, ethically above, totally above reproach. People who knew him best, trusted him most, and we stuck him on a cross, crucified him. And the people who crucified him were the people who were looking for him.

And the people who crucified him were the people who told the world that he was coming. The thing that made the people who were looking for him, who they were, was they were looking for him. That's what made a Jew a Jew.

And when he came, they missed him. And who led the missing? The best seminary professors they had, the best bishops they had, or the best whatever the brass is in your organization. The people who knew the most about the Old Testament were the ones who missed him.

Now how did they miss him? Because they had a preconception as to what he was to be like. Now with that in my mind, asking the question, how could they have missed him? I ran through the Gospel of John and there are four scenes in the Gospel of John, or four figures in the Gospel of John, that now are very impressive to me. One of them is not explicit, it is implicit.

But three of them are very explicitly clear. It's interesting you have in the book of Revelation basically the four same kind of images, except they're turned around. You know that the Messiah, when he came, was to be a son of David.

And David was the king. When he came, he was to be the king. You will remember that when he came into the city on Palm Sunday, they said, blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.

Blessed is the son of David who comes in the name of the Lord. He was, he was, the Messiah was to be the king. You will remember that Pilate said, are you the king of the Jews? The Messiah was to be the king.

Now look at the four pictures that you get, glimpses of him in the Gospel of John. The first one is in the first chapter and it is implicit. It is the picture that's given in that passage in the prologue where it says, he came unto his own and his own received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God. Now the emphasis there is upon the word receive. He came unto his own and the people who were looking for him received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God. Now you get the image of God coming to us in Christ. And when he came, we didn't let him in.

Now I think that is linked with what you have in the Laodicean letter in Revelation 3 is what's behind Holman Hunt's painting of Christ knocking at the world, knocking at the door, the light of the world. You know it's amazing to me how difficult it is for me to see things the way they are. And above all to see the irony which is sometimes in the familiar.

Do you know I think I was 50 years of age before I realized the irony in Holman Hunt's picture of Christ knocking at the door. I was always impressed by the beauty of the thing. A crown on his head, royal robes on, priestly robes, lantern, light of the world, standing at the door knocking, no knob on the door, greenery has grown up across it.

It's been so long since that door has been opened. There he stands. Beautiful thing.

And so we tell about how Christ knocked at our door. But you know the one thing no king ever did in human history that we know about if he was a real king was ever knock at anybody's door. Because knocking at a door is not a sign that you're a king.

I remember I used to watch on TV Ronald Reagan walk into news conferences. You never saw a door open for him. They'd all been opened ahead of time because you and I pay taxes to see that all the doors are open for the president.

And you know it was long about then that I began, you know how he marched in, I began thinking, you know I bet you the only door that guy's knocked on since he walked in the White House the first time is Nancy's. I can remember when Nixon needed to speak on a university campus in this country without a riot because it had to be demonstrated his political life was hanging. It had to be demonstrated that he could walk on a university campus without a riot.

Could not afford to be rejected. And so you know what they did? They picked the University of Tennessee and knocked in the mountains, conservative Republican country. And you know what the occasion was? It was a Billy Graham rally in the stadium in the University of Tennessee.

And the Billy Graham people got a phone call, the president's coming. It had to be proven that he could move on a university campus without a riot. You know, knocking's not a sign of power.

Knocking is a sign that you can be rejected, that somebody else has got the power. Ron, which was the Holy Roman Emperor that stood in the snow three days outside the papal residence knocking. Was it Otto? Because he and the Pope had squared off and the Pope had excommunicated him.

And the Holy Roman Emperor knew the Pope had won. So he stood barefooted in the snow knocking three times. Now the thing that got to me on this and made it much more poignant was I remember seeing Holman Hunt's painting, one of the two originals.

It's in St. Paul's in London, one of them. The other is at Keeble College, Oxford. But the one in St. Paul's, if you've never seen it and you're in London, you ought to go see it.

I saw it in 1955 and the next time I saw it was 1974, 19 years later. And when I stood there and looked at it the second time, I remembered it was 19 years ago I stood here. And do you know, he's still knocking.

That's not power. That's rejectability. Isn't it interesting when omnipotence becomes rejectable? They knew when he came, he'd straighten everything out.

And when he came, he came knocking. And they said, he's not the one. You will remember that on Palm Sunday, he said to his disciples, go into the city.

This is the end of his ministry. The city of Jerusalem is agog. They say, when's he coming in? He just raised Lazarus from the dead.

Everybody in Jerusalem knows about it. And they are ready to welcome him. And they're saying, could it be that he will establish his kingdom now and get rid of these Romans? And so, he says to his disciples, let's do it right.

Go in and you'll find a donkey in its fold. Tell the guy that your master needs him. And bring them to me.

And he got on a donkey's fold that had never been broken. And he rode on a donkey. Now, some of you have heard me say this, but let me tell you, there's a fascinating story in the Bible about donkeys and horses.

G. Campbell Morgan, in one of his commentaries, said they had royal donkeys in the Middle East. That's because archaeology had not done its work yet. We have no, no Egyptian pharaoh ever rode a donkey.

Have you ever seen anybody ride a donkey? You know, the only people that ride donkeys in the Rose Bowl parade are the clowns. Roman generals in Jerusalem rode horses. Sometimes, if you're interested, go through the Old Testament and chase the story of horses.

Because the horse is a symbol in the Old Testament for worldly power. The triumph and the exodus was the horse and his rider are thrown into the sea. Do you know why Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter? He didn't want a donkey kingdom like his father.

He wanted a horse kingdom. And all the horses came from Egypt. So, he wasn't in love with Pharaoh's daughter.

He wanted some horses so he could have cavalry and chariotry. And he took the Pharaoh's daughter in order to get the chariots and the cavalry. And so, he was moving into the big leagues as a real kingdom of this world.

You read through the Psalms and notice its depiction of horses. The horse is a symbol of the way the world is going to solve its problem. And do you know, I read that passage in Zechariah for years before I realized that verse 10 follows verse 9. Do you know what verse 10 says? Verse 9 says, Behold, your king comes to you meekly, riding upon a donkey and upon its foe.

And verse 10 says, He will take away the horse and the chariot from his city. Now, are you going to tell me Jesus didn't know about Zechariah 9-10 when he said, Go get that donkey? And what he was saying is, My kingdom isn't like the kingdom of the world. That can be applied in a thousand ways.

Then the next figure is, you know, on Thursday night when he knelt at their feet and took a basin and a towel and started to wash their feet. And Peter said, Lord, you'll never learn how you're supposed to act. You've never learned your lines.

Now, do you notice the difference in the minds? Peter was distraught. Peter says, Let me wash your feet. And Jesus said, No, this is not the hour for that.

This is the hour for me to wash your feet. Peter says, The Messiah isn't going to do that kind of thing. And Jesus said, If you don't let me wash your feet, you can't have any part in it.

Can you feel the trauma inside him when he says, Lord, I don't understand you. But if that's what's necessary for me to have a part of you wash my feet, my hands, my head, all of me. And Jesus said, No, Peter, that isn't necessary.

Do you feel the intellectual contradiction in him? His mind says no to what Jesus is doing, and his heart says, I cannot let him go. You know, God wants you and me to get to the place where there's some kind of semblance of similarity between the two things. Because if there's an absolute contradiction, we're going to be in trauma the rest of our day.

But do you know what it takes to begin to think the way he thinks? It takes the instruction of the Holy Spirit. Now, of course, the fourth one is this. Now, let me just let me say this.

You read the history of the religions of the world, and the most common thing in the world is for men to be sacrificing to their God. Men on their knees, men on their faces before their God. But I will challenge you to find one instance in all the religious literature of the world where a God knelt at the feet of his worshippers.

Now, how far will God go to save us? How far will he go? Our minds cannot conceive it. And the reason is because we don't know how far God has to go to save us. We don't believe it.

We don't want to believe God has to go that far in order to save us. Now, I got that in my head. I preached that one day to a gang of Christian Missionary Alliance preachers.

And when I got through, one old CNNA preacher came up to me in desperation, looked at me, and pled. He'd say, Kinlaw, for God's sake, get him off that donkey. And you know, I thought, yeah, there must be more to this.

So I read the book of Revelation. And when I read the book of Revelation, to my shock, I found you got the same four images, except they're turned upside down. Because in the beginning of the book of Revelation, it says when he comes the next time, he won't come knocking.

He'll come like lightning flashing from the east to the west, and every eye will behold him simultaneously, and there won't be any door that can shut him out. There'll be nothing that can separate you from him. He will face all of us instantaneously.

He won't knock. He won't even tell you he's coming, because he will come as Lord. And when he comes the second time, he won't come on a donkey.

The book of Revelation says he will come on a great white horse with a sword coming out of his mouth and the armies of heaven behind him. Now, if you haven't heard me do this, let me say this for the ones who haven't. When I got into that, I thought, you know, this is very interesting in Kentucky, making a pit for donkeys instead of horses.

Because I remember in 1986 in Lexington, just 15 miles from here, they sold a yearling that had never run a step in a race for \$8.2 million. And in 1987, those were the years when the Arab money was flowing. In 1987, they sold a yearling never on a step in a race for \$10.4 million.

And in 1988, they sold one never on a step in a race for \$12.5 million. And so I asked somebody what the going rate on donkeys was in Lexington. And I found it was between \$40 and \$65.

There's theology in that. There's theology in that. When he came, nobody could tell any difference between him and one of us and one of the poorest among us.

But then you get, he comes on a great white horse, symbol of power. You will remember that he doesn't come at our feet in the book of Revelation. Not only is everybody on his face before him in the earth, but everybody in heaven's on his face before him.

Everybody is on it. Heaven and earth and under the earth, on its face before him. He's not at our feet.

We're all at his feet. And in the book of Revelation, he doesn't come on a cross. He comes on a great white throne.

I wonder if Peter hasn't had some interesting thoughts along that line. When he sees the throne of God, he says, that's the way I thought he should have come the first time. But do you know Peter wouldn't be there if he'd come that way the first time? Because as I read that slowly through and worked through it, what I found is, do you know when he comes the second time in power and in that kind of glory, there won't be a sin forgiven, there won't be a broken relationship restored, there won't be a soul saved.

And do you know what suddenly dawned on me? Now this, there may be two ways of saying it. One of them is, not even God can save by power. And if that's Harry's then, not even God chose to save by power.

But if I read the Bible right, I think the first is true, that not even God can save by power. If he could, why'd he leave the throne? And why'd he go to a cross? It's interesting when he comes in power, the final word is, he that is unjust, let him be unjust still. And he that is filth, let him be filth still.

And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still. And he that is holy, let him be holy still. That's going to be the word when he comes in power and the kind of glory that Peter and the disciples were looking for and that we look for.

But that's the reason I love that passage in John 12 where Jesus says to his father, now he's my soul trouble, what shall I say, save me from this hour? He says, father glorify your son. And the father says, I have and I will. And do you know the funny thing? Even Madonna wears a cross around her neck, not a throne, because it's not a shadow of a chance for Madonna except through that.

And it's not a shadow of a chance for you or me except through that cross. Now I want to ask you this, and with this I'm through for this session, thank you for your patience. But if God can't be redemptive except by self-sacrifice, how are you going to be? If not even God can save except by self-sacrifice, how are you going to make your life count except by pouring it out? Jesus stood in the vicinity of Jerusalem and looked at the priests and said, you guys are supposed to be shepherds of the flock, I'm the good shepherd.

The difference between you and me is you're like most shepherds, you keep sheep so you can eat and wear them, or else so you can sell them so somebody else can eat and wear them. But I keep sheep so they can eat and wear me. This is my body which is broken for you, this is my blood which is shed for you.

Do you know the worst thing in the world about being a pastor is people will eat you up? But do you know what the good shepherd calls you to do? Is to follow him. Now I'll tell you, it isn't a question of whether you're going to be eaten, it's just a question of who's going to do it. And there's only one of them that's fruitful.

So I had to come to the place where I said, Lord, can you get me to the place where I can turn my life loose and let you spend it the way you want to? And I found I had a paralysis, frozen. When I saw that and said, Lord, I'd like to turn it loose and let you spend it the way you want to, I found I had a hold on it. And do you know there's not a noble moment anywhere in our lives in this process? We never come and say, Lord, take my life and use it.

We come and say, Lord, is there any way you can get it out of our clutches? Is there any way you can get it out of our clutches? And the beautiful thing is, he can.

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