

Relationship Restored

by Duane Troyer

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God and the need to fully submit to His will. It discusses the struggle between truth and lies, the significance of separating the honorable from the unworthy, and the impact of surrendering our hearts to God. The message highlights the difference between a self-centered approach and a Christ-centered life, urging listeners to heed the voice of conscience and embrace the grace that sets us free.

Scripture: Isaiah 59:2, James 4:8, Hebrews 4:16, Romans 6:1, Revelation 22:17

Topics: "Surrender to God", "Embracing Grace"

Description

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Transcript

I think it was, I'm trying to think who it was, maybe the, I think maybe it was on the Mount of Transfiguration where the disciples gathered there, or were there, three of the disciples were there with Jesus and they saw Moses and Elijah, and it's just a real good place to be. So, so much so that Peter said, let us, let us build a few tents here and just stay here. He said, it's a good place to be, anyway, I just, I think that sometimes when I'm with you all, like, this is a good place to be, let's live together, be together, let's stand and pray.

Oh God in heaven, we thank you for your great love and your mercies, goodness and kindness. Thank you for salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ, we believe and confess that there's no other name given among men whereby we might be saved. Just want to be in you and ask you to teach us and guide us and convict us of all evil in all ways that we're not perfected in you Lord, help us to be workable, formable, pray for the blessing here on this day that you would be with us and help our thoughts and hearts to be fully turned to you.

Pray for Brother Daniel and Harvey, keep them safe wherever they're at on their journey. I'm sorry I missed a good portion of the opening, apparently, I'll probably listen to it sometime, but I appreciate what I did, what I did here. I'm not here today to bring you anything new or that I think you aren't fairly familiar

with, but I just came across passage last evening that I thought was pretty inspiring and I'd like to share some thoughts about it.

It's in Jeremiah chapter 15, and most of us, if we're at all familiar with Jeremiah, most of his preaching is, he's in this really, this really dark time of Israel where it's just the last few kings that he's, I think he might have preached for 40 years, but the last few kings before the final destruction or the destruction, yeah, I think it was Nebuchadnezzar who came in and destroyed Jerusalem and took them captive and they were exiles out of Israel for the next 70 years. And Jeremiah had just been continually and continually and continually trying to, trying not only to warn the people, but at times he was saying, it's gone too far. You guys, like God will not turn away from this again, no matter what you guys do.

What he says is going to happen, happens, and he's known as the weeping prophet. He lamented a great deal. At one place he says something like, oh, that my, I'll quote it better in German, but something like, oh, that my head were a well and my eyes were fountains that I could weep day and night for the lost people in Israel.

But if you read the whole book of Jeremiah, it's not as if there's not promises. It's not as if there's not, it's not as if the conditions for us to be right with God aren't there. And that's what we see here in the end of Jeremiah 15.

After he says a whole bunch of those things, he laments, he even laments his birth and his mother who gave him birth earlier there in the chapter. Oh, but, but then here in verse 19, he says, therefore, thus says the Lord, if you return, I will restore you and you shall stand before my face. If you bring forth what is honorable from what is unworthy, you shall be as my mouth.

They shall return to you, but you shall not return to them. I will cause you to be like a strong brazen wall to this people. They will fight against you, but not prevail because I am with you to save you, to deliver you from the hand of evil men and to set you free from the hand of pestilent men.

I think in just those couple little verses there, you can almost sum up that the whole message of salvation, the whole message of what it means to be reconciled back to God. We see in this, in these short little verses, what we must do. And we see in these short little verses, what, what God does and, and, and, and what he will do.

He says, if you return, I will restore you. But if you return is already implying whoever he's talking this to, like you're away from me. You're, you're, you're not where you need to be.

And if you return, I will restore you. I will, I will, uh, re, re, uh, I will restore you. I guess there's no, not much other ways to say it, except I will, I will, I will have you back to where, to where you once were.

Okay. See mankind in, in the beginning, mankind sinned and, and turned away. He was, they were with God in, in the presence of God at, at peace with God, at one with God, there was no conflict between Adam and God.

There was, there was beautiful harmony until Adam sinned. And then, and then he was, he was away and he was not just, he was not necessarily away physically. Um, but, but his heart was now turned away from God.

In Isaiah 59 too, he says, but your iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear you. There's this, there's this conflict between God and man, a conflict between God's spirit and man's spirit and, and, and, and the purpose for that conflict on God's part is not just because he likes conflict, not just because he wants strife. He doesn't strive with the spirit of man just because he likes to strive.

No, his purpose for striving with man is to bring him back to harmony. When God says to Adam, where are you? He's not asking about where his physical, uh, position is. He knows where he's hiding.

There's no doubt in his mind where he's hiding. He's not asking about his position. He's asking about his condition.

He's saying you're in a state that's foreign to me. You're in a condition where, where you once were, something's not right anymore. I think we can probably relate to that, to how God feels or felt about that.

Any of us, probably all of us with any age, for sure those of us who are married or have children, uh, like sometimes, sometimes something happens where some, some tension arises, some, some conflict arises between you and your spouse or between you and your child or, or between you and a close friend. Something arises and there's a weirdness. There's a strangeness.

They're, they're right there physically. You can see them. You could still shake their hand.

Uh, you can still greet them with a kiss, but there's a weirdness, a strangeness, some, something that, something that's no longer quite in harmony with each other is not there. And, and you so, you so much want that. And that's how much God wants that for us, that that's how much he wants that heart to be turned.

And he doesn't just want us physically. He doesn't just want, he doesn't just want some service from us, but he wants us. In James four or five, there's a verse that says he jealously desires the spirit, which he made to dwell in us.

You know, sometimes, uh, some, sometimes like in a, in a family or friend situation, when, when that, that, that weirdness or strangeness is there, we can, we, we, we need to, we need to work on it. We need to, we need to, we need to figure out how, uh, how to bring that back, how to restore what was there, uh, or what should be there. Um, I just remember, okay.

And then, and then sometimes like when, when it's a child and you recognize that there, that their face is turned against you, their heart is turned against you. They're not really wanting to please you anymore. Some, something's not right.

It manifests itself in their, in their disobedience or something. And you spank them. Sometimes you get through to them and spanking is not the only method, but sometimes that's what it comes to.

And sometimes you don't get through to them. And even though maybe you can compel them to say sorry, maybe you can, uh, even convince them that they've done wrong. Like sometimes you can just, you can, you can sense that the heart is not turned toward you and you haven't come through yet.

But you still don't have that, that thing that you're trying to, that you so, so jealously designed. I remember this one time, I don't want to say which one of my children it was, but, um, I mean, I don't think they even

remember for their sake. I don't want to tell you which children it was, which, which of the children it was, but they were probably only, or this child was probably only two years old or something like that.

I don't even remember all the details, but there was some issue when it's time to go to bed. And, um, she was being contrary, I guess I, I guess I revealed it was a girl, but that doesn't narrow it down too much in my family. Um, uh, anyway, I had to spank her and I put her back in bed, but, but I could tell there was no, I hadn't gotten through.

The same problem came up again and I spanked her again and I, I don't know what I did different that time, but I laid her back in bed and a few minutes later she called me and she just wanted to give me a hug and tell me she loved me and I just knew I got through and I just remember like, that's about all I remember is like how precious I felt when, when I knew I had gotten through and that, that heart was completely turned. And I think that that is what God wants. Um, he jealously desires the spirit, which he made to dwell in us.

And herein is one of the most amazing things. Something that can stagger my imagination when I think about it is that he's so jealously desires us, but he gives us the choice in our free will. He gives us the choice to be there.

Like he made himself so vulnerable because we are so, we are so, uh, uh, weak. There you go. We are so weak.

And he places this thing in us that, that this, this thing that he so jealously desires is, is conditioned on that thing. And for the majority of the people, he doesn't have it. We know that in, in, in things that Jesus said, like few there are that be saved.

We just, maybe sometimes we underestimate even how few, but we're, we could be very certain that less than half of the people, um, ever turned to God. I think it's a very small group that is his real remnant and his people, but, but God made himself vulnerable, but, but, but what's so staggering about all that is, you know, it's the only way it would work. If God forced us to love him, would it be love if, if he gave us no choice, could he surely know that we were his? If he made us robots, what glory is that? No, he gave us that thing.

Uh, and, and, and really it's, it's the mystery of love is actually in, in the fact that we choose it. That's why the power of choice makes love the most powerful and the most fragile of all relationships. The will to choose is our greatest strength as well as our greatest weakness.

Our will is like the governor in our lives, like, like the governor and, and, and God wants us to govern our lives according to his ways. And so he has given us that will that has so much power it, it, it is, it is of such great strength and yet of such great weakness. And he has given us that thing to govern our lives.

That is why we must turn our hearts to him. That is why he's saying here in Jeremiah, return to me and I will restore you. And I tell you, if you're, if you're in a setting where, where you never learn, where you never are taught or encouraged or find out that the hard true reality is if you do not return in your heart and come to God, but rather, and, and, and, and, and take that will that governs your life and, and, and govern it according to his will.

Like if, if you end up in a setting that governs everything for you, you will, we will find out that, that, that such a person never returns to God. Like he can, he can live some, some form of godliness and there's no

power there. Uh, if, if he is not, if, if he is not encouraged and left to that place eventually where he returns on his own and comes to God.

And I just, I just want to be clear, like I'm not, I'm not like, I think we should get, and we, we eventually, I think we will get there with all our children. Like the time will come when they will, when they will take that will that they have and they will choose whether, whether they are turned for us or against us. And, and I'm not, I'm not suggesting that, that we don't govern little children.

Like I tell my children sometimes when they, like they might have this habit of, of, Oh, I don't know. There's some, some funny thing or some, some interesting little phrase or something that gets said or they hear and, and, and, and then it gets said and said and said and said and said, I found out other families have that same problem. And I, I often tell them, like, if you can't govern yourself in this thing, I'm going to have to govern for you.

And that's the way we raise little children. These, these, especially these little children, they're not, they're not made to make all these choices themselves. But, but especially when we're talking about like as adults and in a church setting, like, but I would, I would even say though, something like as, as elders in a church, like, I don't want to govern your lives.

I want you to govern your lives. And yet I'm telling you, like, if you don't, I think it's my responsibility to do something about it. And that's why it's just so important that we all, that we all learn to, to, to turn this governor in our lives and have him, have him come before the face of God again, return so that he can be restored and stand before the face of God, as it says here in Jeremiah.

We can force people to do something, but we won't have that thing that we so jealously desire. We can talk, we can teach, we can command, we can rule. We can often establish some kind of order without that thing that we need.

And even if we do all those things, like I'm not saying those are bad things, teaching, instructing, commanding, and ordering, those are not bad things. Even if we do them in love and patience and understanding and gentleness, and in a way that there's nothing wrong with it, like if that person doesn't turn his heart toward us, we still are missing that thing that we so jealously desire. And that's, I think that's the way God feels.

That's the way God feels about people who do not return to him. You know, a relationship, just by its very nature, takes two people. Like, there's something I've found kind of interesting in talking with evangelical Christians.

It's like, it's pretty common for them to say it's about a relationship with God. It's about a personal relationship with God. And I don't disagree with that.

I might disagree with what some people think that relationship is, but I don't disagree with that. But however, then the interesting thing is that talking with this same group of people, you find out that they often don't believe that this relationship is hinged on what we do, but it's all about what Jesus did. And that what he did is all that matters.

It's the only thing that Jesus cares for. All that we could even do is worthless in the eyes of God. And like God does not, God only wants to look at us and see the blood of Jesus.

Because we believe in that, and that what we do doesn't have a bearing on that. And something like that. It can be explained several different ways, but something like that's the impression you get a lot of times.

Brother Thomas Holmes once did this really good message about the folly of that kind of thinking. That's just not the way a relationship works. Imagine a marriage, imagine a husband and wife or a young man, young woman, planning to get married or something, are having this relationship, and then you find out that the one is also seeing somebody else.

And he's not faithful and he's not really committed. You would never hear the other person say, well, that doesn't really matter to me. What I'm concerned about is the relationship with myself that I have with myself.

It's not like God is not just interested in that he has a relationship with his son, who came here and lived righteously. No, he wants us. That wasn't the purpose for Jesus coming.

Jesus did not come to change the father's mind about man. He came to change the man's mind about the father. A lot of people know that they need God and they even want God to some extent.

But instead of returning to God, they want God to come to them. And so they somehow try to appease God and they try to sacrifice for God. And God is not pleased with that kind of sacrifice.

He has very little use for somebody's money and somebody's sacrifice when their heart is not turned toward them. In fact, he hates those things. Over and over you see in the Old Testament where he says, I'm full of your burnt offerings and I'm full of your sacrifices and your new moons and your feasts I hate.

In Micah he says, will I be pleased with a thousand rams and ten thousand rivers of oil? It's not what he wants from a people who are not turned to him. It's as empty as when somebody gives you a gift when they're still set against you. And their heart does not return to you.

Cain and Abel both offered sacrifices. And it's a common belief among commentators to say that the reason that Abel's sacrifice was accepted was because it had blood. And the reason Cain's wasn't, it wasn't.

I don't see that. I don't see that in the text. Abel was a shepherd.

He brought a sheep. Cain was a growing produce or whatever and he brought some of that. And the condition was that Abel's heart was toward God and Cain's heart was against God.

I mean, God said to Cain, why are you upset? If you do well, will you not be accepted? If you do evil, sin rests before your door. And we see just as it carries out, as the story carries out, like Cain was just set against God. He was full of evil within.

He found a good opportunity and he killed his brother. He hated him. And you cannot hate your brother and not hate God.

Maybe John says that. Something like, how can you say you love God whom you have not seen, but not love your brother whom you have seen? And that is the condition. I believe that that is the condition on which God received Abel's sacrifice and not Cain's sacrifice.

We see also in Cain, when God pronounced this punishment on him, like it grieves, it grieves Cain, but it doesn't grieve him because he wronged God or because he wronged his brother. It grieves him because this punishment on himself is so severe. It's just a heart that is totally turned against God.

Back here to Jeremiah. He says, if you bring forth what is honorable from what is unworthy, you shall be as my mouth. The King James Translation says, if thou take forth the precious from the vile, or some translations say, if you extract what is precious from what is worthless, you shall be as my mouth or you shall be as my spokesman or as my preacher.

And we see this thread through the whole scriptures of separating what is honorable from what is worthless. Or as it says here, what is honorable from what is unworthy. It made me think of this passage in 2 Timothy that I'll read.

2 Timothy 2, starting in verse 14. Remind them of these things and solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers. Be diligent to present yourselves approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who have gone astray from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already taken place and they have set the faith of some. Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands having this seal.

The Lord knows those who are his, and everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness. Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and earthenware and some of honor and some of dishonor. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful to the master, prepared for every good work.

Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels. The Lord's bondservant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth.

And they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will. Here in verse 20 where he says, Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, some of honor, some to honor and some to dishonor. And then he says, Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful to the master, prepared for every good work.

I'm not quite sure. If I read that whole context, I think perhaps Paul is telling Timothy something like, in a large house, perhaps talking about the church or an assembly, like that there are people of honor and there are people of dishonor. And he just got done talking about Hymenaeus and Philetus.

That's one of the reasons why it kind of makes me think that, OK, we have we have Timothy, who is a vessel to honor. And then we have these other two men who are going astray and bringing other people to ruin, who are vessels of dishonor. And he's saying, cleanse yourselves of these things so that you can be a vessel to honor.

But regardless, I also think he could be or he could he could just be talking about the individual and that we should we should cleanse ourselves from those things that are honorable to God and those things that aren't. I think I think it applies. Some of these things like separation of.

Of the honorable from the unworthy of the precious from the vile, it applies very similarly, if not identically, whether we whether we think of. The house or the temple. As the body, and that means us or or if it means the church.

The same principle applies and we have instructions on both. It's described in so many ways throughout Scripture, like gold and silver needs to be. Cleansed and separated from dross, the the chaff needs to be separated from the wheat.

He says in Corinthians to come out and be separate and to touch not the unclean thing, the wisdom in the wisdom of Sirach, he says, woe to the sinner who walks on two paths. And I also also think that it is very likely the spiritual meaning of some of the laws of Moses, where he's where he's saying, like, don't don't plant two kinds of seed in one field. Don't don't crossbreed some of these animals that are of a different kind or don't use different kinds of material for the same garment.

Because he's he's wanting to establish distinction and he doesn't want confusion. See, confusion is never the result of of only good or only evil. It is always the result of the two mixed together.

You never you never look at a pile of dirt and dross and junk and and that something that's totally worthless and are confused about it. It's confusing when it's mixed in with the gold and and and and there's something just not right. Right.

You never look at a pile of chaff and think it's confusing. But when the chaff and the wheat are all mixed together, it's confusing. It's a little bit like you look at a it's not that confusing when you look at a horse.

To identify it as a horse, and it's not that confusing to look at a donkey and identify it as a donkey. But when you see a mule, sometimes you're just not sure which one this is supposed to be. And that that's what confusion is.

And that's why God is not the author of confusion in him. There is no variableness nor shadow of turning. And yet the devil is the author of confusion and he is continuously mixing truth and lies together.

And so in our personal lives, we need to be we need to be. We need to be extracting. The.

The valuable from the worthless. And yeah, sure. Which is which is something that God will ultimately do at the end.

Like heaven would not be heaven if God would not come here and he would separate the sheep from the goat, the weeds from the tears, the good fish from the bad fish like heaven would not be heaven. It would not be a pure and holy place. We'd still have all this confusion when it comes to.

To. Like purifying the church or sanctifying the church, like when it comes to the hymenaeus and the elitist is. Like we we need to practice extreme care and wisdom like we stand to risk any any time we have we any time there is a judgment to make, like we stand to risk either way.

Like whether whether like if something is is not right or questionable, like we stand to risk it. If we don't excommunicate it, we stand to risk if we do. The risk is in whether it is the right kind of thing to separate

over.

It's it's like I come from a setting. Who who practiced the principle of a pure church. But my complaint and a lot of the brothers complaints that that that left there was that like.

We're not doing right or we're excommunicating people who you you don't find fault in their life, except that they're breaking the traditions of men. And yet we're in fellowship with people who are immoral and covetous and people who should be excommunicated. And and and that's not right.

That's that's how that's how systems can go. And and the solution is not to just reject the whole idea that the church should be pure and kept pure. But but to get back and to return to God where we stand before his face and we can discern what his will is and figure out what are the things that God wants to that God separates over and what are the things that he doesn't.

We need to judge rightly what the fruits reveal that the heart is made of. You know, when we when we evangelize some. Right.

Right. Yeah, I think that's where it's at. You know, sometimes when we go evangelizing.

In these big cities and sometimes you see you see people that just look so bad and and their appearances. I don't think that I ever think about. So I was taught to raise to never say this about somebody and I don't think I really think about people as worthless.

But but sometimes I have seen people who's just whose appearance just left me with very little hope for them. They just they just act so bad and they look so bad and and. And it's kind of easy to dismiss.

The potential value of such a person. And sometimes I remember as some of the brothers here and abroad have told me about their life when they were young and how they looked. And, you know, brothers who.

Again, I'll spare names, but brothers who. Who told me how they had blue dyed mohawks and dreadlocks and just kind of told me the appearance of what they were when they were young. And it helps me sometimes when I'm out there and I see some of these people that think.

You know, that person has the potential of being the next the next brother, so and so. I have brothers who I'm in fellowship with who looked like that at one time. And I don't think I don't think at all that.

But that means that kind of appearance and action is is is OK. I'm pretty sure you think you realize that, you know, when when a person comes to his right mind, he closes himself when a person repents. His his outward.

His outward actions and appearance changes with it, we can't we can't change the heart without changing our whole life. And. It but it helps me, it helps me when I'm out there sometimes when I see these people, they just have the right the right heart toward them to think those things.

And I think it's also OK, so. So in that person, there already is. At least some or the potential of this, of the of the honorable things that that if if he returns to Christ, that'll be separated from the worthless.

Right there, it's already there, at least the potential of it. Like. It's why it's why sometimes you meet people who I met somebody on, I think, Friday night who said, you know, I just.

In Springfield, who said, you know, I just like to go around and look for the good in everybody. There's good in everybody. And I just like to look for the good in everybody.

And he's right that that's. That that's true. And usually when somebody says that.

I get I get this confusing signal that that. There's still a whole bunch of mixture of of the honorable and the dishonorable of of the they're not trying to extract the precious from the worthless. But but it is right that there is something there.

There is something there that's valuable. It's kind of like it reminds me of this story that I read just a couple of weeks ago on in a news article. I found it pretty interesting.

CNN had a had a had a news article that said there was a a Virginia family was just trying to get out of the coronavirus blues by taking a long drive when they found what turned out to be nearly a million dollars in cash in the middle of the road. The car in front of the family had swerved out of the way of what appeared to be a big bag bag of trash. Major Scott Moser of the Carolina County Sheriff's Department told CNN the family, however, didn't have time to do the same.

So they ran over the bag. And instead of leaving the trash in the road, they stopped, picked it up, threw it in the back of the truck. They saw another bag in the ditch nearby and picked that one up, too.

And after they arrived home later that evening, they were going to throw away the trash. Weigh the trash from both bags. And when they did it, it appeared to be mail.

And when they went to further investigation, it was a whole bunch of cash money. And and then the story went on to say how they called the sheriff's department and and with with their help, they started trying to find find the rightful owner. At the time of the article, I don't I don't think it mentioned whether they had found it yet or found the rightful owner yet or not.

But I just find that pretty interesting. When you see 2 bags that look like bags of trash and you pick them up, throw them in the truck, take them home, plan to throw them in the trash can. You just about threw away a million dollars worth of cash.

And but but that value, the value of a million dollars was in there all the time. And at the same time, if nobody ever would have picked it up, if it would have stayed out there and it would have rained on it and the mower would have went through and shredded it and. It would have been worthless.

But but once it once it's returned to its rightful owner, it's very valuable. And and I just think that's something how we can how we can see a lot of these people. It's similar to I thought about this on the parable of the lost coin.

The woman that had lost a coin. And she. I don't know if it says what the coin was.

Let's say it was a dollar coin. She had lost this dollar coin and she swept her house and she cleaned it and she looked and she looked until she found it. Now, that coin in on one hand was always worth a dollar.

Even when it was lost. At the same time, it was pretty worthless until it was restored to the owner. It was.

Yeah, it was not useful until it was restored to the owner. And that's just the way it is with all these people who have not turned their heart to God. Like the potential value is there.

But unless they return to the owner and come before his face, they're pretty worthless. OK, back to Jeremiah here. If you bring forth what is honorable from what is unworthy, you shall be as my mouth.

They shall return to you, but you shall not return to them. When we turn from this world, we leave all the obstinance and the pliables and the worldly wise men and the legalities and all the people of the city of destruction. Don't return to them like and again, it's it's probably talking more about more about the condition than the position.

But don't return to being obstinate and being pliable and being worldly wise and legalistic like don't return to those things. Or in the sense of like the true reality of. Of.

Relationships that had to be broken in order to follow Christ, Jesus tells us. But this has to happen and that a man's foes will be those of his whole household. That's a big subject that I almost thought.

To give a whole teaching on, but I won't get into it too much, but that's just the true reality. It's it's it's linked with bearing our cross. That those things will happen if we're unwilling to bear it, we're unworthy to be his.

But anyway, even in that sense, like. Let them return to you. But don't return to them or don't return to their condition.

And then he goes on to these promises that he has in verse 20 and 21. I will cause you to be like a strong brazen wall to this people. They will fight against you, but not prevail because I am with you to save you.

To deliver you from the hand of evil men and to set you free from the hand of pestilent men. See, there's the there's the part that like. He's asking us to return.

And then and then to separate the the honorable from the worthless. And he says, I am for you. I am here to save you.

I am here to protect you from the evil tyrants. I am here to I'm here to keep you. So so if we if we return and we separate the honorable from the dishonorable, we're as safe as as a lamb in a shepherd's arms.

That's how safe we are. So safe, even that no man can pluck us out of his hand. Like no, no external force can take us away if that's if that's where we want to be.

But if we forsake him, he also will forsake us. We deny him. He also will deny us.

He came to deliver us from a tyrant. He's here to protect us from this thing called confusion and evil and all the things that set themselves against God. That's why Jesus came to us.

And here's here's where I think this gets really precious in the New Covenant is that. Jesus actually did come to us. We mankind actually was under a bondage that he couldn't free himself from.

And so and so Jesus comes to us. He is the Emmanuel, the God with us. And he comes here and he and he he breaks those chains.

He defeats Satan. And he still says, return now to me. And I will restore you.

And how now can we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? God is for us and he he wants to give us. He wants to give us the good things and the needful things and. And he doesn't like there's things that God gives to those who.

Who return and turn their heart and come to him that he never will give to those who don't write like. There's all kinds of examples in this in the parable. Of of the master and the servants, especially in the in the one recorded in Luke.

Like. There's there's the master. And there's servants and their citizens, the citizens say, we don't want this man to rule over us.

Right. They're the unbelievers. They they don't want to come under his kingship.

They they are at conflict with the master. Their heart is not turned toward them. And and and they they just say, we don't want this man to look.

But then there is the servants who are his servants, who who who are the believers, I believe, who. Who who who receives something, they receive a talent. Not.

I personally believe that that talent is salvation or the kingdom or something, something of that nature in which something that God gives to his servants. And then when he comes back. Just like judgment begins at the house of God, he goes directly to the servants and he and he judges them based on their dealings with this thing that he gives them.

And and those who dealt faithfully. Were profitable servants. Received received eternal inhabitants with him.

Those who did not deal faithfully with them, even among servants were were bound hand and foot cast in the outer darkness. And then he says, those citizens who said they don't want me to rule over them, bring them here and slay them before me. I think that's one of the most complete.

Parables of like what I just it's just a really complete parable of. How. How God will judge and.

Anyway, I wasn't really going to get into that, but that could be another subject in itself. But my point here was that like God. God gives us salvation.

Those who turn to him. God gives us. The things needed like, you know, how.

In the Sermon on the Mount, I think. I think it's in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus says. Give not what is holy to the dogs.

A cast cast not your pearls before swine and give not what is holy to the dogs. Some time ago when I was talking with. That man, Max Gallagher, I don't know for sure if that's how you say his last name, but that man from Minnesota.

Some of you are at least some familiar with him. I thought he pointed out an interesting point about. Like God follows that same principle.

In in that he doesn't give. To the ungodly. Even.

I think maybe it was when he was sharing part of his his journey and his testimony like God gives the truth. To the people who appreciate it. Right.

It sometimes blows my mind how ridiculously. What ridiculous lies some people believe. How how how void of truth.

They seem to be. And yet I think I think it is partly because like. God God doesn't give what is holy to the dogs.

God doesn't God isn't just going to impart a great deal of light and truth to somebody whose heart is still turned away from him and not toward him. I'll just I'll just close with reading these last two verses again. They're real precious.

I will cause you to be like a strong brazen wall to this people. They will fight against you but not prevail. Because I am with you to save you to deliver you from the hand of evil men and set you free from the hand of pestilent men.

Just open it up for comments and corrections. Shared a lot of my own thoughts there so feel free to. Share.

Thank you for the message and it was very edifying. It was. Referring to the people that.

That would tell you that your works are filthy rags and that nothing you can do is. Is worthwhile to God. There was.

There was a comment that I heard a lot of people make during the time we were up at that Urbana event. I heard this over and over and over again. Everybody that came up to interact with us and they said.

I don't. I said like everything you're saying sounds right. Everything you're saying sounds good.

They would say that. But then they would say but I can't really tell the difference between what you're saying and what they're saying. Sounds like the same thing.

And so. I hadn't heard it. For a long time.

But I heard it last night. We went we went back out to Springfield me and my brother for a couple of hours last night and there was. Dealing with the.

Upper room ministry group and. They were about to hold their meeting and somehow me and my brother ended up getting into a conversation with some of them and. One of the men.

We had interacted with several times in the past already and kind of knew pretty well he knew us. For whatever reason just like. Got really sharp with us like.

Said we were false teachers didn't believe that we were teaching things correctly and then. And then I thought about like only in those kind of moments do you really see where a person's like intention is. Like they kind of kind of explain themselves a little bit and they say like well.

Like. You're not acknowledging. The fun that God wants you to have or like the.

You're not you're not accepting that. That that aspect of of Christianity and then and then goes on to say like like. He's happy or if I could say like he is comfortable where he's at.

And when I when I thought about that I was like it doesn't really sound like he's really willing to change or like give up the life that he has. Maybe he got some form of truth under his. Under his feet and then.

But then then stayed instead of moving forward instead of going on like. He heard some version of the gospel and that was OK or acceptable to him. So.

He gets mad at us. And then tries to interrupt our conversations with the other men that are there tells us like you can go around and around in circles with these people all night. But I'm going to go upstairs.

Anybody else needs to go like they better come now. And one of the men that was out there. Didn't know who we were.

Never never really knew anything about what we believed. He stayed and he listened to what I had to say to him and he he said that thing again like like I really can't tell. What the difference is between what you're saying and what they're saying.

And I asked him I was like I was like well if there isn't a difference I don't know why the man would have gotten so mad or so angry. Like what is it that is going through his head. That is making him so upset.

And part of me thinks that it's just that. Like the words that we were speaking to him must be in some way challenging to his view or convicting. And just at that time another another man who we've been interacting with Jake.

I've been speaking about Jacob. Which we didn't even tell we were coming out that night shows up. And he's there during the interaction when he hears this man start to accuse us and he says he says well these guys are my friends and I I saw this ad and you know to come and check this place out.

But he said he says but you're you're accusing these people. I mean they're good people and it's making me a little leery of the situation. So I I think just in these interactions like.

People start to see the way that someone carries themselves and the more that they they lack a solid foundation the more hostile they become. The more challenging because their position is now under fire. And so I I just recognize that that part of it like.

If you don't have a solid belief. Then confrontation arise. Instead of becoming being peaceful or calm like your true position starts to come out and it's just.

It's ugly. That's that's all I can really say about it but. Thank you for the message.

Yeah the weaker their foundation is. Years ago I read this. This.

Years ago I read this. Thing. It's a little foggy in my mind but it was talking about this preacher who.

He made he made his notes really extensive. What he wanted the sermon he wanted to preach as well as you know on the margin like. How he wanted to say these certain points like.

You know. You don't really forcefully. And.

And this guy said in one of his notes he had this one this one section that said. Some. This is my own word but this was the meaning like.

We point say it very forcefully. And I think I think that's kind of. Also reminds me of something that's said in the Proverbs at least the Septuagint says it this way like.

The foundation of truth gives authority to words. Jesus. Jesus could sit down at the Sermon on the Mount.

And. Preach the most. Foundationally true message.

While sitting down. I don't get the impression he. He laid into the people at all.

And the. And the people walked away and says this man speaks with authority. And not like the Scratch Pharisee.

Anyway that's. That's what happens when you have the foundation of truth. Yeah I just wanted to say man I was really blessed by that.

I'm. I just found it very edifying like Rob did I just wanted to echo that mostly. And.

I really appreciated the. Bringing out about what what confusion is and. About how.

It's not because there's. There's solid truth and it's not because there's just. A pile of trash it's the mingling of the two and it and it seems like so often that's.

That's how people get. Swept up into the. Into a system or or something that exists around a really authoritarian leader there is something really good to be gleaned there and yet there are there are these wicked things and.

Going on simultaneously or. Or just mingling of mingling of truth and it leads to confusion and. Seems like that's where a lot of the word that I'm looking for just kind of escapes me now but.

False teachers teachers that would be that would be leading people into error and it's not it's not because it's all error it's because it is it's truth mingled with things that are that are false. Like I think that that might be part of what Jesus was driving at when he said in Matthew 24. Then, if any man shall say unto you low here is Christ or there believe it not for there shall arise false Christ to the false prophets and shall show great signs and wonders in so much that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect behold I have told you before.

Just. Yeah, I just really appreciated that getting brought out that way and had another thought I wanted to share but it escaped me thanks for the message. And then brother Dwayne Thank you just a few comments that.

I know you used James well in James about. When you think you have a bad consider prophets. And the perseverance of the suffering of Job and things like that and talk about Jeremiah a great example of all the things that he went through like you said.

Just a fountain of tears and things that I know from a physical point just this last week delivering pizzas I had to two young girls that were in wheelchairs I had an old man about my age he had no legs he was a paraplegic. And I'm you know I had my wife would know I like to when I get home all my back all my eye and I think how how really they go through these things and my physical infirmities and nothing in comparison to that so it is spiritually. Jeremiah the prophets the ones who went before the martyrs.

Their heroes are examples as you know fathers of the faith or mothers of the faith and Hebrews 11 and how we should follow their example and you really expressed it good I thought how you did that. And even when you get choked up over the children when they said I love you it shows that there are a few that will

they come to the senses like that ought to be on an hourgate. One just a few verses I'd read from Psalms you touched that when you said that Dwayne I thought of Psalm 81 just a few verses the last verses.

God says but my people would not hearken to my voice in Israel none of me so I gave them up unto their own hearts last and they walked in their own councils. Oh that my people had hearken unto me in Israel had walked in my ways I should have subdued the enemies and turn my hand against the adversaries. The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him but their time should have endured forever.

He should have fed them also with the finest of wheat and with honey out of the rock should have satisfied thee and he's still doing that today. God is still beckoning to us you know the Matthew 11 come unto me all you labor he's still doing it but there are so many hardened hearts or bitter hearts or just hateful hearts. It's just that they just they're not they're not interested they just they pass me in the road when I'm driving and you know where they're going.

They're going to the casino. They're going to casino over Oklahoma. Eat drink and be merry.

The Lord helps them. The Lord be magnified. I forgot to mention the thing that I forgot to say was it seems like what most people are challenged with in the same same way that we would profess Christianity.

They're challenged with the way that we would teach those that are truly faithful will carry out good acts and deeds in accordance with Christ's will. But then they then they would also they would profess to say like like in the time that they are teaching or they're trying to speak about things that God will give them the words to speak. But then when they lose their composure it's like what's what's the excuse.

Because I think like you can't really say that that God is telling them to say these things. But it's the it's the actions it's the deeds like that they themselves have problems with. But then other people recognize it.

They see it. It's in the way that someone would choose to carry themselves. But they deny the power of faith and and grace that Jesus gives in order to carry out those deeds.

Instead of overcoming sin they choose to dwell in it and say it's all on Christ. They deny the power to just want to say thank you and man. A lot of thoughts just similar to sort of thoughts were brought out that I've just been thinking about it.

Not all of them. One point that the thing about this thing that you desire so much in a child or with one another. I think that's the thing that makes the difference between between being a Christian and not being a Christian.

There's just this one little thing that really makes the whole thing. The thing. It's.

I've often wondered. I wondered how to put words to that. Many people are religious.

Many people. Doing many good things. And.

But they're not resigned. They're not. They have not surrendered to Christ fully.

And there's this. I think it's. I'm not sure what word.

Yes. But. There's.

That surrender. I don't think it's just surrender. Maybe.
Maybe it's all. Maybe. Maybe it's everything.
I'm not sure. But. There's this.
I see a connection between the two. The big difference. Of.
Not so much the outward things. But. With the inside has.
Changed. And it's surrendered to God. Or.
I mean there's. I think there's a lot of liberty. Not.
Not any sin or. Or anything like that. But like even in a home.
There's just. Much more liberty where there's this. Like.
Like I say with my tools. If. If somebody puts them away.
They have liberty to them all. But they don't put them away. Like talking about my children.
Then I have to make rules. And. But if.
If they faithfully put it away. They. I want them to have liberty.
To it all. My desire. And.
Anyways. It's. I think God operates many.
Similar ways sometimes. Thankful for. Being here today.
And thankful for. All of you. I appreciate talking about this little.
This. I guess mysterious is an OK word for it. Little.
Thing. It reminds me of. It reminds me of what this thing.
That's wrong with my back. I don't know what it is. It's a little nerve.
Or a little bone. Or a little muscle. It's just real small.
But it. It affects my ability to walk. And work.
And just for my body. To function like it's supposed to. And it's just this small.
Some small little thing. Or it reminds me of. Either a locking mechanism.
Or a. Or a trap. That just like. You got this big weight.
And you do it. But because of some kind of leverage. You can just put this little switch.
And the little switch holds the whole. The whole thing is all held up. By this little switch.

This little trigger. But just. Because of the way it's set up.
Just this little. It all. Hinges on this little thing.
Just thinking of how Rob said. That. Oh what you're saying.
What these. What you guys are saying. Sounds like what these guys are saying.
And it's hard. It's hard to hear. The difference.
It reminds me of. When. When the devil.
Came to tempt Jesus. He used scripture. He used.
He used truth. But then he went. But there was a little.
It was lacking that little switch. Didn't have that little. Or it had some little thing.
That tainted it. When he says. The thing I thought of.
Immediately was. Oh jump off this. Jump off this building.
He said. I mean he loves you. He loves you so much.
He says he's gonna. Keep angels from even letting you. Stub your toe.
So it was a true thing. But then. But the devil was trying to make.
Some little switch happen in his heart. That was like. Oh yeah.
He. He did say that didn't he. Well I. I could just throw myself.
Right off of this thing. He said he loves me. He said he's gonna take care of me.
But. But some bad little switch. Would get flipped.
For somebody to. To despise God's care. And God's love.
And just jump off. Of a building. I think it's.
I think it's what Paul was talking about. When he says. He's.
He's saying this really good thing. That should just be really encouraging. To the right heart.
He says what. Like you say. Oh there's.
I had so much sin. And he says. Well where sin abounds.
Grace abounds that much more. And that. That should be.
To the right heart. That's a really comforting. Statement.
But to the wrong heart. It says. Oh well.

If grace abounds. Or sin abounds. Maybe I should sin a bunch.
And then there'll be a lot more grace. And it's this. It's this.
Just this little thing. That says. It's the little thing.
That would. That. That would.
Here's all the good things. God has to say. Here.
Here's all. All. All of the love.
That God has poured out. For us. All the attention.
That he's given us. And made us think. That.
That would make someone think. Well I must be really special. And.
Oh. The thing just popped in my head. I don't know if you've ever heard this.
The difference between cats and dogs. A cat. A dog.
A dog looks at his owner and say. This guy. This guy cares for me.
This guy feeds me. This guy's water. This guy.
Gives me water. He must be God. And a cat says.
Wow this guy. This guy feeds me. This guy takes care of me.
And gives me water. I. I must be God. And.
That's a little joke about the difference between the personalities of dogs and cats. But it's. It's.
It kind of illustrates like. The false gospel. Like.
Oh. Wow. God has given me so much.
I must be. The center of the. It all.
It's all about me. Um. I think about how that.
In the scriptures. A bride is prepared. A bride at a wedding is prepared for her.
To give pleasure. To be pleasing to her husband. To be.
So that he'll be pleased. Like we. We're supposed to be.
Um. Purifying our garments. So that.
So that we'll be pleasing to him. At the wedding. He'll look at us.
And. And think. Oh what a beautiful bride that I have.

Look how. Clean her garments are. And this is typified in western weddings.
And yet. It has evolved. Into a place where the wedding is all about the bride.
I mean it's. I mean like. Her dress.
And her this. And her that. And it's all the bride.
And it. It's. It's.
It's this. It's this American. Um.
Husband wife relationship. It's this. I say American.
It's western or modern. Um. Uh.
Church and. And. Church and God.
Church and God relationship. You can take. Take the same words.
The same truths. And apply them selfishly. Or.
And it. And it's so ugly. And so empty.
And so abominable. Or you. If.
And you apply these things. Selflessly. Then they're.
They're really beautiful. Like it's. It's a really beautiful thing for.
That. This scene that Jesus. Depicts where.
Where someone takes a low seat. And the. And the master of the house says.
Oh no. Come up hither. It's a. It's.
It's a beautiful thing. But. For somebody to hear that.
And then say. Oh. If he's gonna call me up hither.
I'll just. I. I'm gonna just go up hither. It's a. I'm gonna go up there on my own.
Or I. The. The person never humbles themselves. Or.
Or something. There's this little. This little switch.
I thought of. Maybe this is the last thing I'll say. Like he.
He gave himself. For us. Not to just.
Not so that we could just. Like he. He paid the price.
Freed us. From the. The bonds of the devil.

Not so that we could just be free. And be the best us we can be. But so that we could be his.
He doesn't force us to be his. But he paid that price. So that he could have us for himself.
The. The proper heart. Sees this price.
That he's paid. And. And recognizes.
Now we are his. And the. The wrong heart says.
Oh. Now we're free. And it's all just glorying.
And liberty. And God is. Is treated as somebody that.
Pays our bills for us. And not. Not who he truly is.
Which is. Which is. Someone who should have owned us.
And had us. All together in the first place. And.
And then when he didn't. You know. Paid the price.
And. And is just like. Making the way for.
For us to be. Like. Duane was saying.
Return to the place. That we were meant to be in. And that.
It's like. I think it's important to say. That place is.
Is his. Is. He.
Jesus. Is. Separate.
Is. Only it. Is.
To. Go. I am.
No. Go. To.
The. This. In all my thoughts and words and deeds, He brings Him, Father, unto Thee.
In the trials of His cross, by embracing them, oh, trust Your soul. Keep Your eyes on my haven true, for
He's the one who's guiding you. I give myself more unto Thee.
In all my thoughts and words and deeds, He brings Him, Father, unto Thee. The Lord of all, the Lord of all,
is my truth and my honor. However we are tried, we can trust in the Lord.
I give myself more unto Thee. In all my thoughts and words and deeds, He brings Him, Father, unto Thee.
Praise the Lord in each of souls, gracious, sincere, and merciful.
Praise the Lord, He will preserve. All love to Him will love ensure. I give myself more unto Thee.

In all my thoughts and words and deeds, He brings Him, Father, unto Thee. When He shall come with comfort sound, holding our dead in Him be found, to bring my father's will alone, while blest to stand before the throne. I give myself more unto Thee.

In all my thoughts and words and deeds, He brings Him, Father, unto Thee. In the sight of the Lord. In the sight of the Lord.

And He will give you life. And He will give you life. And your shelter for to die.

And your shelter for to die. Christus, I know that He will flee from you. Christus, I know that He will flee from you.

Draw nigh to God and He'll draw nigh to you. Draw nigh to God and He'll draw nigh to you. Love one another just as they do.

Children of angels, fathers blest are men. Love one another just as they do. Children of angels, blest are men.

Bitterest words are lightly spoken. Bitterest thoughts are rashly stirred. Brightest things of life are broken by a single man's word.

Love one another just as they do. Children of angels, fathers blest are men. Love one another just as they do.

Children of angels, blest are men. When a foolish love within tries to take us in a snare, Conscience doubts, resists, and entreats us to beware. Heaven's conqu'ring, we trespass, and our chance of beauty die.

Conscience, your fault confess, do not dare to tell a lie. In the morning when we rise, headward men will bid you pray. Oh, consider conscience bright, should thy body suffer today.

When our angry passion dies, death is to repent and heal. Now subdue this conscience bright, and commend your temper still. Thus without our will or choice, thus is one entombed within.

With a secret, gentle voice, warn us to beware of sin. But if we should disregard, while this friendly voice would call, Conscience's sin will grow so high that it will not speak at all. Faith that saves has appeared to every man, for it teaches us to say So to all ungodliness, and this self-control and godliness, In the present age we're in, while we pray for our Savior, And the blessed hope from Him.

What a faithful priest who has given up his life To redeem us from our deeds, that our fathers in His sight Would be glad of His glory when the Word in flesh appears, For He came to impress and of death remove the fears. What shall we now say? Shall we sin that grace abounds? Reverend, may it never be that in us this heart is found. Let us bow wholly to the throne of grace in time of need.

Do bide now for our trouble and the grace that makes us free. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise the Lord! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

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