

Resident Aliens

by Glenn Meldrum

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having a right desire for God and living as aliens in this world, abstaining from sinful desires and yearning for God instead.

Duration: 1:08:55

Topics: "Worldly Desires", "Spiritual Trust"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the allure of the computer industry and how it draws people in through purposeful marketing. He emphasizes the importance of having a love that is greater than material possessions and comparing oneself to others. The preacher shares a story of a man from Russia who experienced the power and glory of God's love, which made everything else seem insignificant. He concludes by urging the audience to trust in God and live as strangers in this world, abstaining from sinful desires that war against the soul.

Transcript

We're going to be looking at Psalms 84. It's a beautiful section of scripture. It's broke up into three sections.

And what we're going to do is I'll just read each section as we go and we examine it. And we look at the basic concepts of it. I mean, there's so much in here that it could be preached week after week for some time, just because of the amount of substance that is in this particular Psalm.

But I'm just going to highlight some particular points and some issues. Being the first verse, it says, how lovely is your dwelling place? Oh, Lord almighty. My soul yearns, even faints for the courts of the Lord.

My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Even the sparrows have found a home and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young, a place near your altar. Oh, Lord almighty, my King and my God blessed are those who dwell in your house, they are ever praising you.

This was a Psalm done by the family of Korah and the family of Korah, they're called Korites, and they are actually descendants, descendants from the man Korah that made rebellion against Moses. When you go into the book of Exodus and you find that, that he started a rebellion against Moses and, and the Lord judged the man and he was, he paid the penalty for a sin, but his children didn't have to, they were still allowed to worship in the tabernacle and they were still given that privilege. So here hundreds of years

later, they're still have the privilege of worshiping and, and serving as gatekeepers in, in the house of the Lord.

And they wrote Psalms. There's probably about eight Psalms that they wrote. There are some debate about when it was written.

Some think that these are written more towards the building of the second temple after the Babylonian destruction. There's others do believe that it was in the time of David because it has the heart of David presented there, this passionate desire for God that you see so much in, in David's writings. So we really don't know.

Nothing gives us some clarity with it. The only thing that it speaks of is that it does speak of the tabernacle within this, that they're longing for the tabernacle. And so it does lean a little stronger to the concept of it being with David.

One way or the other, they were people who had a relationship with God. They understood something that I believe is tremendously lacking in the church across this country. And in this relationship, as we will begin to look at is the sections are broke down.

And I would just categorize them like this at the first section is a right desire for God. The second section is going to be a right response to God. And the third section is God's blessing and favor to those who live as aliens in this world.

And so we're going to look at the, at the right desire for God. What is our, our desire? How should our lives be in desiring God? And there can be a lot of opinion, a lot of thoughts that are out there, but, but what does opinions matter if they're totally wrong? I mean, you can have a, you know, you can go to the shop and you can hear all kinds of opinions about God and about politics. And what does it matter if their opinions are totally wrong, totally contrary to God, totally contrary to what God would desire to do in their lives? What does the opinions matter? If our belief is not established upon truth, we can have the most profound opinions and, and, and stirring intellect and, and, and concepts and have it totally off base.

What does it matter if we are not walking in the truth? And so they present here a desire of God. And what is that desire and how should our lives line up with it? And he begins with the aspect of saying, how lovely is your dwelling place? Oh God, that term in the NIV that says lovely is not necessarily the best translation. The best translation would put it as beloved.

How beloved is your dwelling place? And the concept of beloved there gives a term of endearment. This, this desire within says, says your, your house, your dwelling place. So God, where you are, it is dear to my heart.

It is something that I yearn for. I love it. It's precious to me.

And this becomes something that is so important that that lays the whole precedent of what follows is an understanding of this yearning for God, this desire for God. We were created to worship. We were created to know him.

We were created to be an intimate fellowship. Anything outside of that is a perversion of what we are created to do. Anything outside of that.

Ultimately, when we are in heaven, that's what we will do. We will worship and adore him and serve him and praise him and revel in his glory. Be awestruck by his magnificence forever and ever and ever.

It will be fulfilled. But while we're on earth here, we are to begin that journey and find the purpose of our lives, which is to enjoy him and to know him. The psalmist is bringing out how lovely is your dwelling place? I love it.

It's it's a beloved thing to me. And Malachi, the Lord rebuked the children of Israel. And made a statement to them that you just think that the the work of God is a burden in the first chapter refers to that is that the Israelites thought that the work of God and the service of God was a burden to them.

And so God reproved them as a result of it. What a shame that the church can come to a point to think that the worship and the service of God is a burden. But you see, it's a hard issue.

It's a hard issue. I mean, the pastors went and made a statements as well. We need nursery workers.

Well, you know what? The is if we understood that the work of God wasn't a burden, actually, after service would be people running to him and saying, please, please, would you let me serve? Would you let me do it? But because our concept is wrong because we don't understand the privilege of it because we don't understand how lovely and beloved is his dwelling place. And not that the church is a dwelling place. He doesn't dwell in temples made by hands.

He dwells in something that is is even more simple and basic into the bodies of people right into us. It's not how beautiful an edifice that we can make, whether it would be laid out in gold and silver and precious gems would lie in the walls or whatever, is that would not impress God. He dwells within the hearts of men.

We become the temple. And now how beautiful is his dwelling place that he would dwell in the midst of his people, that he would dwell in their very hearts, in their lives and pour forth himself through frail, broken individuals. He brings out and he says, my soul yearns, even faints for the courts of the Lord.

My soul yearns and it faints to be in your presence. Well, the clorites, they lived on the other side of the Jordan. And any time that that the floods would come in spring, they wouldn't be able to get to the temple of the Lord because the floods would prevent them.

They didn't have bridges as we know today. At other times when they went, when Jerusalem would be besieged by armies and and there'd be all the problems that would be going on as warfare, the courts couldn't get to the city as well. And they would be kept from it.

Imagine for an instant, here is people who know what it is to worship God and love God and love the service of God and love to be in the presence of a holy God in the presence of his people. They're kept from it for some reason. And you hear within them the longing desire says, how I yearn to be with him.

I'm kept from it because wars sieging Jerusalem or the floods are there. And it's going to be a month before I can get across to go and worship God. The yearning of the heart, the pastor brought out the privilege that we have as Christians to be able to come and to enter in a place of worship and adore him.

In other parts of the world, people are worshipping God and have worshipped already, but some did it in secret. Some did it at the price and the possibility of life in prison. The church in China that has suffered tremendous persecution, they have no pastors per se as what what we understand them.

They have no seminaries or Bible schools. They don't have bookstores. They don't have all the other things.

But yet the Chinese church in one generation has increased 7,500 percent. 7,500 percent because something is within them. They can't go to a building or a temple or some big edifice like what we can have in the States.

But you see, there's something inside their hearts that bring them the point of longing to worship so much that they would pay the price with their own blood, that they pay the price with their own being ostracized and and thrown into a prison. In Hebrews, the 10th chapter, it brings out how the the disciples had come to a point of joyfully allowing the confiscation of their goods because they look to a better possession. They look to something more lasting, more enduring.

And so the early church would even allow all that they had to be taken from them in a time of persecution because their love of God was so great, greater than what they own, greater than what they could buy, greater than than anything of this world, because they had a greater desire, greater love, the yearning, the yearning, the fainting for the courts of God. Back in Genesis 15, God reveals himself to Abram and the Lord says to Abram in a such a beautiful little statement. He says, Be not afraid, Abram.

I am your shield and your exceeding great reward. You see, this is what this psalm is all about, is people coming to a place and understanding that God is their exceeding great reward. Church, is that a reality in your life? I mean, we can say the words we can say, oh, I love Jesus.

And and we can say, oh, yes, I've surrendered all to him. And we can make all kinds of bold proclamations. But is our heart really yearning for him? Is our heart really thirsty? Can I say that, Lord, you are my great reward.

You are all if you took everything. If you took everything from me, it would be irrelevant, I would still love you. Is my love contingent upon what I receive from God? Is my love for him and my service to him going to be if my life is all nice and easy and everything just goes the way I want, or is my love for him real and genuine? And it will it will last and endure no matter what I face on this planet.

Where is the depth of my love? Is he my reward or is he my sugar daddy? What is he to me? If he's my sugar daddy, he's he's just the one that I go to because I I want because I I need and I come to him and if I don't get what I want, then I grow angry. How many Christians grow angry at God because they don't get the desires of their heart? They ask and they they don't get the things that they desire. And so there's problems in their life and their struggles.

And and this song deals with it. And we'll look at that in a few minutes. But you see, God wants to bring us to a place in our life where he is our exceeding great reward.

This is the depth of what Christianity is to be about. I mean, there's all kinds of shallow face out there, all kinds of shallow religions, and there are some that are very demanding because they're legalistic and they're bondage. And and there is no joy.

There is no service like Islam has no concept of intimacy with God. It does not exist within the framework of it. All they understand God is as a harsh being.

And maybe they might make heaven their home. And then their concept of heaven is so perverted. It's unbelievable.

It's unbelievable. Their concept of heaven is that if a man goes to heaven, he'll have 70 mansions with 70 bedrooms with 70 virgins in each bedroom. I mean, it's all sexual around the whole thing.

And the same with the Mormons. The Mormons have the same concept of heaven as what Islam does. Only in true Christianity are we called to this place of intimacy with God, that we can know him, that he becomes our exceedingly great reward, not what he can give us.

You see, when we go to heaven and we behold him, it's not going to be streets of gold. We're going to walk on that. It's going to be nothing to us.

We're really not going to care about our mansion. We're not going to care about about the crowns. When you read in Revelation, the elders take their crowns and throw them back at the feet of Jesus, understanding everything that they have done, God accomplished through them, not because of their own abilities, but because of the work of God.

The exceedingly great reward when we walked in pearly gates will be he who sits on the throne, that now we can come before him with no veil between us, that we can come before him and we can behold him and see the beauty of his holiness and the splendor of who he is. Our exceeding great reward. How lovely is your dwelling place? David Brainerd was a man God used to bring revival among the Native Americans in the 1730s.

He prayed it in, but David Brainerd wrote in his diary, he says, when I really enjoy God, I feel my desires of him, the more ravenous and my thirstings after holiness, the more unquenchable. Oh, this pleasing pain. It makes my soul press after God, makes my soul press after God, this pleasing pain, this pain within.

That's not the pain of the world that leaves emptiness and heartache and and can never be satisfied. This pleasing pain that's inside of yearning for God, desiring God, thirsting for God and tasting of him as he satisfies. But yet when he satisfies, there's a greater hunger that rises up.

And so it gets more intense. And so you desire more and it's good. It's clean.

It's pure. It's holy. It's not what the world is and the taintedness of it and the ugliness of it or the perversion of it.

It is purity beyond understanding this thirsting, this yearning after God. The psalmist says, my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. My heart, my flesh.

The serving of God is more than just what we do inside the soul or inside our minds or even inside our hearts is with our flesh. One reason why we have so much problem with our flesh is because our flesh isn't crying out for God. It will cry out for something.

Our flesh will cry out for something. It will cry out through lust. It'll cry out through pride.

It'll cry out through desire. It'll cry out for all kinds of things or it will cry out for God. The psalmist brought out something here that is so important.

He says, my heart and my flesh yearn for you. Is if our heart and our flesh is yearning for God, it will not be yearning for the things of this world. It will not be yearning for the lust of the flesh.

It will not be yearning for pornography or for pride or for possessions. It won't be yearning for those things because the heart is in a different direction. Its attachment is to something that is not of this world.

A love that is pure and holy, not something that is shaken by the kingdoms of men, by time and chance and so on, but something that is eternal and established. He calls us to a love that is better, to something that yearns for Him, for the living God. Something that cannot be shaken if it is truly founded upon Him.

I'd venture to say the majority of us know of Christians or people who were Christians for a time and backslid. But you know, there's absolute security in Christ. There's absolute security.

Nobody has to turn their back on God. Nobody has to backslide. There's that place that we can walk in security and not be afraid of turning back and rejecting Him.

There's that place. Every person that has backslid, it's always a heart issue. It's always that they got their eyes off Jesus, that their flesh and their hearts stopped yearning for God and began yearning for something else.

Every single time. It's never the fault of God's ability to keep us. It is always the fault of a wandering heart and a lusting eye and a lusting flesh.

My heart yearns for you. My flesh cries out for you. 1 Peter 2.11 says, Dear friends, I urge you as aliens and strangers in this world to abstain from sinful desires which war against your soul.

You know, if you feed the lust of your flesh, don't be shocked when the lust of your flesh is running wild. Don't be shocked as if you're feeding it with desire, with wants of this world. Don't be shocked that there's always this yearning that can never be satisfied for worldly things.

As if you're feeding it with pornography, don't be shocked that your lust is going wild. Man, as if you're watching television at times where there's all kinds of immorality in the show and sexual joking, don't be shocked that lust is a plague to your life. Because you're feeding it.

You're feeding the flesh. You're feeding something in you. We are told that if we live as aliens in this world, that we will abstain from those sinful desires that war against us.

That war against us. Because if we feed those things, it's going to keep wanting more and more as this ravenous beast inside that can never be satisfied. Wanting, craving more.

Is there ever enough lust that can satisfy the lust of man? Can a man ever be proud enough? Where is it ever satisfied? Proverbs brings it out. It says, Can a man take fire in his bosom and not get burnt? Can a fire itself ever be quenched? Does a fire ever say, I've had enough wood. I've had enough.

It's never satisfied. If we keep feeding it, there'll be that eating away of our souls. Jesus brought it out in a different way.

In Matthew 6, 19 through 21, He says, Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and thieves break through and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where moth and rust do not destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is there

will your heart be also.

That's not an issue in and of itself whether we have houses or cars. The issue is where our treasure is, where our heart is. Where our love is.

The desire to have more. It's kind of like what the computer industry does to Americans. They're constantly bringing out newer and faster computers.

And if you have a computer that's six months old, are you really satisfied with it? And they're always telling you, you've got to have something faster. And so there's this thing inside of you going, I need something quicker. I need something faster.

I need something more powerful. It's this ever, just in a simple way of the computer industry, this ever desire that they keep calling, they keep drawing you. It's not just time and chance.

It's just not technology that's advancing. It is a purposeful marketing thing and trying to draw people into it. Because it deals with the character of man, with the desires of man, with the yearning, the lustings of men.

We have to have a love that is greater. And you know, that's a hard place to come into a country that has so much and to come to a place where Paul says, I know how to abound and how to be at ease. I know how to be content in everything.

It's hard to be content when you see people always driving better cars than you or having bigger houses or more stuff. Last week we were in Wisconsin. We had the chance to witness to this man and that was from Russia.

And I don't know his whole story. We didn't get that far. Somehow he had gotten out of Russia while Russia was still under the communist regime.

And this man was filled with such bitterness, such anger. He had such anger at the communist government but not because of communism. He was a communist.

He believed in communism. But he believed that the communist government never went far enough. And so his anger was that there were those in the communist government who had and then everybody else was left without.

And so he comes to America fleeing it because communism was such a disaster. It never happened because it was never taken far enough. So he comes into America and then he had dreams of what he could get.

And then now he's all filled with bitterness in a whole another way. Just a man filled with disappointment because he looked to one thing to satisfy and then another thing. He goes from one country to another hoping that the answer would be in America.

And he's still angry inside. He was at a point of such despair. He says, I just want to stop living.

I want all of humanity to stop living. If he had a button that he could destroy all of humanity I believe he wouldn't have thought twice about it. Ravi Zacharias went and said it's not poverty that brings people to a place of hopelessness.

He says it's actually what takes place in America because we have such super abundance. And when we taste of all the stuff and all the dreams, all the wants, all the desires and we say, I'll be happy when, I'll be happy when and whatever we get, we lay our hands on we're not happy then it brings us to a point of hopelessness. That's why the highest suicide rate in the nation is among doctors.

And the second highest suicide rate is among attorneys. People who reach the pinnacle of supposed success find it empty at the end. And here you find the remedy where Jesus tells us there are treasures that are better.

Treasures that are better. I mean, we need cars, we need houses, we need to take care of the basic necessities of life. Those are things that God has no problem with.

But where is our heart? Where is the yearning of our desire? If it was all taken, what would the response be of our lives? I'm not going to say if everything I had was taken that it wouldn't hurt. But would my Christianity be upset? Would I shake a fist at God and say, Why God? I'm just trying to serve you. Why is this bad stuff happening to me? Or would I draw near to Him and say, The remedy is Him.

Not my possessions, not what I own, not my job, not anything in this world, but He is the prize. Count Zinzendorf, a man that God used for the Moravian revival, and I won't go through into the history of it, but what defined this man, what made the man, the man of God that he was, was a simple statement that defined his life. He says, I have only one passion.

It is Jesus. Jesus only. And the testimony of this man was that he's a rich young ruler who said yes.

In scripture you have the rich young ruler who came to Jesus and he said no. When Jesus said, Sell all that you have and come follow me, he said no. And he walked away from Christ.

Here was one of the men most destined to be one of the most powerful men in all of Europe. And instead he becomes a pastor to a people that were persecuted and comes to his lands and he pastors these people that are from other parts of the world and have other ideas and so on. Then he pastors them and sees revival break out.

Because he had one passion. One passion that moved him. You see, he was not for sale.

Are we for sale? Are we for sale? That's something we really got to ask ourselves. Are we for sale? Is there pain enough in our life that finally we would give up on Christ to get rid of the pain? Job went through some pain in his life and his wife came to him and says, Well, Job, just curse God and die. I mean, could there be pain so bad in your life that you'd give up on God that you'd walk away from? Or would somebody, if they came and offered you 5 billion or 20 billion or 50 billion dollars, whatever number there could be upon it, would you give up your Christianity for that? How about a relationship? Maybe you've had nothing but miserable relationships in your life and somebody comes along your path and goes to offer you what you think to be the real thing finally.

Are you for sale? Is there a price on your Christianity that you would give it up? Zinzendorf said, I only have one passion. That's what defined the man. The psalmist then brings out this beautiful little illustration about the sparrows and the swallows going and making their nests in the temple.

This is what he's referring to. He says, these little birds get to go into the holy places that man isn't allowed to. And they make their home there.

And they have their little babies there. And they live in this peace and tranquility because there are no predators to take them in the presence of God there in the temple area. There are no predators, no birds that is going to take them or no animals that would take them away.

They live in security. And the yearning of this man says, Oh, how I wish I could walk in such a place of intimacy with you. To dwell at your altar, to worship and adore you in this continual, perpetual way.

It's a statement of desire of a man yearning to be with his God, yearning to walk with him in intimacy. That he would even envy the birds that could dwell in the house of God. Now comes the second section.

And this is a right response to God. And let's look at this. In the fifth verse it says, Blessed are those whose strength is in you who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.

As they pass through the valley of Baca, they make it a place of springs. The autumn rains also cover it with pools. They go from strength to strength till each appears before God in Zion.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, God Almighty. Listen to me, O God of Jacob. And this is really where I'm wanting to go and this is what I'm really wanting to deal with.

Is this section of scripture right here. He says, Blessed are those whose strength is in you who have set their hearts on pilgrimage. That's a very obscure sentence there.

Who have set their hearts on pilgrimage. There is no exact translation for it. It's a very difficult term.

And so when you go to different translations and you look at them, they'll give some different ideas. The King James says, In whose heart are the ways of them. In whose hearts are the ways of them.

That's kind of a weird saying, isn't it? In whose heart are the ways of them. But the idea is not even of pilgrimage. Pilgrimage has a concept of this short term thing.

We're going to go on a pilgrimage. We're going to go to this place. You know, whether you go to Jerusalem or whatever.

And you're going to go on a pilgrimage. And when you're done with your pilgrimage over there, you'll come back and your pilgrimage will be over. It's not a temporary thing.

And so pilgrimage isn't even the right word that they're using here. It's the concept of a highway. It says that their heart is on a highway to God.

It is more of the concept of a sojourner. I passed it for a time, a Romanian congregation. But let's just say there's this Romanian and he wants desperately to come to America.

He wants desperately. He's doing everything he can inside because he has this other land he wants to go to. This land of plenty that he believes it will be.

And when he starts doing that, everything he does, he's looking to another country. Everything in his life is looking to another place. He has to go to work, but every penny he has, he's saving so he might be able to get himself free and out of that country.

Everything he does, he's not living like everybody else because he has his eyes on another destination, another place. So he lives different. He acts different.

He talks different. He saves money in a different way because his purposes are different. He'll go without because of a desire.

He's a sojourner. He's on a pilgrimage. You see, this gives us the idea of a lifetime pursuit.

Not a one-time emphasis, but a lifetime pursuit. And the emphasis is not on the travel, but on the residency. The emphasis is that we are now citizens of heaven and we are on a journey and that our loyalty is not to a nation, is not to a people.

Our greatest loyalty is to God Himself. We ought to have a right loyalty to a nation, a family and so on. There's that right place and right order.

But our true citizenship is not as Americans. Our true citizenship is citizens of heaven and that is what I look for and that's what I yearn for and that's what I desire and that is where my goal is. And so everything in my life points to one thing.

Points to one thing. Everything. My money points to one thing.

My time points to one thing. Everything. And what happens so often in American Christianity is that Jesus is a dimension of our life rather than being our life.

And what becomes so important with this is He refers to our citizenship, to the aspect of having this one focus to set our eyes on something greater than this world. Jesus went and said, if your eye is single, then your whole body will be full of light. If your eye has one focus, but if our eye is duplicitous, looking on multiple things, how can we be loyal to anything? Paul brought it out.

He says, you cannot eat at the table of Christ and at the table of devils also. You cannot. He says, you cannot serve two gods.

And in that situation, he says, you can't serve God and money. You cannot serve two gods. You will cling to one and reject the other.

And what will always happen is we will, if we put God and money in that place, we will always lean to the money because it ultimately becomes a heart issue. He brings out, he says, blessed are those whose strength is in you. And what does he say that happens to that strength? What does that strength do? It puts them on a pilgrimage.

It puts them on a journey. You see, those who find themselves strong in Christ, it's not because of seniority. It's not because they've been saved X amount of years.

I mean, across this country, I can be at churches and there can be people that have been in the church for 50 years and be as worldly as can be. And you have this newborn babe in Christ that is more spiritual than somebody that's been saved that long because it's the state of the heart. It's the yearning after God.

It's the desiring of God. And here you have a situation that their strength, their strength in God brings them to a point to live as an alien. Their strength in God brings them to the point that they have a love greater.

Do you know this world is ever tugging and pulling on us? Ever tugging and pulling. I mean, pulling at us from a hundred different ways. Young people get it constantly.

Young people get it from media. They get it from music. They get it from school.

They get it from friends. I mean, this pull to be worldly. This pull to act like the world, to dress like the world, to talk like the world.

This constant pulling and tugging upon them. We have that same thing as adults. We've got a world tugging and pulling on us.

Just like I said with advertisements. They go to you and they say, you deserve a new Ford today because they know you believe it. There's this thing that says, this is what it means to be successful.

I mean, in the workplace it's given. Family can do that. I get together with my dad and my dad speaks of one of his stepchildren and boasts of how much money they got and all the gas stations they own and the big huge yacht that they have and that's success.

And we can have that flooded at us as individuals and it can affect our Christianity. But when we grow strong, nothing's going to stop us from a pilgrimage. Turn with me for a moment.

We're going to turn back to Psalms 84. Turn with me to Hebrews 11. I want to take a moment and look at Abram.

Hebrews, the 11th chapter and the 8th verse. This is, By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive, as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land, like a stranger in a foreign country.

He lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same possession. For he was looking forward to a city whose foundations, whose architect and builder was God. God went to Abraham and says, Leave your family.

His dad was an idolater. His family were idolaters. They all had their whole bunch of gods that they worshipped on a regular basis.

And God speaks to Abram and says, There's one God. It's me. Leave everything and follow me.

That's a ridiculous thought. Ridiculous because in that day and age everything was your family. In America the family is broke down and we can be all over the nation and so distant and see each other only once in a while.

But in that day and age, family was everything. I mean, that was your livelihood. That was your ability to survive.

That was where you'd be able to protect each other if war broke out. And for Abram to leave the protection of his family was to go into a place of disaster. A place that could spell, sure, death for everyone.

But yet he heard the voice of God and he was willing to leave it all because the voice of God spoke and says, I have a better place for you. I have a better place. You know, that's what it is with Jesus.

Sometimes our Christianity has been twisted from a concept that says, Come to Jesus because He'll make your life better. And you know He will make your life better. I won't say no.

But there's still pain and we're going to look at that in just a couple of minutes. There's still sorrow. There's still agony.

There's still problems that happen in this world whether we're Christian or not. And if we look to come to Jesus just because He'll make our life better, sometimes it doesn't happen like that for a time. Sometimes it can be difficult.

And if it becomes difficult and we say, Jesus, I came to you just so you could make my life all better. And if I look for everything just in the temporal, the temporal is not always going to give me what I want. It's not a safe world we live in.

And it doesn't always deal out safe things. And I have to have my eyes on something greater, something more permanent. C.S. Lewis referred to this earth as we are just living in shadow lands.

This is the shadows of the real world. Shadows of what real life is. We're just living in the shadows of it.

The things that go on are not the real world. The real world we will know when we die. And we enter into its presence.

Then we'll be in the real world. What we were really made for. This is just shadows.

And the problem is we can cling to the shadows. We can think the shadows are real. That they have more substance.

But yet it is heaven and it is the God of heaven that is the real substance. This is just shadows, just passing. This will all pass away.

One day God will speak a word and all of heaven and earth will be rolled up as a scroll. It'll be burned by fire. And then He'll speak another word and it'll all be recreated in a new heaven and a new earth.

It's just temporary. But there is that which is lasting, which is eternal. That's what Abram was looking for.

Something more stable. Because life is not always stable. Life is not always easy.

I remember what it was as a young person before I became a Christian. I felt the instability of the world. I felt it shifting under my feet.

I didn't know how to handle it. I didn't know how to deal with it. I didn't know how to deal with the pain of a family wrought by sin and all the junk that went on with it.

I didn't know how to cope with those things. And so I went into drugs and I went into other things and I'd go into my room and I'd turn my music up as loud as I could just to drown out the pain of the world because I did not know how to cope. I felt the instability of a world that is ever changing and who had no idea how to control it and how to deal with it.

And then the Lord broke in my life and brought a stability that was not from this world. That wasn't part of this life. It wasn't contingent on this life.

And if I make my Christianity contingent upon this life, I will sure fail. My Christianity must be founded on something more sure, more real. In the 13th verse of that same chapter, it says, All these people were still living by faith when they died.

They did not receive the things promised. They only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth.

People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, then they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country, a heavenly one.

Wherefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. You know, when Abram left, he was not looking to go back. He put himself on a journey that was a one-way trip.

That was it. There was no looking back. There was not even an option.

Saints, I want to ask you, are you on a one-way trip? Is your Christianity only upon whether everything goes right in your life and everything goes easy? Let me give you just the harsh realities. As you grow older, you will know more and more people that die. Your family members will start to die on you.

And it's going to hurt. There's going to be loss. There's going to be things suffered as a result of it.

I mean, I believe absolutely in divine healing. And then sometimes we get sick and I don't understand why we're not healed. And so here we can try and serve God.

And everything goes wrong. Everything falls apart. Where's my Christianity? Jesus in His high priestly prayer of John 17 says, My prayer is not that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the evil one.

They are not of the world even as I am not of the world. Jesus came into this world with one single focus. One single purpose.

From the moment He was conceived, He had an agenda and He did not have His eyes on this planet. He had His eyes on the Father. And He knew, says, I've come here to rescue humanity, to purchase them with my own blood, to bring redemption to them, and I'm going back to the Father.

He came with an agenda. He could not be deterred when the devil tried to bring temptation. He could not be deterred when no matter what happened, pain, suffering, nothing could keep Him from it.

In the garden when He sweat drops of blood and He wept, He could not be deterred. There was none that keep Him from it because He had a single focus, a single desire. And then He says, My prayer is not that you take the Christian out of the world.

That's not what He wants to do. He wants to make us triumphant through it. How often it is that Christians... I was just ministering to a believer in the last couple of weeks that was just distraught over the trouble that they were having in their life.

And their concept was that, Well, I came to Jesus and why is all these bad things happening? That's some poor theology. As if God is more concerned with our happiness. He's not going to make all the bad things disappear.

What He will do is make us to triumph over them. And that's the whole thing. In the world we escape.

In the world we go to drugs or we go to money or we go to sex or we go to one thing or another. Or we live in a fantasy world of television. To escape rather than to cope with it and deal with it.

We so often don't overcome because we blame everybody. That's all secular psychology does. Even when it's Christianized.

It blames everybody. Well, I'm like this because my father was like that. Or because this person... Or my marriage is a piss because my wife or my husband.

Rather than coming to the point and dealing with us. You see, that is the whole point of Christianity that God deals with the individual and makes the individual triumphant. But they do that because they have another home.

Another home. I want to take just a minute and contrast worldliness with living as a resident alien. Living as an alien in this world.

And you know, like I said as I pass it for a time, Romanians, and they smell different. They think different. They talk different.

They act different. Everything's different about them. The Romanians, if they go to Wal-Mart, you know they're from another world.

You know it. I mean, when we would go to restaurants, we had to go to restaurants that only had pictures on their menus because they didn't know how to read it. So they'd say, I want that or I want that.

And it didn't take long for the waitress to know these are foreigners. But are we like that? Can the world look at us and say, you're not of this world. Where are you from? Where are you from? Why are you so different? Why do you talk different? Why do you act different? Why aren't you like me? Why aren't you like me? Why don't you chase after things I chase after? Why don't you love the things I love? What makes you so different? And you see, our life should be so radically different.

So separate from what the world is. Not separated from the world. We are to reach out to a perishing world.

We're to live in the midst of them. But while we live in the midst of them, to be totally different. To be Christ's precious possession.

To have our eyes in a different world. Not upon what we own. Not upon the possessions or people or anything else.

To have our eyes on something greater. And they should be able to watch us suffer. And see us different than what they are.

They should be able to look at it. Says, yes, you're hurting. How are you dealing with that? How is it you're going through that pain like that? I couldn't.

When I went through something, man, it devastated me. Why are you different? That our whole life should manifest it. 2 Timothy 3 speaks of the state of our world.

Says, people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. Having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with that.

Spurgeon made a statement, he says, I believe that one reason why the church of God at this present moment has so little influence over the world is because the world has so much influence over the church. We don't have a voice. The world does not listen to the church anymore.

We've lost our voice to immorality and to compromise and being like them. And they will not listen to us until we are not like them. And it doesn't mean that we go in some cloistered community and drive horses and buggies and have no electricity and talk to nobody outside of our community.

That's not what it means. It means that we are in reality a people that is on a journey and nothing can take us off that journey. If somebody were running here with gunpoint, they couldn't take us off that journey.

Nothing could take us off that journey. We are on it. There's no devil, no person, no terror, no disaster, no good thing, no blessing, no nothing that could take us off that journey.

We have our eyes fixed on it and that is what we live for. For the prize. And that prize is Christ.

2 Timothy 4.10 says, Demas, because he loved the world, has deserted me. You see, saints, this love of the world is a very scary thing. In 1 John, I believe it is, we're told that if we love the world, the love of the Father is not in us.

It's a very scary thing because it grabs hold of us. If our love is not all-consuming for Christ, our love will be for other things. And there is this thing that happens as we love other things that it draws and it pulls us and we look to them for purpose and meaning.

But when they don't meet what we want, then we grow angry. We get this anger in us because we've been hurt because we expected somebody to make us happy and they didn't make us happy. Or somebody took from us and we thought we should have that and they took something important from me.

And so we grow angry. And you know what happens when we grow angry? We grow angry at God. And I have seen it many times where people's anger at God has been so great that they turn from God because they blamed Him.

All this pain, all this bad stuff is happening to me. Why? Do you know God does not want us to live like the world. You cannot live like the world.

If you're going to be the real thing, if you're going to be a real Christian, you can't live like the world. You can't talk like the world. You can't walk like the world.

You can't dress like the world. You can't watch what the world watches on television. And you can't watch the same shows and the movies that they watch.

You can't be what they are. Because if you are what they are, then you are not maybe where you should be in Christ. Or let me say you're not where you should be in Christ.

And then you may not be with Christ. That becomes a terrifying reality because we cannot be like them. And not just that, that is why would I as a Christian want to be like the world? Why would I want the loves that cause such pain and sorrow? Why would I want to mimic them in any way, shape or form? Why would I want that? When there's something better that is offered me.

Something better that I can lay hold of. Now they bring out a situation here. He says, as they pass through the valley of Baca.

The valley of Baca, Baca just means tears, through the valley of tears. And I want you to understand the image that is being presented here says that we are pilgrims, we are sojourners, we are on this journey. A journey that we are not going to get off of.

And in that journey, you have your mountain tops, you have the wonders, the beauty, and the vistas that you look at and you just say, Whoa, it's just beautiful. God, what a wonderful creator. And then we go through a valley and through the swamps or through the deserts and through the agony and we go through valleys of tears.

They are not permanent places, they are seasons in life. Just seasons in life. But you know what happens time and again, we get in that season of sorrow and pain and struggle.

And we become hopeless so often because we take our eyes off of Christ or we think it's going to last longer than what it is. We go through valleys. Every person that lives goes through valleys whether they are Christian or not.

They go through their Bacas. They go through their valley of tears. The world has no comforter.

If you are not a Christian, you have no comforter. I witnessed this one girl up in Wisconsin. Sixteen year old rebellious girl.

I asked her where she went to church and she says, Well, I go to the Pentecostal church down the road. I asked her, I said, What do you think of it? She says, It's boring. And so I apologized to her.

I said, I'm sorry. That's our fault, not God's. God's not boring.

It's a shame that we make him to seem boring. He's the most exciting being that there is. And I know she'd been witnessed to many times so I approached things from a very different standpoint.

I went to her and I asked her a question that she didn't know how to respond. And I says, Who do you weep to? She says, I know you weep. I know you hurt.

Who do you cry to at night? All you got is your pillow, right? That's all she had. Nothing but her pillow. Because there was pain, she went through the valley of tears.

Her valley of tears was a long valley, man. She went through a lot of hurts. She didn't see any hope before because she had no hope because she didn't have Christ.

And so the sorrow in her life was tremendous because she saw no remedy. She saw no way out. And so I told her about a Jesus who cares about her tears.

And that he will walk with us through that valley of tears. Only through Christianity, only through Christianity is there purpose in suffering. Anything else in life, there is no purpose.

I mean, if you're a hedonist and hedonism is a pursuit of pleasure, if you're a hedonist, any pain is against your philosophy of life. Any struggle, anything that robs you of your pursuit of pleasure is not good. And that's the way it is with every religion in one way or the other.

Pain and suffering has no rhyme or reason apart from true Christianity. Pain came into the world because of sin. It is the sin of people, whether our sin that I inflict pain upon myself or the sin of others that inflict it upon me or a fallen world that has all kinds of problems.

One way or the other, as we go through that valley of pain, and only through Christ is there an answer. And what that answer is, is that God will take the pain and transform me through it. To the world, it's just an inconvenience.

It's just a problem. And their concept is, well, I'll overcome. What will they overcome for? What is it to make them overcome? Just the desire of self-preservation.

But for us, there's a whole different thing. We overcome because He's given us purpose. He's given us life.

We want to be triumphant. Whether it's through pain or suffering, we will overcome. When you go through Hebrews 11, a little further down, it speaks of all these great saints in Scripture in the Old Testament.

And it says, some were victorious through armies and so on. Others were victorious through the midst of suffering and pain. And then it says, the world was not worthy of them.

They were all triumphant because through the midst of it, whether through battles and victorious, or whether through defeat, seeming defeat, and torture or persecution or whatever, they would not be deterred from their relationship with God. They were aliens in this world. They were not for sale.

They were not for sale. There was nothing that could separate them because they were determined to walk with their God. Our suffering will either draw us near to God or drive us away from Him.

That Russian man I was talking about, the pain in that man's life made him angry, wrathful at God. I mean, he blamed God for everything. He says, if you're God, He must be a sadistic God if He is God at all.

And I says, well, if He is that, then He must be the devil. He says, exactly. I mean, he was raging because pain in his life.

And he wanted to blame somebody. And he wouldn't accept blame for himself. So I tried to put the blame on him and showed him the sorrow in his life was from his sin, not just the sins of others.

And that didn't make him very happy. But it was necessary. It was necessary.

They pass through the Valley of Baka, the Valley of Tears. Do you know, sometimes as Christians, we go through that valley and we make that valley very long and it doesn't have to be. We make a very painful valley because we don't put our eyes where it should be.

Because we have wrong conceptions of God and what God wants to do. Wrong conceptions of life. That life is for ease and happiness.

And life is ultimately for service to God, whether it's easy or whether it's tough. How often people don't serve in ministry because they say it's inconvenience. It's a difficulty.

And what does that have to do with it? But you see, if we're on a journey, we understand that part of that journey is to grab every person we can to bring on that journey. In Ezekiel, it speaks of a highway of holiness. This highway of holiness.

And it says only the saints can walk there. It says no ungodly thing, no impure thing, no animal can walk in that highway. Only those who are His, only those who are child of the King can walk on that highway.

And that's what it is. We're on a journey. We're passing through all the death that's all around us.

A world dying and trespasses it. And we're walking through on this road that is to heaven. And we are to all along the way be grabbing everyone we can and pulling them up to try and get them on that highway of holiness so they themselves would be on that journey.

And that is one of the purposes of victory. Overcoming in the midst of it. They make the places springs.

They make the places springs. The autumn rains also cover it with pools. You see, here's this valley, this place of dryness and barrenness.

And so they go in and they start digging for wells. They start saying, we must have water. And they start digging and through their desire they start digging deep so that things might happen.

As Christians, so often we wait and we wait rather than digging and pursuing and desiring and yearning for God. Well, if He just wants to draw near, I guess He just better show up. And He told us, He promised us, He says, if you seek Me with all your heart, I will be found.

The digging that's necessary, especially through those valleys. Especially those valleys. How many times have you come home from work and you've been stressed to pieces and all you've done is you sat in front of the television and you vegged out.

Because you were stressed to pieces and you were hurting. Well, you want the pool, you gotta go and dig it out and it's not always fun, it's not always easy. But that's the place where there's refreshing.

That's the place where there's life. And there's something about a pilgrim that he says, if I don't get water, I'm gonna die. I'm on this journey, if I don't get water, I will die of thirst.

And so they go and they start digging, though it's hard. Sometimes life is hard and so you must dig, you must say, God, I must have You and I will give no rest until I get You. Until I touch You.

But you know, equally as much, I found something in my life that some of the sweetest times I've ever had with God have been those times of pain. And I sat at His feet and I wept, and I wept and made a pool. And then I felt His arms wrap around me and love me in the midst of it.

He did not make the pain disappear because so often the pain was my fault. Lack of faith, lack of trust, something out of whack in my life, His embrace of me was not the sanctioning of my wrongs, but was the

hope to get rid of that. The hope to overcome that.

Isaiah 57, 15 says, This is what the high and lofty One says, He who lives forever, whose name is holy. This is astounding. I know you know this verse.

I live in a high and holy place, but also with Him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite. Pain and suffering, like I said, will either draw us near to God or it will make us harder. And I heard this phrase a long time ago, especially from being from the Motor City.

It says, You can't sing the blues till you have them. You know, and that's just the way it is. How can you relate to a hurting world if you don't remember your hurt and understand it rightly and allow God to be the healer of it? So many times Christians are reaching out to a perishing world because they forget the hurt.

They forget what it was to be in the world. They forget the loneliness. They forget the sorrow of sin and all the weight upon them.

They forget. They get in a comfortable lifestyle. And because they forget what it was, they become uncompassionate.

There's something about understanding pain. He takes us through pain that we might be relevant to those who are hurting. The pain you've gone through, if you allow Christ to use it rightly, can make you passionate for God and passionate for hurting people.

It can make something inside of you so deep that says, God, please, let me talk to those who are hurting. God, I remember what the hurt is. There's purpose in the suffering.

There's purpose in it. Smith Wigglesworth, a man that was mightily used of God for healing and revivals. One account I've read recently of a revival that broke out with him is he was in Sweden.

While he was in Sweden, he was just exhausted from meetings and he just gets into the area. It was morning and his first service wasn't until like five or six at night. So he asked the guy that was doing the translation, he says, do you mind if we eat breakfast and then just go to the seaside so I can get some rest and relax and pray and that.

And so they ate and went to the seaside and probably about 4.30, they get back and when he goes back to where he was staying, the streets are packed with people. They're everywhere. They're just everywhere.

I mean, jam-packed in there. People are in wheelbarrows and carts and in cars and trucks and all kinds of things and by the time he gets to the house, the house is packed full and they were all waiting for him. And so he started going through, laying hands on them, praying them and seeing the sick rise up and walk and run.

Seeing deliverance from demonic spirits. Revival broke out. By the time he got to the church that night, they couldn't even contain it.

The police could not contain the crowds. And what made the man the man was he made this statement. He says, you cannot talk about things you have never experienced.

You cannot take a people into the depths of God unless you have been broken yourself. I have been broken and broken and broken. Praise God.

For the Lord is near those who have a broken heart. You must have brokenness to get into the depths of God. There's something about our pain and the struggles and sorrows of life that will either drive us to God and we will yearn and we will thirst for Him or we will strive to be more self-sufficient.

What will we do? Will we draw near to Him? The valley of tears is going to be there whether you like it or not. It's going to be reality. This is going to be struggles.

You're going to draw near. You're going to get more desperate. You're going to dig the well so that you have water or you're just going to run.

You're going to allow the pain to get in the way. What will you do? And then this little statement, he says, they go from strength to strength till each appears before God. And it's just the concept of constant growth.

God has not called us to stagnation. Saints, He's called you to grow. You should be more spiritual today than what you were a year ago.

If you're not, something's wrong with your version of Christianity. You should be more desperate for Him than what you were a year ago. Your prayer should be more intense than what it was a year ago.

You should be maturing. You should be more effective in your Christianity in touching a perishing world than you were a year ago. If not, there's something wrong because He takes us from strength to strength.

The New Testament version of it is from glory to glory. The ever maturing that God does in our lives. William Booth, the founder of Salvation Army, says, if there's anything of power in my ministry today, it's because God has all the adoration of my heart, all the power of my will, and all the influence of my life.

William Booth became a man that God mightily used, not because he was wise, though he was a wonderful preacher. Not because he had ability, though he did have ability, but because he became a man desperate for his God. And God took him through a path of pain and brought him to a place of brokenness so that he would walk along and he'd see the bruised and the broken and he would hurt.

As a preacher, he was rejected by mainline churches because his passion was so great for the lost. He'd take him into their churches and they wouldn't want him. They'd go and put him off on his side for the poor people.

And you know what they did for the poor people in those days? They cut him off so the regular people couldn't even see him. So the preacher couldn't even see him. They'd put a partition up and they'd have to sit behind the partition.

And William Booth would take the worst of the worst as he'd take him and he'd march him right down the front aisles. It wasn't very popular because that's where they needed to be. Let's look at the final section of this psalm.

Look upon our shield, O God. Look with favor on your anointed one. That's verse 9. Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere.

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked. For the Lord is a sun and a shield. The Lord bestows favor and honor.

No good thing does he withhold from those who walk blameless. O Lord Almighty, blessed is the man who trusts in you. For the Lord is a sun and shield.

Bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk blameless. He's a sun and shield.

He's a sun, the warmth to life, that which gives life and vibrancy and vitality. He's a shield, a defense in the midst of pain and war and struggles and trials of life. He is ever what we need.

He will be what we exactly need whether deliver or comfort or whatever. He will be what we need. Always just what we need.

But he brings out a point here. He says, you withhold no good thing from those who walk blameless. And I just want to touch a brief moment before I move on and close is the concept of good.

We have a problem with good. What do we think of good? If God is good to me, he gives me what I want. But God doesn't work like that.

It's not the aspect of what he can give you. It's what he can make you to be. God is good sometimes to take you through a fire, through the valley of Baca, that he might make you the man or woman of God he wants you to be.

He was good to take you and allow you to go through pain in your life before you came to Christ so you might come to him. If everything would have went well in my life, I wouldn't have come to Christ. He was good to take me through that valley of Baca.

He was good to do it that he might bring me to Christ. And he's good to do it now. The worst thing I ever went through in my life as a Christian was the last church I pastored.

It was a nightmare church. It was a church with the sheep had teeth. And if any of you sheep have teeth, you need to get them pulled.

And you know who was on the meal? They loved roast pastor. Rump roast especially. And you know, it was hard.

But it was good. It was necessary. And God used it for the breaking of me and to bring me to a place to see how needy I really was.

How needy I really was. You know, we fight against that, that neediness. Man, we want to think ourselves so able that we can do it.

And you know, it's not in our abilities that God draws near. It's in our neediness that he draws near. In that place to see, God, I don't want to go on without you.

And that's where this cry comes out. Better is one day in your courts than a thousand common days. I'd rather be with you than to have a thousand common days fishing, a thousand common days golfing, a thousand common days shopping, a thousand common days in Hawaii or whatever the common days

might be.

Not that those things in and of themselves are wrong. But there's this yearning that will say everything will go, God. It doesn't matter.

It doesn't matter. That he could go to us and like the rich young ruler and say, say one thing you lack, sell everything you have and come follow me. And we would say, Lord, it'd be hard.

But for you, I'll do it. Lord, I'll be scared because I don't know what that means. But I'll do it.

You see, that place of abandonment, that place where we have so fallen in love with him that we're not for sale. And he calls us and we say yes. I'm not going to lie to you and tell you that it's easier and that surrender is this simple thing.

It can be a difficult, it can be a battle sometimes inside. We can feel, I know you felt the tension at times where God's asking you to surrender and inside you're going I mean the struggle that goes on. It might hurt sometimes but when it's done, when it's accomplished, you have the benefit, the joy, the beauty of that surrender, the beauty of that abandonment to Christ.

David made a statement in Psalms 63 and I'll just read this to you. When he went through the desert of Judah, when he went through his valley of Baca, he says, Oh God, you are my God. Earnestly I seek you.

My soul thirsts for you. My body longs for you in a dry and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory because your love is better than life.

My lips will glorify you because your love is better than life. I have seen you, God. I've seen you and to see you makes everything else just seem as rubbish.

It says nothing compared to the excellency of knowing Christ Jesus. Jim Cimbala, pastor in New York, says, I discovered an astonishing truth God is attracted to weakness. He can't resist those who humbly and honestly admit how desperately they need him.

David was a man after God's own heart not because he was a king, not because he was wise or he was a soldier and had ability but because he says your love is better than life. He lived it. He lived it.

It was a real thing in his life. It just wasn't words. It just wasn't songs he sung It's what defined his very existence.

I just want to close with this final statement and the last verse is as blessed as the man who trusts in you. 1 Peter 1.17 Since you call on the Father who judges each man work impartially live your lives as strangers here in Reverend Fear because you will stand before God each of us will stand before God live your life as strangers in this world. That's what Peter told us.

Live your life as strangers in this world. It can be hard young people it can be hard.

You go to live as a stranger in this world and you feel out of place in school you feel people looking at you you're afraid of what they're saying and maybe they will say something I don't know but you can feel the pressure of it and if you give in to the pressure then you'll be like them you'll act like them you'll do what they do I'm not going to tell you to live in this world as a stranger it's going to be a hard thing he never said it would be easy he gave us promises because they hated me they will hate you he didn't whitewash he

didn't make it something that made it all flowery he gave a reality when he spoke of the truth of the kingdom of God and what it would be in this world he gave us the real thing he said there will be the joy and I will give you my joy I'll give you my peace

but there will be sorrow in this world and they will hate you at times other times they will love you and they'll run to you because you have the truth other times you'll have to flee from the city and shake the dust off your feet it's a reality that we face but are we on a journey have we put ourselves on that journey are we so determined to walk that journey that no devil no person no nothing could take us from it anybody in this room that's not a Christian if you're not a Christian you've not gotten on the journey you're not on the path you've not gotten on that highway of holiness yet you don't know him you may be a religious person and religion doesn't mean you have a relationship with God you could be a religious person and go through the motions and know basic things and never have

a relationship with God through this psalm that we looked at is that where your life is have you come to a point where you yearn better is one day with you oh God than a thousand common days have you come to a point to know love that is so pure so beautiful so overwhelming Christ gave us this one commandment that is so wonderful he says love the Lord your God with all of your heart mind soul and strength he didn't give us a command that says swim the deepest ocean and climb the highest mountain and then you can go to heaven he says love me with everything you have and why do we fight that one day why do we fight that one command that's what he calls you to if you don't know Jesus the call that he's given you he's saying love me with everything you have and I'm not going to tell you that's

halfway that is everything that's you surrendering your life to him and you may not understand what that means but it's not a command that is vicious it's not an ugly command it's not a command to make you weird or strange it is the most beautiful command that you can understand it is what salvation is all about come and know your God love him with everything you have and let it be proved and manifested through your life if you love him with everything you have I guarantee you you'll learn how to love others in your life the problem you have of loving others is that you've not learned how to love God which teaches us how to love he who knows how to love is able to teach frail people how to do it he's able to rescue us from our selfishness that breaks down relationships but we have to go

on that journey there's no other way there's not another way you can't get around it you can't go and say can I somewhat be a Christian occasionally maybe Lord you see you get on that highway and you've got to say God I'll die on this journey I got my eyes fixed on one place God if I lose everything I don't care what it is if I go through pain if I go through joy if I go through success or I go through sorrow God it's irrelevant I'm on this path and there's no devil that can take me no person no nothing if you don't have that there'll be some pain in your life you're gonna have it one way or the other but if you don't have that determination if you haven't fallen in love with him and understood that he is better than all the common days you could ever have if you don't have that you may

walk away one day because your love doesn't have depth sorrow may happen in your life what you can't handle but you see there's a God when we abandon ourselves to him that says he will be there every step of the way he will be there through our valley of baka he will be our comforter he will be the one even at times when we are so weak that he'll pick us up and he'll sustain us and walk through that valley carrying us that we might get to the other side he promised us he'd never leave us or forsake us in the worst of times or in the best of times if we're on that journey he will be there he has promised it and he will never abandon he is true because he's calling us that place

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