

Deuteronomy 30:6

by Kevin Turner

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the Bible as the inspired word of God, which is reliable and life-changing, and encourages listeners to submit to the lordship of Christ and have their hearts purified by faith.

Duration: 1:06:19

Scripture: Deuteronomy 30:6, Matthew 11:28-30, Matthew 22:37-39, Acts 2:1-4, Ephesians 3:20

Topics: "Sacrificial Love", "Righteous Living"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of spending time with God and loving Him above all else. He encourages listeners to focus on their relationship with God rather than on their actions or achievements. The speaker also highlights the significance of sacrificial love, where one willingly gives up everything for the sake of God's kingdom. He concludes by reminding the audience of the holiness of God and the righteousness they have through Christ. The sermon encourages believers to understand and apply the teachings of the Bible in their lives.

Transcript

great man of God, and how he had made this verse his prayer. And every day he would pray this. And when I heard that, I started to pray it as well.

And it was probably about, I want to say, five or six years that I prayed this verse. And one day, only as God can do it, he took me from that verse to another one, from the Old Testament to the New, that were literally interlinked. It was almost like he started that sentence in the Old Testament, and he finished it in the New.

And it was really an amazing thing for me to see. Of course, it brought light to my soul. And I realized that my sufficiency was in Christ alone.

That his ability was working exceedingly abundantly on my behalf. And that it wasn't so much about my striving as much as it was about my abiding in him. And so, if you would, let's pray together.

And then I want to share some verses with you, okay? Lord Jesus, I thank you that you're the author of life. You're the giver of all good things. You discipline us.

And Lord God, you wrap your arms around us. I thank you, Father, that you are not just a God of love, but you are love. I thank you, Father, that in heaven they cry, holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.

And I thank you that that holiness through Christ has been imparted to us. I thank you that when we are hid with Christ in God, we are perfectly righteous before you. I thank you that we have a place to hide.

No longer must we be sheltered in the cleft of the rock. But now, Lord God, we're sheltered in Christ. And it's from that vantage point that we can see you, Father.

I thank you that Jesus said one day, if you see me, you see the Father. Because I and the Father are one. Blessed Trinity.

God in three persons working out redemption. Father, may this meeting tonight, this service, bring glory to you. May your holy name be exalted.

And may no flesh glory in your sight. In your matchless name we pray, amen. Hallelujah.

Well, if you would, we're going to dip back into the Old Testament again. I know I was preaching on it this morning, so many people are going to be calling me an Old Testament preacher. Just remember when the disciples were preaching, by the way, that's what they were preaching out of.

So the New Testament preachers were preaching out of the Old Testament. Because remember, it wasn't compiled yet. The ink wasn't even dried on some of them.

Some of the epistles that we take for granted now. And when we lay these 66 books across our lap, I think we're tempted to believe that, you know, they already existed in the time of the apostles. And that's simply not the case.

They were being penned under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit through them. And imagine this. Think about this for a minute.

You realize that there were churches meeting, New Testament churches, if you will, and they did not have the New Testament. All they had was the Old Testament. And then, they would hear word that, you know, there was a letter sent to Timothy, who he had asked to stay on in Ephesus, and they would be like, oh my goodness, can we read it? Pass it around.

And literally, this is how, you know, the word of God would go out about the glory of Christ, about the secret of redemption. That which had been hidden from ages past, now revealed in Christ Jesus through His apostles, who went out and boldly proclaimed. Now, here's what's interesting.

And before we, tell you what, before we jump back to Deuteronomy, in fact, here's what we're gonna do. Go to Deuteronomy 30, Deuteronomy chapter 30, verse six. Deuteronomy chapter 30, verse six.

Then, what I'm gonna ask you to do is just kind of put your thumb on it, okay? We'll go back and look at it, but I just wanna get you ready, because we're gonna be doing some Bible roulette here, okay? So, Deuteronomy 30, verse six. This is the verse, of course, that I prayed over and over again. But before I go there, here's what's so amazing.

Now, I'm talking about, of course, in the New Testament, and we have the book of Acts, the book of Acts. Of course, the book of Acts tells us about the founding of the church. Now, previous to that, of course, there was Israel, but now we have the church.

Now, interestingly enough, of course, we all know, you know, Acts chapter one, Acts chapter two, Acts chapter three, some amazing things were going on. Peter stands up to be, basically, the spokesman for that church. And, of course, we saw an incredible move of God's Spirit, initially, upon the first apostles, and then that fire spread.

Remember, this morning, I was saying, fire begets fire? Well, these guys had gasoline dumped on them. They were explosive. And the word was going out, and people were being saved and set free.

But what we have is, as one who the Bible says was born late, if you will, the apostle Paul, the least of the least, he said. Also, he was the one who was considered, what? The scum of the earth. Amazing title for such a man.

I called it the glorious crown of contempt. And it's amazing what I've heard Christians around the world being called in Pakistan, where we go, in fact, I will be there in October. We have a school there with 260 students.

We have 159 Muslim children going to school with Christians. Now, just so you have some background, in Pakistan, to have Christians and Muslims going to the same school, it does happen in the government schools, but the difference is, all of the Christian students have to learn an Islamic education. And they're not allowed to drink from the same water tap as the Muslim students.

They can't drink from the same water cup. The Christians, as the Muslim students, they're treated as third, fourth class citizens, and it is really, it's tough. And they're forced to take the course called Islamia, which is basically an indoctrination course on Islam.

We have a school there, and we're providing a full-blown 100% Christian education, and we're educating Muslims and Christians together. And we're teaching them that one is no better than the other. You can drink from the same water fountain.

You can eat off the same plates, whatever it might be. And it's a pretty amazing thing. Why would we be in Pakistan? Well, we're in Pakistan because Paul.

We're in Pakistan because of Paul, the apostle. Because he said that he was appointed to preach the gospel, the gospel to who? The Gentiles. And that same mission vision and burden and passion has been literally continually planted in the hearts of men and women who have come after him, who've read those epistles, now that they have them, now that they've been compiled.

And by the way, interesting study for any of you. Look at how we got our scriptures in their current form. It's thrilling to see, you know, a lot of people, of course, in an Islamic world, they always tell us, oh, it's change ed, your scriptures are change ed.

Yeah, you know, because they're in other languages, whereas the Quran, of course, is in Arabic. What they don't realize is Arabic has changed. In fact, the good thing about Islam is that the Quran, which is, of course, written in a very archaic form of Arabic is so archaic that most people who read it, even those who read Arabic, can't understand it.

So it'd be similar to, for instance, if I were to hold a Catholic mass here and do it in Latin, very few of you would be able to understand exactly what I was saying. Well, when they have services from the Quran, of course, in a mosque or whatever, very few people actually understand what they're saying. Now, that's

where the imam, the muftis and the mulvis and others come in, and of course, they will teach them whatever type of Islam they espouse, whether it be Sunni or Shia or some other mystic form.

But the thing is, they don't have any way to really go back and check on it themselves. But see, we do. The Bible opens itself up for criticism, and what I mean by that is textual criticism.

We can look at the word of God, we can pick it apart, we can test it, we can try it, and it is always found true. And so I really encourage you in your personal time, you know, Google it, whatever you do, however you do your studies, and look at how we got the 66 books that make up what we call our Bible today. It's amazing, and it will fill you with awe, because you will rest assured, sleeping tight in the arms of Jesus, that the book you read is inspired.

In other words, that's what it literally means. That's what inspired means. Except not my breath, God's breath.

And I took some mints, because believe me, if I did on any one of you tonight, you would not be healthy. So here we have the glory of His word, and we get to study it, not just the Old Testament, but the New. We get to put it all together, we see how it culminates, and I was teaching substitute teaching for the American Christian School in Bartlesville on their opening day, and I was actually talking about the Bible, and how did we get it, and 40 different authors, at least 40 different authors, penned over a period of 1,400 years.

Now, not only, however, you know, for those of you who have children, especially teenage children, and they happen to have a mobile phone, and they text message, of course I have two teenagers, one soon to be, and they'll send me a text message, and I gotta get out some urban slang dictionary to understand what they're saying to me. It is really interesting the way they spell out text messages, and I was thinking to myself, now these are kids that live in my own home, but when they communicate to me via a mobile phone, I don't even know what they're saying. Now imagine if they had text messaging capabilities from 1,400 years ago, and they were sending you a text message.

Would you understand the text? Now see, when it comes to reading, studying, and applying the Bible, that's what we need to do. We need to understand the text. Now, not to run off on a rabbit trail here, but if we look at, in Acts chapter 15, there's an amazing thing that takes place.

In fact, Acts chapter 15 was what? It's the first council, it's the first gathering of the church. They come together. Beautiful, beautiful thing.

Here we have the disciples, who are now the apostles, and they have come together, and they're talking about the great things that God has done. They're kind of all excited. They all kind of got their notes written down, and they're all like, oh, pick me, I want to give my report, you know? They're really excited.

And we're thinking, what a blessed time this will be. And Acts 15 is a great narrative on the first church argument. We don't have to be pious.

The first church argument. They were disagreeing. Corporately.

You know, I always say, there's no such war as a holy war. You know what is so beautiful? Is that these men were so zealous for the truth. They were so zealous for what God was doing, they were willing to stand toe to toe and discuss it.

Mildly mannered. You see, a lot of times what we don't realize, you know, at the church, we were born for battle. We were born for a war.

And if you don't have battles externally, in other words, if you're not engaged in battling the enemy and pulling down strongholds and raining down righteousness externally, guess what? You will fight internally. And you're gonna do that because it's your nature. It's the way God made you.

You don't have to apologize for that. It's just focus your energy where it needs to be focused. Externally.

And when you are so consumed with the glory and the will of God and the battles that are out there, then you will come back and what will you see? The hand of God working in the midst of you. Now there's an argument that takes place and this dispute, if you will, is about what? It is about how does God save the Gentiles? Nevermind the fact that He is. What we wanna know is can we quantify it? Is it qualitative? How is He doing it? And of course Acts 15 verses 8 and 9. Now the spokesman at Pentecost, we know is Peter.

Once again, what's so beautiful is he stands up, because some Jews are saying, well, were they circumcised? You know, this goes to Galatians again. You know, I call them scissor making Christians. No pun intended.

But Paul, he said, hey, I wish you'd just cut yourself clean off because if you think that's what makes you righteous, you're wrong. I'm a Jew of Jews. Circumcised on the eighth day.

He goes on and talks about his worldly pedigree, if you will. And then in the end he says, it's rubbish. It's nothing.

And so now the spokesman of Pentecost, Peter, stands up again. And here's what's beautiful. As they're trying to decide how it is that these Gentiles get saved and what they need to do to be saved and all these other parameters, Peter stands up and a lot of people, and there's a lot of speculation and churches have been divided over it and some have come together and whatever.

But a lot of people say, what happened in Acts chapter, this cloven tongues of fire? The Bible says they spoke in other tongues. What is glossalia, which is the Greek for that? And there's debate as to whether that was some heavenly language, whether one man spoke and they all heard and he was speaking in whatever language. It doesn't matter to me.

None of that matters. Because Peter, who was there, who experienced it and was a spokesman for it, clarified it for us. In Acts chapter 15, verses eight and nine, he said what? Let me turn there so I can read it.

I've memorized it, but we'll go there anyway. Acts 15. Look at this.

This is so beautiful. Acts 15, verses eight and nine. Let's go to seven.

Let's start at seven. And when there had been much disputing, that's a nice way of saying they were toe to toe. And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up and said unto them, men and brethren, you know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel and believe.

And God, this is beautiful, and God, which knoweth the hearts, bear them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit, even as He did unto us. Now, what is he talking about? Well, he's talking about

Pentecost when they received the gift of the Holy Spirit. And now he's saying God who chose us, He's choosing them.

He's not showing any favoritism. He gave them the Holy Spirit just like He did us. Now, here's the definer.

Here's the descriptive verse that tells us what was that. Let's read. And put no difference, verse 9, between us and them purifying their hearts by faith.

So, what is a touch of the Holy Spirit or to be baptized as it says or to be filled with the Holy Spirit? What is that? It means that God comes into your life in such a way through the third person of the Trinity that your heart is purified by faith. Now, that faith is a gift of God. But the result or the evidence, if you will, that demands the verdict is this.

Has your heart been purified by faith? Because if you claim to have the Holy Spirit dwelling in you, living in you, residing in you, then the proof's in your ticker. Or, you know, that area, metaphorically speaking. It's that your heart is being purified.

That God is having His way in you and through you. Because God works in you both to what? To will and to do of His good pleasure. I can tell you, dear saints, that to simply will it is not enough.

But we must do it as the book of James says, which becomes evidence. Now, I don't know about you, but I'm not much for a salvation that produces nothing. I'm not much for a salvation that produces nothing.

For instance, we talk often about what we've been saved to. We talk about heaven, still kind of mysterious. Sometimes we don't even really understand what it is.

What will we do there? How long? All this other things, you know? But beyond that, we talk often in Christian circles about what we've been saved to. Well, we have eternal life. We're going to spend the rest of our lives when we die because to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

And we're going to be with Jesus, right? Now, let me ask you this question. What have you been saved from? What are you saved from? Because the implication is you've been saved to something, you've been saved from something. Now, some might quickly raise their arms and say, been saved from hell.

That's good. What else? Have you been saved from bitterness? Have you been saved from anger? How about, have you been saved from pride? Have you been saved from selfish desires? Okay, let's go to Deuteronomy 30, verse six. And this is why I had to say that before we read this.

Deuteronomy 30, chapter 30, verse six. I love this verse as I shared with you. I've read it for years and years, made it my prayer.

It says, and the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed, there is promise, to love the Lord thy God with all your heart, with all your soul that thou might live, that thou mayest live. Now, if you want something truly admirable to pray, that when you drop on your knees in the morning or at night or however it is you seek the Lord, pray this. Pray Deuteronomy 30, verse six.

Why? Well, you know in Scripture, Jesus, he was considered a rabbi or rabboni, right? Which meant he was a teacher. Now, Jesus purposefully, with purpose, contradicted, went against all of those traditions that a normal rabbi would. For instance, we have a word called subjugate, which comes from the Latin subjugare, which literally came from, oh, it was about 300 BC when some Romans had their clocks

cleaned by a Swiss king.

And this Swiss king, when they surrendered, he didn't kill any of them or anything else, but he said, look, here's the deal. If you wanna leave here alive, what they did is they pulled out the yoke of an oxen and they held it up and they, these prideful Romans, had to willingly subjugate. They had to go subjugate.

It comes from what? The ox, from the yoke. That's where we get it from. Comes from the yoke of an oxen or some animal.

And they had to pass, it means sub, to go under. They had to go under the yoke or they couldn't go away alive. Now, we are called to operate, to walk in subjugation to the lordship of Christ.

But here's the deal. When it says, take my yoke upon you, remember when Jesus said that? It's not talking about the yoke of an oxen. In fact, indeed, what it's talking about, the rabbis who taught, see, remember now, in this day and age, in that day and age, there weren't universities.

And so what happened is, you know, children, and by the way, they had memorized what? The first five books of the law, the Pentateuch or Torah. They'd memorize the first five books of the law put to memory by the age of 12. Now, I have a hard time reading Leviticus, let alone memorizing it.

But they had put it to memory, all five books, at the ripe age of 12. And what's so beautiful about that is, the rabbi then came along and he would call, just like Jesus did, and you didn't apply to go to the rabbi's college. He came and sought you out.

And that's why Gamaliel and some of these other famous rabbis, that was kind of like, to be a disciple of Gamaliel was like, ooh, I'm in the Harvard of rabbinical studies. I have arrived. And I can't go into it all, but there's actually good reason that we can see through text that all of those that Jesus called had been passed over for the rabbinical school.

In fact, they were told to go home and ply their trade. In other words, whatever your father does, learn it from him and do it. And what do we know? Well, we know some were fishermen.

We know one was despised by the Jews. He was a tax collector. This is kind of like going out after secular unemployment.

And in the midst of all this, Jesus comes along and he calls these disciples. And then interestingly enough, he stands up, he tells people, take my yoke upon you for its burden is easy. What does that mean? Well, the yoke was a term that was used by the rabbinical schools.

And it meant take my teachings upon you. Now, Jesus not only exalted his teachings or yoke, but he also attacked the yoke of the other teachers, the other rabbis. For instance, they were always saying, what in the world? Your disciples are walking through a field and they grabbed some kernels of wheat and they're eating.

What? You know, Jesus, they had a certain way, by the way, they had to walk, clean their hands. They had to rub them so many times. Each one of the rabbis that you could only walk so many steps on the Sabbath day.

And it was nebulous because it depended upon which rabbi you spoke with. And then some would make it tight. But what they'd done is to be religious.

And that's why they said, you count your tithe to the seed. You know, you got mustard seeds, you're out there with a magnifying glass and you're, you know, in other words, it's not the heart of it. It's not because you want to give.

Instead, it's legalism. That's not what I want. I want your heart unshackled.

I want you to be in love with me because there's a great Puritan proverb. I'll never forget it. It says, love binds without a cord and it rules where there is no sword.

You see, love never brings out a measuring stick. Love never says, I'll go this far. That's it.

And that's why Jesus came along and he says, if somebody wants you to walk one mile, go two. If somebody wants one shirt, give them two. What he's saying is, look, love gives all.

Love's never measured. Love doesn't have you counting out mustard seeds. You don't have to put the little black bands on your wrist, a little visor and start playing money changer.

That's not what he desires. What he desires is that when your heart is enamored with him, when you are so passionately in love with the King, everything can go. You relinquish everything and you gladly do it.

And when you've given all and your pockets are turned inside out and you just have rabbit ears now, when all of it has been relinquished and thrown at the foot of the Savior, guess what you say? Oh God, I wish I had more. Because the heart of love... Now listen, I just celebrated, and for some of you this is going to seem like, you know, Sunday school stuff, but for some of you it'll be like, wow. But I just celebrated a 20 year anniversary, been married to my bride who was here this morning.

She couldn't be here tonight, but it was amazing because I've known her since, she was in first grade and I was in second. So I was a cradle robber and swooped down to get that gem. And we have had 20 years of marital bliss.

Not. We've had 20 years of marriage. We've had 20 years of love and commitment to each other.

Even when there were times when she didn't like me and I didn't like her, we still loved each other. The secret to marriage isn't 50-50 or whatever, the secret to marriage is love. But it starts with love of God.

And then it culminates with a love towards others. How do I know that? Because Jesus said, what's the greatest commitment? The greatest commandment? Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, right? And then what is he said? And there's one like unto it. What's that one? Love your neighbor as yourself.

There was this yoke. That was his yoke, by the way. That was the rabbinical yoke of Jesus.

Two commandments. Love God, love your neighbor. He said, come unto me.

Take my yoke upon you. It's easy. Love God and love your neighbor.

In the meantime, you had another rabbi, Gamaliel. Don't walk more than 3,268 steps on the Sabbath. Make sure you give 48 seeds of mustard seed.

Make sure you wash your hands 23 times in a circular motion. When you're done, shake four times. I'm not kidding.

This is what they were doing. Jesus, the revolutionary teacher, comes along. He takes the second string team.

He revolutionizes them and says, come and follow me. Can you imagine hearing that call? Well, if you're a believer, I sure hope you have because that call still goes out today. Now, here's what's amazing.

Think about this. Who starts a revolution with this phrase? Come and die. You wouldn't think that there'd be much life to the revolution, would you? Come and die? Now, I don't know if you guys or any of you people here are World War II buffs or whatever, but some of you might remember when George Patton quizzed his soldiers and he said to one of the young men, what is your job? He said, sir, my job is to die for my country.

He said, no, it's not. And with a few expletives, which I won't add, he said, your job is to make the other guy die for your country. But Jesus, Jesus, he said, you wanna be part of my revolutionary army? Come and die.

Come and give yourself away. Take my yoke. You know, I read that in the New Testament because I was a new believer and I read, I'm supposed to love God with all my heart.

And believe me, I wanted to. But I always said, I don't know if it's enough. I don't know if I love you enough, Lord.

And then I found Deuteronomy 30, verse six. I, the Lord, thy God, will circumcise your heart and I will cause you to love me. And I said, oh my goodness, amazing.

Eureka. Not only does God command it, but God provides it. So with the command comes the promise.

So that all that Christ has called us to ascertain is ascertainable in him and through him. Now I alluded to it this morning, Genesis chapter 11. I said, and mud had they for mortar and bricks and slime had they for mortar.

And they were building this tower of Babel. They were all unified and they were trying to reach God. Now God wasn't threatened.

He wouldn't say, oh my goodness, if they put five more rows of bricks, they could probably dethrone me. No, that wasn't it. God's not threatened.

He's not threatened by the state of the church now either. He might be grieved, but he's not threatened. You know, as one man said, you can't impeach him and he isn't gonna resign.

So he's pretty comfortable where he is. There's no higher court of appeal. So we need to just basically accept him as who he is.

King and Lord. And Jesus said, if you see me, you see the Father. And then he says, take my yoke upon you.

So what does God want you to do? Love him with all your heart. And what else? Love your neighbor as yourself. And how does that happen? With the promise of God.

How do we get the promise of God? Well, the Bible gives us an interesting clue. It says that without faith, it's impossible to please God. Not probable, not maybe, impossible.

Because all who come to him must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of those who half-heartedly seek. I misquoted that again. Of those who diligently seek him.

And so here I am praying this prayer. Now we see this, you know, Genesis chapter 11, they're trying to reach God. You know what's so beautiful about that? That's, remember, that's where we get babble.

That's when the tongues were confounded and the foremans couldn't speak to their underlings anymore because they couldn't communicate. And by the way, that's actually happened in modern times too. It happened in a little coal mine in Wales.

It happened after the Spirit of God came down in such a powerfully profound way that a bunch of drunken, nasty old miners were set free by the power of the Holy Spirit. And whereas the donkeys that worked in the mines that were used to bringing out the mules, that were used to carrying out the coal, they couldn't understand the commands of the miners anymore because they didn't know how to respond if they weren't being cursed at. Work couldn't proceed because people's tongues and lives had been so cleaned up by a visitation of the Holy Spirit.

Well, it happened in Genesis chapter 11 as well, but it was a visitation of God, but he separated them. They couldn't understand each other anymore. And what's so amazing to show you that God was there, that he didn't forget anything, that he doesn't have a bad memory, what we see is in Acts chapter two is the reconciling of that, because what takes place? When it's the people gathered together in unity, but they're no longer trying to provide their own access to God, what happens? One man speaks in every tongue and nation under heaven that's there.

What? Hears him as in their own tongue. So what was taking place in Acts chapter two? The fulfillment of Genesis chapter 11. God was saying when Christ is the foundation, when Christ becomes the chief cornerstone, then you will have access to God and one man will speak and all men will hear as in their own tongue.

So God never forgets. And the God who promised Deuteronomy 30 verse six said, I the Lord thy God will circumcise your heart. Jesus says, take my yoke upon you.

He gives them this revolutionary teaching. You know, they're waiting for, you know, he gets done, love the Lord your God with all your heart, love your neighbors yourself. And you know, all the disciples still got their like, you know, pen and their, you know, whatever their quill and their papyrus and they're like, yeah, and? And? You know, they're waiting for 0.48, you know, 0.63, you know, tuck up your dress or, you know, whatever they wore back then, your jellabia, tuck it up before you run and, you know, all, none, that's it, period, two.

Because contained in that was the fulfillment of the law. See, love is the fulfillment of the law. So he says it, he promises it in the Old Testament.

Well, I wonder if he delivers in the New. Well, literally folks, and I mean this after, it was five or six years of praying that constantly. I mean, I prayed this over and over and over again.

God, circumcised my heart. And you know, it was so amazing. One day I'm reading and you can turn with me and read it with me, Colossians.

Turn in the New Testament to Colossians chapter two, Colossians chapter two. Let's start at verse 10. And ye, Colossians two, verse 10, and ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.

Now listen to this folks. In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead. And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh hath he made alive together with him having forgiven you all your trespasses.

Now folks, if that's not rapture practice, then nothing is. I would jump and shout, but I might look silly. I would prefer to allow you guys to do it.

Look at this promise. The fulfillment. Here we see a God who speaks to the children of Israel.

I the Lord thy God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your seed. Later on, and I don't have time to get into it, we have Ezekiel 18 and some various other passages that are just beautiful. In fact, what does it say? God will write the law upon the what? The fleshy table of your heart.

Where once he wrote it on stone, now he writes it upon your heart. And that, my friends, is the law of love. It's what took place, Acts chapter 15, when the church council had convened.

He said, look, what happened is our hearts are purified by faith. And he did the same thing to them. Now, here's what's amazing.

When's the last time you've been able to look into anybody's heart? You can't, can you? So then how do they know? By their outward actions. Do you know what's so amazing? You will not find any place in the New Testament at all where one man tells another man they were saved. Look, if you want, do a Bible study on it.

You will not find one place in the New Testament where one man tells another man you have been born again. By the way, folks, that job was reserved exclusively for the Holy Spirit, because it's the Holy Spirit who bears witness with our spirit that we have become children of God. When that same Holy Spirit comes and takes up residence and your heart is purified, then others will see it in you.

And how will they see it? Because not what you've been saved to, folks, but what you've been saved from. Because everything that captivated and controlled your life before, you are a two Corinthians person now. You are a new creature in Christ Jesus.

The old things have passed away. Behold, A-double-L things have become new. Now, I have a hard time with somebody promoting a salvation that causes no change whatsoever.

And by and large, in much of the church today, what we've done is we've reduced salvation to an act. It's not about the restoration of a relationship as I talked about this morning. But instead what it is, is, and by the way, do you know how you get saved in Islam? You know how you become a Muslim? You recite the Shahada.

You recite the Shahada. Allah is God. Muhammad is his prophet.

Besides him, there is no other. You know how you get saved in evangelical circles today? You say something similar to the Shahada. Jesus, I believe you died.

I believe you rose again. Come save me. Be my Lord.

Or be my Savior. We don't even usually get Lord in there anymore. And we've reduced salvation to repeating a sinner's prayer.

That's the Islamic version of the Shahada. And what we've done is we've taken something beautiful, which is the restoration of a relationship, and we've reduced it to a mantra, a Shahada. And what we want to do is we simply want to have people recite certain things.

So now what we've done is we're the new Gnostic. Knowledge brings salvation. We're the new Gnostic.

And so what we do is this. If you can nod your head at the right theological points, then at some point in time, I'm going to slap you on the back, give you three verses to take home in your back pocket, and then you can say, praise God, brother, you're in. Now, hear me out.

I am not saying that if you have said what we call the sinner's prayer, you're not born again. And I'm not saying that you cannot be born again saying the sinner's prayer. That is not what I am advocating.

But what I am saying is you can also not be born again by saying the sinner's prayer. Because God does not give credence to lip service if we look through the scriptures. In fact, he says, for these people do honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

Now here is the tragedy that took place in the New Testament. The tragedy when Jesus was betrayed by Judas. Can you imagine if only Judas would have just stood at a distance, maybe he could have hid behind a bush or behind a stone and just pointed towards Jesus.

But no. Especially in that culture, when you understand that culture, do you know how sacred a kiss was? And I mean even a kiss between men. It was not due to homophobic tendencies.

It was an honorable thing, shared among the closest of friends. Can you imagine how pierced the Lamb of God was way, way, way before he got to Calvary? Betrayest thou me with a kiss? And yet, in evangelical circles today, we often do the same thing. Because what we do is we feign our admiration, our love, our devotion towards Jesus.

But it's really to sell them out. Listen, the question is this. If Jesus were to come here today, if we had a Christophany, if you will, if Christ were to appear, Theophany, Christophany, depends upon whatever flavor you like, what would he say? What would he say to us today? Would he point us out and say, betrayest thou me with a kiss? You feign love for me, but your heart is far from me? Would he say, these people have forgotten me days without number.

They have come to my altar spewing vomit. They've brought broken, bruised, and bleeding sacrifices instead of a spotless lamb. He did say that, by the way.

He did say that to Israel. God, who makes the demand, gives the promise. And as we can see through looking at Colossians chapter 2, we can also see that God brings the fulfillment in Christ.

Now, dear friends, I am not promoting a religion of salvation based upon your own striving and struggling. What I am promoting is a relationship established on love, first towards you, and then you reciprocate back. But here's the beauty, even in our deficits, Christ becomes our all in all.

And he becomes the empowerment for the fulfillment of his command, which is God circumcises our heart. Now, Charles Spurgeon, whom I love and whom I've read much of, preached a sermon one time on Philippians called, That I May Know Him. And one of the things he was doing is he used this back in Roman times about a man who had been condemned to die, and of course at that time they were thrown into the Roman Colosseum.

And there for sport, you know, they paid tickets, got some popcorn and a Coke, and they would watch, you know, somebody being mauled by lions or eaten by some beast or gored by wild hogs or wild dogs or whatever it might be. And Spurgeon said that, imagine that that was your sentence and you were condemned and you were thrown down into the Colosseum, and as the lions and the wild animals were running towards you, ready to leap on you, your benefactor jumped down from the edge and he covered you. And instead of you being mauled and beaten and chewed up, your benefactor was.

And you were quickly whisked out of the Roman Colosseum, you were taken away, and as you were taken away you were brought into a sumptuous palace. And while you were in that palace, they put you on sheets of linen and silk, and you were fed the finest things, and day after day you were given just the most beautiful meals and living in the most sumptuous place, and there were attendants there to wait and to care for you. Would not at some time, as you learned that this was all the result of your benefactor, would you not at some time say, tell me, who is my benefactor that I may know him? This is a living book, folks, with a living God.

It's impossible to have a dead church with a living Christ. So my prayer is that Christ is being formed in you. And I just ask that right now in the quietness of this sanctuary, let's just bow our heads together.

And you know what? I'm not going to put words in your mouth, but I just ask you to do this. Ask the Lord to try the reins of your heart and see if there be any wicked way within you. If you've allowed a root of bitterness to grab hold of your heart, would you relinquish that to him? If you have anger, if you have old hurts, maybe your marriage isn't everything you thought it should be.

Maybe you wish you could change your spouse, and you've tried for years and it's not working, and you've developed a resistance or a resentment. Maybe it's when your family, your children, and they're kicking against the goad. Maybe your youth that are here, maybe you're thinking, my goodness, my parents are so old-fashioned.

They won't let me do this. They won't let me do that. Would you please just say, God, would you search my heart tonight? Do you realize that corporately with the people that are here, the number of people that we have here, do you realize that if we were saturated with the power of God's Holy Spirit, and our hearts were purified by faith, do you realize that we could turn Barnstall and all of Oklahoma upside down? Because the scripture said, and these men who have turned the world upside down, they've come here as well.

Pray with me. I'm not going to say anything, but just in the silence that we have, maybe our brother's going to play a little music, but in that time, before God, and by the love of God, just bow your heads, and in the quietness that only you and God can have, just ask Him to search your heart. And if there's something you

need to repent for, then by the grace of God, do it.

And if there's something you need to be thankful for, then by His grace, do it. Count your blessings, all the things He's done for you. And as you pray, say this, Jesus, do I love you more now than when I first fell in love with you? Or do I love you less? I know in earthly terms, I love my wife more now than when I first fell in love with her.

So in your heart of hearts, just cry out and say, Jesus, search me. Try the reins of my heart. And this is the supreme question that we can ask and have answered tonight.

Jesus, do I love you more today than yesterday? Do I trust you more now than 10 years ago, or 5 years ago, or 30 years ago? Is my relationship with you as vibrant as it was, or have I allowed things to come between you and I? Lord Jesus, make thyself to me a living bright reality, more present than faith's vision keen, than even the dearest earthly object seen. Father, circumcise our hearts tonight. You promised it in Deuteronomy 30 verse 6. Lord God, by faith I point my finger at your promise and I raise it towards heaven and I ask you, Lord God, to read your word concerning us, your bride.

We're marred. We've been sullied by the world. We have dirt on us, Father.

Cleanse us. I ask for this breath of God. Would you blow on us afresh? Would you breathe on us afresh again? Lord Jesus, we lay all roots of bitterness down.

We ask for your Holy Spirit to dig down deep into the recesses of our heart, excavate that root of bitterness that grows in the darkness and cleanse us. Lord God, forgive us for having an unforgiving spirit towards any in our life. In our marriages, Lord Jesus, have the preeminence.

As men, Father, may we no longer have our prayers hindered because we don't treat our wives as Scripture requires. We repent of that, Father. Lord Jesus, for the youth that are here, I pray that they would be broken with a spirit of repentance and recognize that to obey God is to walk in submission to the authority of their parents.

And Lord God, for the parents here, I pray that they would not provoke their children into wrath, but instead in godliness. Lord Jesus, may we at some time during the rest of this day, may we hold our brides, our husbands, our wives, may we hold them by the hand and maybe do for the first time that we haven't done in many years, may we just pray over them. Bathe them with our prayers.

Lord God, may we gather up our children and get on our knees in brokenness with a spirit of humility and repentance and say, children, I commit my life to Christ. I purpose and promise to love Him with all my heart and I long to see the same for you. Father, may a spirit of unity bring us together as we focus on Christ and His glory.

Lord Jesus, would you break that crusty veneer around our hearts and would you once again write your law upon the fleshy table of our hearts. Lord, we ask for nothing less than to be renewed by the power of your Holy Spirit. Jesus, would you come and have the preeminence here among us.

Would you try the reins of our heart and see any wicked way within us. Lord Jesus, that with the finger of God you would point out any area in our life that is not pleasing to you and with your finger, God, that you would specifically show us because with the conviction comes the ability for repentance and then comes the renewing and the restoration. I thank you, Jesus, that we have access every one of us, that we can

boldly enter into the throne room of grace.

And Father, I thank you that there is plenty of room at the foot of the cross. Have the preeminence here, Lord. This is your house.

I pray you're welcome here. I pray you're expected to show up. And you do so not to inhabit the architecture that man has made, but to literally embed yourself in the vestibule of a human heart.

Have first place within us, oh God. May we love you with all of our heart, mind, strength, and soul because we have the circumcision of Christ. Hallelujah, we love you, Father.

We glory in Christ alone. So Lord, now I ask you that I know you're doing business, I know that. You're dealing with hearts today, I know that.

And as you do, Father, I pray that the hand of faith, that by the hand of faith we would reach up and apprehend God for which we have been apprehended for and that we would know the surpassing greatness of your power towards us and trust that you alone can answer our prayer. Hear our heart cry, Father. Hear our heart cry today.

From the youth to the oldest of the saints here, Father, breathe upon us afresh again that we might know the sustaining presence of your power. We love you, Father. In the wonderful and matchless name of Christ our King.

Amen. Praise God. Thank you, sister.

What do you have to share, brother? Because I know you do. I can see your heart beating. I have x-ray vision or something because I can see your heart beating up over here.

So I know you got something to say. I spend a lot of time doing a lot of activities and I think I'm doing all this to really please God and somewhere today and in recent days I've understood to please God. He just wants me to spend time with Him and to love Him and devote my time and attention to Him.

It's not about what I'm doing here. It's about what I'm doing with Him as He communicates to me and I communicate to Him. Praise God.

Jesus is all she needs that His opinion of her is worth everything. Wow. You know what I can't believe? I can't believe that I get to do what I do.

I can't believe it. I know we have a brother Paul here with us tonight and I know he spent his life in pursuit of the King and making him known not just here in Oklahoma but around the world and it's really, it's an honor. I want you to know that it's an honor for me to be able to spend time with you this morning and tonight.

It's really been a privilege for me to, as I said, to get back in the saddle and share again. And so I just want to thank you and I know that while some of you have shared, some of you haven't, but I trust that the same God who's at work in one of us is working in all of us. And so church, thank you for being so gracious to me.

As I got back in the saddle this morning, I was greeted by many of you who thanked me for sharing the Word of God and then again tonight when I came in the door many of you came to me and greeted me

and were just super friendly to me and I just want to say thank you for that. And so let's just close in prayer, okay? You say, well, we just were. Well, we're not going to wear God out.

I'm sure I'm wearing you out, but we're not going to wear God out. Lord Jesus, we commit ourselves to you. We come boldly to the throne room of grace to receive help in time of need.

I thank you for those that have shared about boldness and a commitment and a conviction to be more bold and to stand and share the truth. And I thank you, Lord God, for those who shared about realizing that it's not work that you want, but it's for us to abide in you and to love you. I thank you for those who shared that they're convicted that the only applause I need is the applause of heaven.

So Lord, I thank you that He who begun a good work in you will be faithful to see it unto completion. We commit our lives to you today in the matchless name of Christ our King. And God's people said, I'll wear you out a little bit more.

I feel like we need to just pray for Kevin and his family and give God thanks and praise. And what a privilege it's been to have him. I tell you, I'm just overjoyed.

My heart is full and Lord willing, he's going to be with us again the last Wednesday of September for the VAFC meeting here. And by the way, you have an open invitation to this pulpit anytime. But let's pray together.

Father God, I just come before you again in the mighty name of Jesus. And I thank you for this broken vessel, Lord God, that you are filling up, that you have revived and that you are pouring your life out through. And I pray, Father, for the continuation of that, Lord, a continual filling of your spirit, O God, of your grace and of your power, Lord, to glorify your name.

Lord, we commit our brother into your hands. We thank you for him with all of our heart. We thank you for his wife, his children.

We pray, Lord God, for your continual blessing upon them, your favorable hand to be upon them. And with each one of them, Lord, you would draw closer and closer to your heart that this fire that burns in their hearts now of love and devotion for you would continue, Lord, to burn even brighter in the days to come, Lord, and that you would continue to use them for your glory and honor, continue to give them revelation of yourself, Lord Jesus, and just lead and guide and direct their steps, Lord. Thank you for the such as this so refreshing, Lord, to see you anoint a man, a family, to cause your face to shine upon them for the glory of your name.

Lord, give us that kind of passion, I pray, in Jesus' name, amen, amen. God bless you.

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