

Wells Without Water - Clouds That Are Carried Away

by L.R. Shelton Jr

The sermon warns against false teachers and preachers who bring in damnable heresies, lead many into their pernicious ways, and come with a covetous heart and eye, and emphasizes the importance of sound doctrine and searching the conscience.

Scripture: 2 Timothy 4:1

Topics: "False Teaching", "Sound Doctrine"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of preaching the word of God and warns against false teachers and prophets. He describes these false individuals as being driven by their own lusts and desires, leading others astray with their deceptive teachings. The preacher highlights the need for sound doctrine and the danger of turning away from the truth. He also criticizes the health, wealth, and prosperity preachers, suggesting that their messages appeal to people's lustful desires for money and material wealth. Overall, the sermon emphasizes the need for the true gospel and the importance of standing before God in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Transcript

The Lord God offers you a new year sermon next Sunday but we have one more message left in the second chapter of 2 Peter that we must complete and I want you to turn there with us one more time and let us read it and I want you to pray that God will give you ears to hear and eyes to see and I pray that God would let me bring this with a broken heart let me bring it with Him not my will but His will because as I've said before many and many times this is one of the most awful chapters in the Word of God as it pictures the deceitfulness of the human heart a warning against false teachers and preachers and their ultimate end the judgment of God upon them let's begin reading in verse 9 on to the end of the chapter The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the

unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished but see through them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise government presumptuous are they, self-willed they are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries whereas angels which are greater in power and might bring not raven accusation against them before the Lord but these as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed speak evil of the things that they understand not and shall utterly perish in their own corruption and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness as they that count it pleasure to riot in the daytime Scots they are, and the Britishers

sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you have an eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin beguiling unstable souls and

heart they have exercised with covetous practices cursed children which have forsaken the right way and are gone astray following the way of Balaam the son of Isa who loved the wages of unrighteousness but was rebuked for his iniquity the dumbass speaking with man's voice the madness of the prophet these are wells without water clouds that are covered with a tempest though in the midst of darkness is reserved forever for when they speak great swelling words of vanity they allure through the lust of the flesh through much wantonness those that were clean escape from them who live in them while they promise them liberty they themselves are the servants of corruption for a little man is overcome of the same as he brought in bondage for after they have escaped the pollutions of the world

through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ they are again entangled therein and overcome the latter end is worse with them than the beginning for it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them for it happened unto them according to the true proverb the dog has turned to his own vomit again and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire thus pray our Father and our God we wait in thy presence this morning Christ our living God the God of all the universe who sits upon the throne work in all things after the counsel of thy own will move in the armies of heaven and among the sons of men and none can stand and say unto thee what doest thou for thou art God and

beside thee there is none other glorious in holiness fearful in praises doing wonders among the sons of men and how we praise thee our Father that you let poor sinful creatures like myself come into thy holy presence and I praise thee that thou hast provided that new and living way through the Lord Jesus Christ through the ripped veil, through his flesh and through the poured out of his blood that we might enter in before thee through him our great high priest the one who has made unto us wisdom righteousness, sanctification and redemption and we come in his name this morning asking for thy mercy to be upon us Father we plead for mercy this morning we plead for thy great grace to rest upon us we plead that thy word which is sharp as any two edged sword may divide asunder thy word which is

a fire may it burn thy word which is a hammer may it break thy word my Father which is milk and honey and water may it nourish our souls and may Christ Jesus our Lord be lifted up in our midst as our cry we thank you for the time of worship the time to come again as a body to look to thee, to call upon thy name to wait upon thee, to hear the word that you have for our hearts and our Father our prize that we not only be hearers of that word but doers also that it goes home to our hearts and my Father thou knowest the subject we are on this morning thou hast been with us in the past week the last six messages on this chapter and we look to thee to be with us this morning thou knowest thy servant I have no strength I'm weak helpless hopeless without thee Father I cannot even open my mouth

unless thou dost fill it by thy spirit with the word that we cannot hear only lest thou dost open our ears so come spirit of the living God and do the work which only thou canst do in our midst this morning and my Father there are hungry souls here this morning there are seeking souls there are souls that are troubled there are souls that are bowed down because of grief there are souls here because of what you have allowed in their lives and they need you would you speak a word to them and all of us as they will look up and look out and look to Christ alone bless each home that was entered this morning may you have your way in each and every home bless the fathers and the mothers the children and the young people be thy work in our hearts and we'll give thee the praise and honor and glory

for in Christ's name we ask Amen for the past six weeks we have been working our way through this chapter which speaks to our hearts with a warning and that's what the whole chapter is about a warning against false teachers and preachers who have not been sent of God to represent Him who have been called by the evil one, Satan himself, to represent Him so that He may keep the souls of men in His dark kingdom of sin they come as angels of light 2 Corinthians 11 but they come to deceive they come in sheep's clothing Matthew 7 but inwardly they are ravening wolves devouring the simple ones they are a form of godliness by denying the power thereof the Holy Spirit of the Apostle Peter gives us a vivid description and shows the characteristics of these false men who pose as the messengers of

God but are nothing but tools in the hands of Satan to keep men and women, young people, boys and girls blinded to their true condition before God and the true way of salvation through Christ alone by His precious blood and uncreated righteousness He says those are strong words, well we have it right here in this chapter God's word is strong He doesn't hide anything from us He tells us in verse 1 that these false teachers and preachers bring in damnable heresies and verse 2 He tells us that many are led by them into their pernicious ways that is into their unbridled lust and excess into their lascivious way of living it says in verse 3 that they come with a covetous heart and a covetous eye and they with faint words make merchandise of those who hear them He gives us the warning of the

angels at sea and how they were cast from heaven of the old world that was not spared only nor and of the seven living in the ark the burning of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah with the fire from heaven only Lot and two daughters got out and He gave the ninth verse and showed how the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation how precious that is and was and has been to my own soul those four words have been ringing in my soul ever since that ninth verse when I studied for it and preached on it the Lord knoweth how He knows how to do a trillion things but He knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation and then He goes on and shows that they walk according to the lust of their uncleanness they despise governments they are presumptuous, they are self-real they are waiting

to receive the they are waiting to get into and sport themselves with deceivings among the people of God if they can in our love feast spots they are in verse 13 one of the most descriptive words of them is in verse 14 have an eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sin and beguile unstable souls and heart of exercise with covetous practices and then we come this morning to that 17th verse He said that these men for us teachers and prophets are wells without water clouds or a cavern with a tempest to whom the midst of darkness is reserved forever in other words the Holy Spirit through the apostle Peter gives us a picture of the desert He gives us a picture of a well or a spring or a water hole and the individual who sees it they come expecting to discover water for their thirsty

souls but they get there and they have nothing but dryness and deadness and there they are they have nothing to drink therefore he likens these men these false teachers under wells without water for God's minister and God's called one should be a well from which their springs flow that water of everlasting life that only in Christ the Lord whom he calls to deliver his precious word he calls them to be wells rivers of living water and we should expect you should have expected this morning when you came to worship you should have expected that you would hear a word from God that out of the abundance of the heart that God's given us and how he's dealt with our heart that out of abundance of the heart would come his word this morning and so what happens is this they're likened under springs

without water they're like clouds that you see in the distance and you're waiting for rain everything is parched and you're waiting for rain and surely this is it coming and it's nothing but a greasy cloud that it

soon disappears you've got to live where I live on the Gulf Coast to see how many times in a year that I see black stormy clouds as it were and we're surely going to get rain and the wind blows and the clouds are gone and you get no rain and so what he's picturing here is that seeking souls souls that desire to know Christ souls that desire to know the way of salvation souls that desire to know the way to heaven they come seeking to get that water of everlasting life and what do they get? for that which is in imitation that which is without God and without hope Christ's name

might be spoken but there is no way that they can give out anything because the Holy Spirit's not in them to teach and to preach they like it dry false exhausted wells although they have a name to live they have fame they're spoken of so many around the world and you expect to come there and get your soul fed and your soul watered but they're wells without water winds that are taken away a mist of darkness they're out of way with the winds clouds without water that's an awful thing they come to be taught and what do they get? usually it's emotionalism and beloved, you can't feed on emotionalism if you don't have it in your heart if it's not been written upon the soul by the Spirit of God emotions don't mean a thing when I was unsaved and went to the picture show and the movies back in my

young days I could cry with the best of them my emotions were worked up I could weep at the scenes I saw on the screen that's not what I want I want reality I want Christ I want something that faith can lay hold of I want the Word of God I want to be quickened and made alive by the Spirit but nothing like this do they offer they offer entertainment they use every gimmick under the sun to get people to make decisions they promise health, wealth, and prosperity they promise a salvation without Christ they promise a salvation without holiness they promise a salvation without repentance they promise a salvation without a man coming clean and coming clear with God and laying before Him as a guilty lost sinner they'll promise a salvation without death but their will's lower then he goes on in

verse 18 and he says for when they speak great spelling words of vanity they allure through the lust of the flesh to much wantonness those who will clean escape from them who live in error that's why I tell you that there are those seeking souls who are willing to get away from sin and they have hunger and they come under the message of the false teacher and the false prophet when he has nothing but to offer them but health, wealth, and prosperity what is that going to do me in the day of judgment?

I ask you a question in May 1995 when I lay dying and the doctor gave me 3 hours to live and for my life I'd never come off the operating table in that hour what was emotionalism going to do me? what would health, wealth, and prosperity do me then? if I had a billion dollars I couldn't have bought one more hour of life and certainly I could not have bought eternal life which God only gives in Christ and I'll tell you a hundred times before when I heard the doctor say that I turned to the wall and I asked myself the question I said, Leroy in 3 hours you're going to meet your maker how are you going to stand before him? and the words came back just as swift as they could I will stand before him only in the blood and righteousness in the person of my Lord Jesus Christ that's my hope and beloved this is what, this is what men need the true gospel these individuals are allowed ghosts of folly they beguile and lure with lustful desires and that lustful desires means much more than just passionate sexual desires it means that but I fully believe that these health, wealth, and prosperity men when they preach they are luring to lustful desires because people want money they want to be rich and they don't mind if he says, you send me a hundred dollars and then God will give you two hundred dollars back they don't mind giving that hundred dollars up if they're going to get two hundred back why? money wealth is in their eyes God assigns instead of the glory of God so these lustful desires could mean anything it could mean pleasure it could mean the world it could mean anything that is connected with the world so with great swallowing words of vanity they lure

through the lust of the flesh and what do they do? they beguile they come with subtlety they come with damnable heresies that they might get under their control those whom they preach to that they might make disciples just like themselves in other words, make them to for more a child of hell than themselves using every gimmick they can think of they're judging no matter of it I'm not judging I'm not a fourteen year old kid I'm seventy five years old and in the ministry over forty years I have seen with my own eyes and heard with my own ears on every kind of situation you can think of the damnable heresies and the damnable lies that they produce and God told me to warn you alright I'm going to tell you all something this morning I've never told another audience in my life God allowed me to go up every blind alley every detour that could possibly be in the religious world you're looking at a man that knows and can spot by the grace of God the false you know why?

I've been there did you know that I spoke in tongues? did you know that, did you? I jabbered with a bunch of gibberish and I never will forget I was riding in the car from Richfield to Minneapolis one day with two preachers and I made that statement that I had and they said, well how did you do it?

I said, well let me get my mandala and I'll show you and that's exactly what I did I know the power of Satan you're looking at a man that cast out devils you know that, did you? you're looking at a man baptized in fire all false all evil and God let me go through all of that and deliver me out of all of that that I might be able to stand and know what I'm talking about I speak from actual experience it's false and beloved, if that's what you want you can get all you want of it but it doesn't bring you any nearer to God but if right now, but where you are in your heart, you would fall down before him as a helpless lost sinner you would find that the grace of God is sufficient for every need I can tell you other things, but I wanted to put that in there now those against whom we are here

warned are men who have a false commission never having been called of God to the service they are engaged in they preach error which is subversive of the doctrines according to godliness and brother, that's what we've got to watch for sisters, that's what we've got to watch for brother, that's what we've got to watch for is the doctrine according to godliness in other words I'll give it to you later, it's in my notes but let me give it to you now we should ever remember exactly what God says, listen for the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lust we should live soberly righteously and godly in this present world looking for that blessed hope in the glorious appearance of the great God and our savior Jesus Christ watch

it now who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity for what purpose? that he might purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works to follow the Lord that's where God desires that's what he wants us to do the doctrine that is according to godliness please don't turn me off I want you to hear what we have to say this morning by the grace of God and I want you to be a good believer and search the word of God to find out if what we're saying is true the chief identifying mark of the false teacher and preacher has always been peace, peace when there is none that's the identifying mark you let a soul get awakened to their lost condition and go to the average individual who claims to be a minister of God and they will comfort them in their sin instead of

telling them to go to Christ and pour out their hearts before him cry peace, peace when there is no peace they heal the wounds of sinners slightly and dub with untempered water they prophesy smooth things inventing every easy way to heaven and doing nothing but pandering the nature of man in other words Timothy tells us in 2nd Timothy chapter 4 for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine let's go back to the beginning I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall

judge the quick and the dead and his appearing and his great kingdom preach the word be in sin and season, out of season reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine why? for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine but after their own lust shall they

heap to themselves teachers having itchy ears and they turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables and Lord unless God does a work in the soul of the Holy Spirit every one of us would seek someone to tickle our ears we would seek someone to tickle our ears for by nature we have itchy ears we want somebody to tell us that we are good we had a dear brother who was in the prison for 5 years he was in service with us the other Sunday he sat back there and after service we talked with him for a long time and he says do I praise God I come to this place this morning he said in the jail everybody that came there told us how good we were and it's so funny to hear somebody tell us how bad we are how much we need the Lord how much we need the grace of God and so beloved

there is no easy way to glory and this is what I have found that in the teaching and preaching of the falls there is nothing that searches the conscience I have had my friend go to the lobby tell me a number of times he said Pastor if I come to church and don't have my heart searched I don't think I have been to church well that's the way it should be the message should penetrate to the conscience but there is nothing in their preaching which searches the conscience there is nothing that renders the empty professor uneasy nothing which humbled and caused the hearers to mourn before God overseeing but rather they sit there to be puffed up and to be pleased that they might hear what they want to hear that they can go on in their false security without hope and without God that's an awful

condition in the living like priests, like people the people love it so this is what they want to hear they are not broken souls they do not have a humble heart they have never come to the place of blessing the poor in spirit for there is the kingdom of God that I know nothing, I have nothing I can do nothing humility is not in their religion brokenness of heart they know nothing about sorrow overseeing crying out against a proud heart crying out against a lustful heart crying out against an unbelieving heart all of these things are missing why? because the Holy Spirit is not there to bring the word home to their hearts I want you to hear what I have to say now but on the other hand this is what grieves me on the other hand I have known false preachers who preach depravity who preach

repentance who preach saving faith and seemingly believe in the doctrines of grace but for their shame and their damnation they themselves knew nothing through repentance and lived ungodly lives while they promised others liberty they themselves were the slaves of depravity and defilement having eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sin I know what I am talking about I have known men, preachers who preach depravity preach repentance preach saving faith and seemingly believe in the doctrines of grace but for their shame and their damnation they themselves knew nothing through repentance and lived ungodly lives coming up with the truth promising liberty to others but they themselves were slaves of depravity and defilement having eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sin how do

you know?

I know this is what I have in mind I never will forget you've got a series on the Ten Commandments and I knew when he started what he was going to do in the seventh do you know what the seventh commandment is? Thou shalt not commit adultery I knew exactly what he was going to do with that commandment when he got to it he went to James 4 and he spiritualized it the adulterers and adulteresses he spiritualized but we can't play with the word of God like that I'll tell you this Martin I've told

you before I'd rather a millstone tied around my neck and cast in the depths of the sea than to stand away with the least of God's knowledge I would expect God to strike me down dead if I came in this pulpit and brought you false and did not hold out the truth to you and deal with your hearts in love but deal with your hearts in truth then again the general characteristics of false teachers and prophets and preachers is that they make vital godliness to be less strict and easier than it actually is did you know what I said?

I said in their preaching they make godliness to be less strict and easier and an easier thing than it actually is they make more agreeable to the fall in nature and they encourage the unregenerate to be satisfied with something which comes short of true grace I say this is the common mock of false teachers rejecting the divine way they manufacture one of their own that suits themselves and they make the Christian walk an easier thing than it is I tell you nothing about the conflicts I tell you nothing about the afflictions and trials that those who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution and that God calls us to holiness did you know if holiness was not given to you when you said God saves you you're lost because Christ has made unto us wisdom righteousness sanctification

and redemption he has made unto us all of that and beloved this if holiness is not part of the salvation that God gave you then 1 Thessalonians 4-5 is wrong because it said there that this is the will of God even your sanctification and that 7th verse says of 1 Thessalonians 4 I did not call you unto uncleanness but I called you unto holiness 1 Peter 1-15 says be holy for I am holy Hebrews 12-14 says that without holiness no man shall see the Lord Ephesians 4-22 says that we are for war in righteousness and true holiness 2 Corinthians 7-1 says come ye out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you you see holiness or sanctification is part of our salvation that God gives thus be wary of those who do not have holiness in

their preaching I want you to step further you are listening God is in our midst He is working He promised me to be here this morning promised me to give me His word I want to preach it with a broken heart because the only difference between these false teachers and preachers that He warns us of here and your speaker is the distinguishing grace of God that's all that's the difference the distinguishing grace of God if you have not heard anything else I want you to hear this the emissaries of Satan have fatally deceived souls by false understanding and preaching of salvation of the salvation of good works under salvation can you follow me with that? the emissaries of Satan have fatally deceived souls by false understanding and preaching of the salvation of good works unto salvation now let

me explain myself there are two errors there are two errors that are abroad in the land today first of all salvation by works and salvation without works I want you to get the distinction salvation by works salvation without works the teaching of Rome says that the good works of the Christian have a meritorious value which entitles them to heaven in other words a man can actually work his way to heaven with his good works that's the teaching of Rome or they'll say something about grace they'll say something about the blood but their final teaching is that man is his own savior it's by his works that he is saved therefore they robbed Christ of all of his glory and the word of God is so true on this for it says in Ephesians 2.89 for by grace are you saved through faith and that not of

yourselves but as a gift of God not of works lest any man should boast but the one that ties it down completely is the one in Titus 3 where we find that but after the kindness and love of God our savior to him there appeared not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us hear those words? not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit which he shed on us

abundantly for Jesus Christ our savior but being justified by his grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life it's all grace it's not by works at all and that's on one hand salvation by works which is not the way of God on the other hand there are so many today that

teach and preach salvation without any works following and that's an error cause James tells us and listen to the way he puts it I love the way that James puts us and doesn't leave us in doubt about it he says what does it profit my brethren though a man say he hath faith and have not works can that faith without the works save him? from a standpoint that faith that God gives us will produce good works you see there are certain things about God's salvation that are that God gives gives everyone he gives them holiness and he gives them the power the spirit of God to do good works this is part of them a man may say God has faith and I have works show me thy faith without thy works and I will show thee my faith by my works for if the body without the spirit is dead so faith without works is

dead also that's what he said to James true in other words good works will follow now let me go back and give you Ephesians 2 again for by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves is it a gift of God not of works lest any man should both for we are his workmanship ordained for good works ordained for good works so they will follow but there are those who say well you made your profession didn't you yes you came down here you had a preacher in your hand didn't you yes you believe that Jesus died on the cross didn't you yes but you're saved we'll make a difference while you live nothing can harm you don't ever let anybody tell you you're not saved I've heard that a hundred thousand times don't let anybody tell you you're not saved and beloved that's just as much error as

the Romans with their salvation by works for good works will follow the salvation that God gives and that's holy living they teach that yes good works are desirable but they're not imperative they say so they have taken that statement by our Lord on the cross a sixth cry from the cross it is finished they take it and they lull souls to sleep with a false peace saying Christ did it all the blood covers it all you don't need holiness you don't need good works if you think I'm exaggerating believe me I'm not exaggerating I've heard it with my own ears many and many a time you don't need it the face of the work is finished at the cross God finished it all but I ask you a question did the Lord Jesus Christ at the cross buy us a salvation that there is no repentance needed on the part of a

sinner did the Lord Jesus Christ just die on the cross by simple acceptance on our part and then go on to live like the devil and in the world the rest of the time and be a Sunday Christian God didn't buy such a salvation with the precious blood of Christ for that like that no he didn't beloved these are these are this is a fatal doctrine and these are ravenous wolves and they love to speak it but God says he's against it it is finished do those blessed words signify that Christ so satisfied the requirements of God's holiness that holiness no longer has any see any blessing need and claims upon us did Christ magnify the law and make it honorable that you and I might be lawless did he fulfill all righteousness to purchase for us an immunity from loving God with all of our hearts and

serving him with all of our faculties and being his for time and for eternity no salvation was bought by Christ like that the salvation that God in Christ bought for us is a salvation that makes us a new creation in Christ Jesus all things have passed away and all things have become new Christ died not to make my sorrow for a nature of sin useless Christ did not die to absolve me from the full discharge of my responsibility to walk in love to walk in the will of God to walk in kindness to walk in mercy to walk in peace to walk depending upon God it was a salvation that brought us to ourselves utterly and completely upon him Christ did not die and give me a salvation that I could go on living and having friendship with the world

and living like the world and being like the world no he says

love not the world neither the things that are in the world for he that loveth the world the love of the father is not in him can I tell you all something?

God's got to give you a love for this kind of preaching but it's the truth what I'm bringing before you this morning in the salvation that God gives he makes us new creations in Christ Jesus this is the salvation that God gives I hope you hear it I hope God lights it upon your hearts this morning and for me the culture of the whole matter is what I read to you from Titus 2 and I want to read it again for the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men teaching us the denied ungodliness and worthy of us we should live soberly righteously and godly in this present world looking for that blessed hope from the glorious appearing of the great God and our savior Jesus Christ who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself the peculiar people zealous of good works isn't that precious? isn't that grace?

I praise God for it that's what it is the glorious appearing of the great God and our savior Jesus Christ who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and do what? purify unto himself a peculiar people and God's people are a peculiar people they're his particularly and they'll be zealous for good works then I come to the point the place that I'd rather leave alone than I can't verse 19 God I promise that liberty they themselves are the servants of corruption for whom a man is overcome of the same he is brought in bondage then he's talking about the false prophets and teachers and he said if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ they are again entangled there and overcome the latter end is worse

with them than the beginning that's awful I love that you don't know how long and hard I cried to God under conviction that he would not let me go and turn back the meaning of verse 20 is this there is a saving knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ which leads to salvation in Christ a holy walk a holy life a hatred for sin and a love to God and his Christ I'm going to blow the distinction now listen to me there is a saving knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ which leads to a holy life a holy walk and a hatred for sin and a love for God in Christ watch it then there is a knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ which has only reached the mind the understanding that has never entered into the affections the heart to make them new creations in Christ Jesus and it is

this last knowledge that he's talking about in this verse this last knowledge is what these false men had so that there was no indwelling Holy Spirit to hold them and keep them so they have an escape with that knowledge without Christ they left the world but when everything was gone the only thing they knew was sin and the world and darkness so what did they do? they had a knowledge but they went back and entangled themselves and they overcome and the latter end was worse for them than the beginning and I cried I'm telling you I cried for God to hold me and keep me because I knew enough truth and I had enough knowledge to save a thousand souls but I knew there was no work of grace in my soul until the revelation of Christ came home to my heart and I was able to hold Him by faith let me

show you let me read in your hearing what I read listen the unclean spirit has gone out of the man he walked through dry places seeking rest and finding none he has that knowledge without Christ then he said I will return to my house from which I came out and when he has come he finds it is empty swept and gone life was cleaned up but he found an empty heart an empty place with no rest then what did he do then goeth he and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself and they enter in and

dwell there and the last state of that man is worse than the first even so shall it be under this wicked generation for the Lord is with us that's the word of God so what happens what did he say happens to these these men these apostates what happens to them he tells them verse 21 it

would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than after they have known it without life to turn from the holy commandment given unto them that which they said they embraced I weep in my soul every time I think about it I've had a brother seventy years of age he and I were ordained to the gospel ministry the same night where is he today in New York he had a knowledge but it wasn't the knowledge of Christ my heart breaks for him every time I think about him but he will not let me talk with him he would kill me if he had opportunity he told me that a dozen times he said I'd put a bullet through your brain right now if I could get away with it he hated me you know why holiness made him feel miserable he liked to be around me he didn't think of me but of the grace

of God for my brother it would have been better if he had never known the way of righteousness do you think there is any hope for him pastor I don't damn this old hell I'm just telling you he's lived this long in that condition without hope and without God heaven denied everything let me read you another scripture that was mine to plead before God's throne for this was in my mind in Hebrews chapter 10 for if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth that we may make no more sacrifice for sins but are fearful looking for of judgment and fire and damnation which shall devour the adversaries he that despised Moses law died without mercy unto two or three witnesses how much so a punishment suppose ye shall be thought worthy to have trodden underfoot the son of

God and have carried the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified and the holy thing and have done despite him for the spirit of grace for we know him that sent vengeance but oneth unto me I will recompense hath the Lord and again the Lord shall judge his people it is a fearful thing to fall in the hands of the living God that's exactly what he's saying here in 2 Peter chapter 2 it is better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than after they've known it to turn from the holy commandment which is delivered unto them then he goes to the Proverbs and he gets a proverb but it is happened unto them according to the true proverb the dog is turned to his own vomit again and the sow who was washed turned to water in the mire what a picture of the apostate what a picture

of the false prophet and teacher have I been too hard on him this morning? look what God's word says about it that's what I said and yet I know from experience what the word of God says here is true have you ever seen a dog turned to his vomit? well have you ever seen a hog? about 8, 9 years old we were living out from New Orleans about 4 or 5 miles my father had a whole pen full of hogs raised to kill and us boys in the place we'd go out there with a hose and we'd hose them down try to rye them and they would invariably they would take them and me right into the mire you could clean them but they weren't satisfied until they were watered in the mire grotten, grotten remember the hogs? grotten and grotten they loved it loved it that's a picture of man without Christ loves his sin loves

his way now some of you some of you are going to ask me how then does God save a soul? that's a good question and I could not leave you this morning without telling you I couldn't bring you here and leave you that's a good question I think it's a timely question and by the grace of God the Holy Spirit filled my mouth with his precious words I want to answer you first of all we must understand that salvation is of the Lord we must understand that salvation is of the Lord from beginning from the beginning to the end salvation is of the Lord salvation is an inward work of the Holy Spirit he works in us only he can regenerate and raise a dead soul from the grave of sin beloved I could talk to a man and get him on a petition but I have not got

him one hair's breadth to Christ I cannot draw a

man to Christ you cannot draw a man to Christ there are precious souls that you know in your life beloved that if it was in your power you would have already saved them you would have brought them in but it's an inward work of the Spirit in the soul that doesn't keep us from witnessing that doesn't keep us from preaching that doesn't keep us from praying that doesn't keep us from walking and praising God and living a holy life but I cannot save a soul I cannot awaken a soul every man outside of Christ is dead and trespasses and sins that's the reason he tells us in Ephesians 2 who has he quickened men alive who are dead and trespasses and sins this is the work of God so we first must understand that salvation is of the Lord that regeneration is of the Holy Spirit that life must come by

God planting in us that spiritual seed you take a woman a young lady she grows up to be a woman she's in her twenties thirties forties never married never know a man she could beg she could cut herself she could work to her fingers to the bone she could do anything under the sun but she could not put life in her womb put her to get married and the seed and the sperm beat and so it is in the human heart Christ has come the Holy Spirit has to come and plant Christ the seed in our soul that's the reason when Nicodemus came to the Lord Jesus Christ and he said I know that you men come from God and work all kind of miracles and the Lord said unless you are born again you cannot see the kingdom of God so how can a man be born a second time when he go and enter back in his mother's womb oh no to

be born again by the Spirit of God by water by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit must come and do that work alright what does he do when he comes by this work of regeneration in us by the Holy Spirit we are drawn by the Spirit of God to Christ we are shown our sinful condition before God that we are lost sinners that we are depraved sinners that we abide under the wrath of God because we have broken His holy law a man must know that he has sinned and come short of the glory of God and the glory of God is Christ if you do not know Him you are still short of the glory of God to know Him is to have the glory of God now this work of grace that the Holy Spirit works in the heart can be the work of a few hours like the man the thief on the cross all that thief had to go by was the inscription

that was written across the top it says Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews but he also had to have the Holy Spirit working in him to convict him of sin that he could turn to this other thief whom he was a few hours ago ridiculing the master with and to know that he was the sinner we die justly this man has done nothing amiss there are two or three other things in the scriptures I believe that was the most the greatest example of saving faith that our God known in the scriptures this man looked at Christ and all of His blood and glory with all of His suffering faith made hold of Him and saw in Him the Lord God of glory and glory that's the way we come to Him by faith would I able to see Him like this man did he could have never believed Him without the work of the Spirit in his heart

the other thief didn't believe in Him it was because the Holy Spirit had regenerated him and showed him he was a sinner follow us now the Holy Spirit by the word of God shows us that God Himself has provided a lamb Isaac turned to his father that day on Mount Moriah and he said father here is the word and here is the fire but where is the offering and Abraham looked at him and said son the Lord will provide Himself a lamb and the Lord He has provided for us a lamb that's why John said behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world God shows us that God Himself has provided His lamb His only begotten Son to die as our substitute and that by faith in His blood we shall be justified from all things and we could not be justified by the works of the law along with this work in

our hearts He gives us the gift of repentance which leads us to turn to God from sin repentance leads to the confessing of sin repentance leads to the forsaking of sin repentance leads to the falling us falling at the feet of the Lord Jesus in humble sorrow for our sins confessing our rebellion our pride our unbelief our lust and then hoisting the white flag of surrender laying down the arms of our rebellion against Him and confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father that's God's way of salvation it can be over a period of years it can be over a period of months days or weeks or it could be like a thief on the cross or it could be like Lydia in Acts 16 whom it says that the Lord opened her heart I don't lay down rules to come by but I'll tell you what God works in

the soul cause if you've never been brought to repentance you know nothing of saving faith because listen to me beloved saving faith and saving repentance are Siamese twins they call God never gives one without giving the other and wherever you find true faith you'll find true repentance and wherever you find true repentance you'll find true faith and how will it show itself how, how will true repentance show itself well He tells us in His word He gives it to us in 2nd Corinthians chapter 7 He said for for godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of but the sorrow of this world worketh death for this same thing that you sorrowed after a godly sword so what does repentance bring this godly this godly sorrow that is repentance it worketh repentance unto salvation it's

a repentance whereby we are, what careful is it Lord in you we are careful to repent we are careful to tell God of our sinful condition in other words we hide nothing we come clean and we come clear with God yea what cleared of yourselves I can say it again we come clean and we come clear with God we hold back nothing yea what indignation we hate sin yea what vehement desire we cry after Christ yea what zeal we want Him above all our hearts goes out to Him yea what revenge I do not want the world I do not want sin I want Christ and God saves us by His grace through faith He makes us a new creation in Christ Jesus He gives us a new heart He gives us a new nature He gives us a new spirit He gives us of His Holy Spirit to teach us to read us to keep us to pray in us and to continue to reveal

unto us His Holy Word that we have in Christ this new life of which Christ is the head the Lord the great high priest He is the one who lives to make intercession for us within the veil my dear brother Michael is in that 44th chapter of Isaiah on Sunday night he is going to get to my verse pretty soon you know where my verse is in Isaiah? 44? 22nd verse for the glorious day for that's the day when faith paired in the soul by the blood and hours of faith carved by transgressions and the carved by sins returned unto me for I have redeemed thee that's tense and when that came to my heart my heart in power that day and I longed for this and prayed for this for faith made hold of it when it said sing all ye heavens for the Lord hath done it and how many times I come there and I sing and I say

oh sing all ye heavens for Jehovah hath saved Leroy Shelton Jr. from going down to the pit why not? can you put your name there? that's blessed to put your name there sins brought it out transgressions forgiven redeemed by the grace of God knowing him and his salvation in Christ sing all ye heavens for the Lord hath done it I told you salvation was of the Lord and that's exactly what it is the Lord hath done it so what do you do after that? well I tell you what you do you keep coming back every day to get new instructions from his word you cry to him Lord show me how to walk show me how to talk and I don't know why God did it but he did it for me he let me walk 11 months in first love I know why he did it because I've been so long in all these blind alleys and my soul has cried to him

Psalms 35 over and over and over and over again say unto my soul Lord my salvation I want him to tell my soul that he was my salvation and he did in Isaiah 44.22 he heard my cry and he let me walk in first love

for 11 months where I had my first battle with Satan and then I thought I was going to die but he wouldn't let me so you see the gate to the door through which we come into this way of spiritual life in Christ is Christ himself he's that door he's that gate and then when we get in that way it's a narrow way and we find that it's still Christ he's all in all so he says I am the way the truth and the life and no man cometh unto the father but by me so the way he brings us is a way of grace he keeps us in that way of grace and we keep always coming back to him looking to him for every

need for he is our life he is our hope he is our salvation he is our redeemer he is our all in all I have none beside him for my ignorance he is my wisdom for my justification he is my righteousness for my filthiness he is my sanctifier and for my deliverance out of hell he is my redeemer I want to preach another message I want you to watch this one this morning by the grace of God warning but yet praising God we can look to Christ holding our hope in him and what he does for us give lessons and I pray that God will take it home and write it upon our hearts

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