

The Gospel That Makes a Gospel Community, Part 2

by Michael Durham

Salvation is not just deliverance from sin, but from the present power of idols in our lives, and it requires us to believe the truth about God and look to Christ for what we need.

Scripture: Psalm 51:12, Romans 1:16-17, Romans 1:21, Romans 1:26, 1 Corinthians 10:13-14, 1 John 5:20

Topics: "Salvation By Faith", "Gospel Community"

Description

Michael Durham preaches on the power of the Gospel to bring salvation to all who believe, revealing the righteousness of God and the consequences of ungodliness and idolatry. He emphasizes the need for believers to deepen their understanding of the Gospel to experience its full richness and to grow in sharing it with others. The sermon delves into the stages of salvation, highlighting the first stage as deliverance from sin's penalty, which is the wrath of God on those who do not believe, leading to a distance from God. Durham explains that salvation not only saves from the negative aspects but also for a relationship with God.

Transcript

Romans 1:16-32

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man--and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26 For this reason God

gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

How can we speak of a salvation to the uttermost? It is beyond the comprehension of men and beyond the ability of heaven's highest angel to tell. And yet, the Bible commands us to expand our knowledge of the Gospel of mercy so that we may experience more of its wealth. The inability to know all the Gospel did not stop the Apostle Paul from praying for the Ephesians that they would experience fuller knowledge of this Gospel. He prays that they "being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height--to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge." He prays for something that passes knowledge. A knowing that is not just intellectual but a knowing nonetheless. Does it confuse you that you could know and yet it not necessarily be intellectual? This is where many people stumble at the cross and fall, never again to get up. May God help us to see it this morning.

It has been established that for this church or any church to grow it must do so by speaking the Gospel to one another inside and outside the church. If we are to expand our knowledge of God's good news heralded in the person of Jesus Christ we must apply ourselves to that Gospel that we may be able to speak the truth, encourage, edify, strengthen one another in the Gospel and be able to proclaim it outside the church to the lost.

In our last message, we explained that there's three stages of salvation and the first stage of salvation is deliverance from sin's penalty. What was the penalty of sin according to the Apostle Paul in our text? It's the wrath of God already on those who do not believe. This is the penalty of sin. It puts you and God at a distance where you are unable to know or interact with God. The wrath of God is that you are not able to understand this God, know Him on a personal level, or interact with Him in a vital relationship. This is the penalty of sin. We said last week that salvation doesn't just deliver you from the negative aspect, like the wrath of God against sin, but salvation saves you from something for something. You are saved for the benefits and blessings of God Himself and His love for you.

Last week we showed how God has delivered you from the penalty of sin so that you may know Jesus. That's the positive. The wrath of God is not to know God, and fellowship with Him; it is to live your life independent of God, which is what we wanted before we became Christians. That's what the sinner wants who is not yet saved. God gives him or her that very thing, a life without God; therefore salvation must be the deliverance from not knowing God for the purpose of knowing God. This is what's happened to us. Salvation is more than being forgiven of your sins, it's to know God, and not just be rightly related to Him but to relate to Him. That was last week.

This week we will examine stage two of salvation. Why is there a second stage? The simple answer is I need more saving than just from the penalty of sin. I'm thankful for this but I'm a messed up person. I've

got a lot of problems and issues still yet today. I need a Savior today.

Stage Two of Salvation: Deliverance From The Power of Sin

For The Purpose of the Worship of Christ

When you are not worshipping Jesus, the power of sin has been allowed to work. It's sin that disrupts our worship. That's what Paul shows us here. We who have been saved from sin's dominion and penalty must painfully acknowledge such does not mean we are totally free from sin's influence. Sin's power remains strong. The Bible doesn't say sin died, it says we died. It also says that we are not to let sin reign in our mortal bodies. It doesn't reign over us but it can reign in us. If Christ is a Savior worth knowing, then He has a plan to deal with our present struggle with sin. It is my joy and privilege to tell you that our Jesus has the very thing to deliver us from sin's powerful sway.

Let's look at sin for a moment. I know it's depressing to even think of the subject but sin is a master at having mastery over us.

I. Sin's Mastery

What is the power of sin that it can sway even believers? Why do you still sin? Why are you still enticed? What is the power of sin that it would still appeal to us?

A. The Power of Sin's Appeal is Idolatry.

Sin appears appealing because it promises better gods than the God of the Bible. Sin says that someone or something can do a better job of helping, caring, and providing for you than Jesus.

"because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, (when Adam and Eve rebelled against God, something happened to them internally and spiritually; darkness came. They could no longer glorify Him and worship Him as they had prior to the fall) 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man--and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen." (Romans 1:21-25)

Paul shows that all temptation is a temptation to idolatry. Sin promises you a god that will do much better than what God has done heretofore. It promises that the god it's suggesting will always take care and provide for you much better than the Lord does. Paul is stating what he establishes in other epistles, that temptation is nothing more than a temptation to idolatry.

For example, 1 Corinthians 10:13, a very popular verse, says that we do not have to sin.

"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

Praise God. He is right there ready with a way of escape. And so it is good news--you don't have to give in to temptation. You've been set free from its dominion. God will make a way of escape. However, notice the

next verse. Interesting that Paul tags this verse with the next.

Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry." (1 Corinthians 10:14)

Paul says every temptation is a temptation to idolatry. When you are tempted you are presented with a choice of a different god, someone you can believe or something you can trust to provide better for you than you believe God is doing for you at that present moment.

John shows that idolatry is the at the heart of everything that opposes the Gospel.

"And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. 21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen." (1 John 5:20-21)

Why would two apostles writing to Christian churches say, "flee idolatry . . . keep yourselves from idols"? Idolatry is sin's appeal. That's the way sin maneuvers its way into your heart and mind. You say, I've never sinned thinking, "I'm going to pursue a different god." No, you don't. But that's what sin does. That's its mastery. It's a mastery of deceit in convincing you that what you're doing is not pursuing another god, but it is. Why? Because worship is not defined as the singing of "worship" songs. It's not that. Worship is to build your life on someone or something, looking for care, help, and provision from that person or thing. Worship is an act of life where you revolve yourself around that person or thing in order for them to provide for you the essentials of life. So when sin comes along and says, "Here's something that you ought to think of and consider," it's actually saying you can't trust God for this, you need this. This will do a better job than you waiting on God.

If that's the case, and it is, salvation must be deliverance from the power of idols.

B. Salvation Must Be Deliverance From the Power of Idols.

Salvation is not just deliverance from sin but from the present power of idols in your life.

Look at God's response to man's idolatry. He turns us over to our idols. He simply resigns you to the idol's influence.

"For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;" (Romans 1:26-28)

After God gives you over to your lusts you become perverted. When we use the word perverted we think of the grossest types of sins. We often attach the name pervert to certain people who practice those kinds of sin that we think are twisted, but Paul doesn't do that. Paul says that every sin is a manifestation of some perversion. What is perversion? It is a distortion of God's original design for whatever you are worshipping. Another way of saying it is: Perversion is what sin really is--a distortion of God's design for us.

For example, let's look at gluttony. Gluttony is a perversion in that you eat and delight in food beyond the satisfaction of the body's needs. God gave food for you to enjoy. There are many commands to feast in

the Bible. God even ordained three feasts for the nation of Israel where they ate and drank and enjoyed themselves. God gave food to be a pleasurable experience and secondly to fuel the body. A perversion of that would be to delight in the food more than you delight in God or to eat more than the body requires. Why would that be a perversion? Because it's not according to God's intended design and that's all perversion is. That means all of these sins are simply manifestations of the perversions of our soul and our idolatry.

This set man on a course of never experiencing the satisfaction he was designed to experience. Things and people cannot satisfy you as you were designed. Only God can. It's heartbreaking when you see people pursuing things or other people to satisfy what only an infinite God can. Instead of getting angry with them we ought to pity them and have compassion on them for such are some of us even now. Do you have a problem with temptation now and then? Do you have sin creep into your life? What is that? It's idolatry; Paul's already established that fact. Why are you looking to something else to satisfy you? Because you've believed the lie. What's the lie? Verse 25.

"who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen." (Romans 1:25)

The lie is always God is not sufficient. God is not good enough, He's not gracious enough, great enough, glorious enough. Therefore we turn to these other things. Notice these words worship and served the creature. You never worship unless you serve what you worship. Worship and service go hand in hand. You can't separate the two.

Look in your life. What is the driving motivation that you're serving? That will tell you who your idol or idols are because worship is to serve. Something or someone is so monumental to your life that your life cannot be balanced or happy without them or it. Therefore you give yourself to the idol and that's why idolatry has such power, it can't satisfy but it convinces you that God can't either. You exchange a truth of God for a lie. You've already believed that God is not adequate so you keep searching to find something that can. When the whole time, God says, "If you'll just simply trust Me, you'll have more. Come back and believe Me. Believe the truth." And when you believe the truth you will worship this God who has been proclaimed to you.

Perversion is therefore a manifestation of sin. Let me deal with this because this passage is very relevant to our times right now. Often Christians look at Romans 1 very inadequately. Romans 1 is often used to say that of all the sins in the world homosexuality is the worst. Paul never intended anyone to get that from what he said. He uses homosexuality in verses 26 and 27 because he knows that most of his readers would agree there is nothing more unnatural than homosexuality or lesbianism. He even says so, does he not? All of his readers would understand that it is not natural. According to God's design. Marriage was intended for one man and for one woman. I'm not trying to slander any group of people; I'm just establishing what God has established. In fact, I'm not establishing anything, am I? It's already established, I'm just saying what God has established. The problem with many Christians is that we've taken this text and used it in a way God never intended. We say, "My sins are just that, sins, but homosexuality is a perversion." But you need to start reading verse 29 all the way through 32 and read the list again. All these are perversions! Perversion is to take something that God designed for good and worship of Him and use it in a different way.

For example, strife is one of the words of Paul's list of perversions. Verse 29, "...full of envy, murder, strife..." Strife is a perversion of God's order. Let me give you an example. Your husband acts in such a way, either in his actions or words, that hurts and wounds you and because of that you're so hurt that you say, "I can't stand this man. I can't handle this. He doesn't give me the attention I deserve, he doesn't honor me, he neglects and mistreats me." Now you respond in retribution. You try to solve the issue by giving him a dose of his own medicine thinking that might wake him up, and now there's strife in the home.

Paul is saying that strife exists because there is idolatry. The perversion of strife is the manifestation of idolatry. It's a perversion because God designed for husbands and wives to dwell together in unity as one, not two separate people. But with strife, you're acting like two different people with two different agendas. That's not God's design, therefore it is a perversion. Husbands are to lead and love their wives as Christ leads and loves the church and gave Himself for it and the women are to submit to their husbands as the church submits to Christ. Anything else is a perversion.

Now where did the idolatry start? If we can see this then we can see why it is idolatry. It's idolatry because you, the wife, believed a lie about God. Yes, your husband also believed a lie about God to have dishonored you in the first place but we're not dealing with him. I want you to see that when there is strife there is idolatry because you've exchanged the truth of God for a lie. The Apostle Paul is saying that you are actually worshipping your husband. That can't be true, you say, because I can't stand him! You can't worship someone you can't stand! Oh, yes, you can. You've placed your world's harmony and balance on that man. Your world is wrapped around his approval of you, his acceptance of you, the way he treats you. You cannot be happy without him; you cannot have pleasure without his approval and his kindness and his romance and all the things you look to him to validate you for. When he doesn't do that it's still idolatry because now your world cannot find peace or balance without him.

What should that tell you? You've believed a lie about God. You're not believing that God is all-sufficient to give you everything to validate and approve of you.

Ladies, I'm not just picking on you. This is applicable to everyone. To your employer, friend, to a neighbor, one another here at the church, to your children, or parents. In any relationship where there is strife and division it is because somebody in that relationship is putting too much emphasis on the other person and that is always the result of believing a lie about God, that God is not good enough, not great enough, not gracious enough, nor glorious enough to give you everything you need.

Pastor, I don't understand, you say. How can my life be at peace and there be joy when my spouse, someone I live with, is unlovable, not enjoyable to be around, and is always contentious? How can I have that?

Let me assure you that I do not believe in a fairy tale world where the Gospel eliminates all problems. We're not advocating that. You're going to have pain and hurt, you will have sorrow, but listen to me, Christ is enough to maintain peace and contentment in your soul, if you'll just believe the truth about God and not look to the spouse, the mother, the father, the child, the employer, the neighbor, for what you need to be looking to Christ for.

So you don't like your boss and you can't be happy in your work because of the way he is? I'm telling you, you've put that man on a pedestal. And while you may not like him, he's an idol because you are refusing to believe the Gospel in Jesus. The Gospel says you work for Christ not man. And this Employer, Jesus, will always pay better than any many will pay. You say you should have gotten the promotion but he

overlooked you and gave it to someone else half as qualified as you. Dear brother, sister, do you not believe the truth of the Gospel that you're seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus right now? That's better than any position or title on this earth. You say that's not enough. Well, that's the problem. You have believed a lie. You believe the title or position would be better than what you have in Jesus. That's the power of sin's appeal--idolatry.

How do you get deliverance from that? You need a Savior.

II. Salvation's Deliverance From Idolatry

A. The Gospel is the Power to Break the Power of Sin.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." (Romans 1:16)

I still need salvation, and this tells me the power to deliver me is the Gospel. How does the Gospel break the appeal of idols?

B. It is the Revelatory Power of the Gospel That Overcomes the Power of Idols.

"For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'" (Romans 1:17)

Look at the word revealed. It is this revelatory power, this ability of God to reveal something not just to the mind but to the soul, that has an expulsive power. Expulsive power means it's stronger than other desires and expels them by its sheer greatness. The revelation that God gives is so powerful that it expels all competing idols. When God reveals the beauty of Christ all other beauties lose their attraction. When Jesus is seen not with physical eyes, not just with the intellect, but with the spirit within a person, that man or woman sees the beauty and is drawn to it. He knows that Christ is better than the appeal of all idols. That's what happened to me when I got saved, it's what happened to you when you got saved, and it's what we need today. I've got to believe the truth of the Gospel, but I don't believe the truth of the Gospel without God's revealing power aiding me. It's the revelatory power of the Gospel that overcomes the power of sin.

Here's your solution: see Jesus. Get another glimpse of Him. See Him yet again. Go back to the Gospel and look for Jesus again. What Paul is talking about here is not just learning the information of the Gospel. I'm not trying to teach you right now, I'm really not. I know that sounds contradictory to what you think I'm doing, but I'm not really trying to teach you anything. However, I am hopeful that as I'm proclaiming and teaching, God's Spirit starts revealing truth and opening eyes and hearts of both saints and sinners. That's the power.

You know when you've read a verse so many times and then read it again and, man, it's like you've never read it before? There's something about that verse that has such freedom and liberty in it and there's something about it that sets your day on a course that is awesome. That's revelatory power.

We're memorizing Scripture so we can meditate throughout the day--but that's not the power. It's not in just memorization. That's law, and that's flesh. What we're hoping to do as we're memorizing the Scripture and living in obedience to God is that He shows up and reveals Himself. That's what we're hoping for. That's what we're believing Him for. That's what we need.

How do you get God to do that? Wouldn't it be nice if I had a little formula, a little trick to hand out and say, "If you do this every time, God shows up"? But it's not that way at all. So how do you get God to show up?

I spent quite a bit of time yesterday afternoon with somebody who has heard the Gospel over and over but can't believe it. I guess a better way of saying it is they won't believe it. I said to them it is a paradox. God has to open your eyes to see it, but also don't forget the Bible says you have to seek Him for it with all your heart. All I could see with that person is that they really didn't want it. I say the same thing to us. When I'm struggling it's because I want God to do it my way. I want to control Him. I want to manipulate Him so He will always help me my way. And He won't do it. He just won't do it. Tomorrow I'll have been saved 28 years and for 28 years I can give you one lesson from my life: God cannot be manipulated and controlled. He can't.

How do you get God to reveal Himself to you? There is one word. Brokenness.

Where does God dwell? He says He dwells with people with a broken and a contrite heart. We hear those words and think, Broken. Sad, morose, crying, down, despondent, that's brokenness. No it's not. It means humility. When someone is broken it means his or her will has been surrendered and yielded. That's brokenness. It's the same word we would use about breaking an animal. "We housebroke our dog." "We broke the horse so he is now safe for riding." What do we mean by that? That we can make the horse sad and weep and profess its sins, going around gloomy? No, it means its will has now been submitted to the will of the rider. That's brokenness. It's not being sad or acting super spiritual by being despondent all the time, "Woe is me!" That's not brokenness. Brokenness is a yielded spirit that God can do whatever He wants with.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." We think of pure in heart and think of impurities, we think of sin, but we need to expand our thinking. God didn't want you just to think about sins, He wanted you to think of the motives. What's a pure heart? A heart that doesn't have secret motives that tries to manipulate. A pure heart is a heart without guile that is open and transparent, not trying to work its will over on someone else. Who are those who see God? Those who have a pure heart, which means a broken and a contrite spirit.

I've learned something recently. I teach the doctrine of desperate dependency. You've heard me preach it many, many times. It's a doctrine that simply says you cannot truly depend on God until you become desperate. But do you know what I've also discovered? I've learned that I can be desperate without being dependent. I can get desperate alright, but in my desperation I'm not depending on God, I'm depending on me to convince God, to control God, to get God to do what I want. That's not desperate dependency.

It reminds me of a story I heard many years ago when I heard for the first time Paris Reidhead's famous sermon 10 Shekles and a Shirt. Toward the end of the sermon he told of a preacher who came to him in Huntington, West Virginia where he was preaching a meeting. After the service he came to Brother Paris and said, "I've heard you've had an experience with God. I want that experience. I have a fantastic church that's growing. Our Sunday School is growing, and I have a radio program, but recently I've been sensing there is something lacking in my life. I want to get filled with the Spirit like you. I've come here so you could help me get filled." He looked at that young man intently and immediately he said he saw himself. Not himself in the past but himself right then and there. He saw that he had the same problem that young man had--wanting God to do for him what he wanted and the way he wanted it. So he said to the young man, "I can't do it. I'm sorry."

The young man was astonished. "What do you mean you can't help me? Surely you can help me."

"I can't help you. I know what you're like. You're just like me, you've come up here and told me all about your success. It's like driving up to a filling station in a big Cadillac and God's the service attendant and you say, 'God, fill 'er up with the best unleaded gas You've got.' That's what you've asked God to do today. God doesn't work that way. He will never give you His blessings and power for your purposes and end. Here's what you've got to do, young man. You've got to give the keys to God and slide over in the passenger's seat." He looked at the young man again and said, "No, that won't work because I know you. You'll reach over and try to grab the steering wheel. You need to get in the backseat. But no, that won't work either. You'll try to climb over the backseat and still yet control. Here's what you need to do. Get out of the car, unlock the trunk, give the keys to Jesus, crawl into the trunk, close the lid, then whisper into the key-hole, 'Jesus, take me wherever You want. Take me wherever You want to go. I don't care, I'm Yours!'"

That's brokenness. You don't cry out to God for God to do it your way or save you the way you think you need to be saved. When you are humble enough to say, "Lord, I don't care, I believe in You, I'm so trusting in You that whether you give me health or sickness, wealth or poverty, success or failure, popularity or unpopularity, whether You bless me or You curse me, I'm going to trust You!" then God will show you Jesus.

There's no formula to it, friends. It's a principle. It's a law of the Spirit. When a man or woman is broken before Christ that they will trust God and really believe the truth about God that He is good and always does good no matter how it looks, that's brokenness. And when a man is broken God will always respond to him. I know some of you may be despondent this morning and things aren't going the way we want it to go, but brother, God is good. He is great. He is gracious. He is glorious. I can trust Him. I can climb in the trunk and say, "Okay, God, just take me wherever You want to go because I believe the truth that You are everything I need and I don't need anything else."

You say that you'd like to be able to pray that but you wouldn't be honest if you prayed it today, I understand that. Believe me. I do understand. We can get down on our face and say, "Oh God, help me, help me. I'll do whatever You want me to do, anything You want me to do," yet, really, down deep in our hearts we're only trying to impress Him so that He'll do what we want Him to do. We're still trying to manipulate and control God. That's why you pursue idols in the first place. You find out you can't manipulate God, you can't control Him because He won't do things your way, so you leave Him and go find things you think you can control that will validate, please, or help you in the way you think it needs to come.

If you can't be honest praying that this morning, knowing your heart will still try to manipulate, can I give you a prayer that helps me? It's the prayer of Psalm 51:12. David has sinned the sin of murder and adultery and tried to conceal it for more than a year. But God causes him to see his sin through somebody else confronting him, which is amazing in itself, isn't it? This man, so close to God, couldn't even see his own sin the way he should see it until somebody confronted him? But when it happened, he truly repented.

Psalm 51:12 in the KJV says "uphold my spirit" but literally in the Hebrew it reads,

"Restore the joy of Your salvation to me, and give me a willing spirit." (HCSB)

Give me a willing spirit. David knew that his heart wanted control and in that word he's acknowledging that, "God, I know I want to keep control. I want to control You. I want You to do the things I want in the way I want, but Lord, will You help me to have a heart that is absolutely surrendered and yielded to You? Help me be broken!" Why did David pray that prayer? For this reason--He believed God. He believed that God would answer that kind of a prayer and I'm here today to say in the name of the Lord if you will pray, "Lord, make my heart willing. It isn't willing but I want it to be," He will answer that and you will begin to return from whence you came when you departed from the living God.

I'm talking to Christians right now. When you pray that way you'll experience revival because that's what revival is. It's when you say once again what you said the day you were converted. Do you remember the day? Do you remember the season, if you don't remember the day? There was such a desire for God that it expelled everything else? Do you want to walk with God as you did then? Then go right back to that and He will make you willing.

The same is true to you, my friend, if you're not a Christian. Ask God to give you a willing spirit. The Bible says, "Seek Me with all your heart" and He gives you a promise that you will find Him. You will find Him. God will save you from all the things you're looking to provide for you but cannot. Those things, idols, now control you. That's the nature of sin. It allures you with its appeal that it has a better god, a better way to care, provide and help you, and you believe it and now you're captured and can't find your way out. You're in a cave a mile deep and pitch black with all of these different tunnels and caverns and you don't know your way out, you can't even remember how you got into it. But if you would just cry out to God in absolute brokenness, I'm telling you He will show up and show you Himself. The revelatory power of that Gospel will change your life. May God help you to cry out to Him this morning. Amen.

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