

Man's Greatest Problem

by Paul Washer

The greatest sin of the West is the failure to honor God and give thanks, and man's greatest problem is that God is good and loving, and humanity's failure to reciprocate this goodness and love.

Duration: 55:31

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Romans 1:18, Galatians 5:22-23

Topics: "Depravity"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the issue of injustice and how it contradicts the nature of God. He gives examples of unjust punishments, such as beating someone up and imprisoning them for 50 years for a minor offense. The speaker argues that our sense of justice comes from God, who created us in His image. He also emphasizes the importance of accepting our own faults and rebellion against God as the first step towards Christianity. The sermon concludes with a thought-provoking scenario, highlighting the fear of exposing our inner thoughts and actions to others.

Transcript

Now, it gives me great pleasure to be able to invite Paul to come up now and bring God's Word to us. It's good to have you with us, Paul. Thank you very much for coming.

It's normally our custom that we pray for the preacher before he preaches, and I'm sure you have no objection to that. Let's pray together. Father, we are grateful to you for sending our brother Paul to us.

Thank you for his ministry, for the fruitfulness of it, for the truth of it, for the empowering of your Holy Spirit upon him and the message that you bring through him. Anoint him afresh, we pray. We thank you for all the preparation that has already been a part of this day.

But refresh him and strengthen him in the busyness of his schedule. Be his strength, be his peace, be his joy. For we pray this in the name of Christ, our Redeemer.

Amen. Well, it's a great privilege for me to be here. Tremendous privilege.

The great scholar C.S. Lewis said that one of the greatest evidences of Christianity is joy. If that's the case, then your pastor definitely has Christianity. There's just some things that you cannot learn.

Joy is one of them. True joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and it's contagious. When he was standing up here and began to say different things, I came out of my sleep, my tiredness, and felt joy in my own heart.

And then I also want to greatly thank you for the prayers for my country. My country is very, very needy. We look strong on the outside, but in fact, we are very, very weak.

We look very religious on the outside. But there is great argument in Scripture to say that we've already been turned over as a people. Please continue to pray.

Probably more than ever in the history of our country, our Christians are terrified. They're afraid. They know that if this current administration has its way, there will be little freedom left.

Myself and other ministers have already met and talked about if we continue to preach the truth, how inside of 10 years we will be looking at fines, maybe even prison. We are living in very dangerous times in our country. We know that there has been a freedom of religion, but that is being eaten away, though the world does not know it.

Little by little, we know it. There is such an opposition to Christianity as you cannot believe. And the problem is, it is not open.

It is very sly. A law here, a law there, hidden in other laws. But slowly the noose is being tightened around our neck.

We also realize that though our country sends out many missionaries, not all of them should be sent out. For many great abominations have come out of our country. Many wrong ideas and doctrines have come out of our country.

And the church today in America, though it seems that the evangelical community is very, very large, much of it is a distortion or even a departure from historical Christian truth. We need a great deal of prayer. I think it is somewhere around 4,000 babies a day are aborted in my country.

We need a great deal of prayer. If this administration has its way, all the pro-life legislation that has been fought for over the last 40 years will be completely taken out of the books. We need prayer.

There are certain things that we are now being told that we should caution ourselves in the pulpit. For if we speak of sin, it could be a hate crime. We need prayer, prayer.

Let me, let's just go the time we have for just a moment to the book of Romans, chapter one. Let me share with you something about Benjamin Franklin. You'll probably know the great American statesman and inventor.

He was also known as quite the immoral man. His grandparents were Puritan in their theology and in their morality, in what they believed about God and in their lifestyle. His grandparents.

But his parents decided that they wanted the Puritan morality and ethic without the Puritan God. Benjamin Franklin decided that he wanted neither of the two. The point that I'm trying to make is this.

Look at the West. Look at England. Look at the United States of America.

Rampant immorality. Violence. The death of innocence.

And to some degree, the death of beauty. From where does it come? It comes because of a departure from God. Civilization cannot exist.

Morality cannot exist. Philosophical terms such as love, beauty, poetry, meaning, purpose. None of these things can exist apart from the God who made us.

For apart from him, we are nothing more than chemistry interacting with itself. And I want you to look in Romans chapter 1. It says in verse 21, For even though they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations and their foolish heart was darkened. Look in verse 26.

For this reason, God gave them over to degrading passions. Look in verse 28. And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind.

The point of this text is this. The gross immorality that is found in this chapter is not the cause of the judgment of God. It's the result of the judgment of God.

It's God turning a nation and a people over to itself. Now, why does he do that? Well, he says quite clearly, Although they knew God, they did not honor him as God nor give thanks. You see, the great sin of the West, the great sin of our societies is that although we knew God, we did not continue honoring him as God nor giving thanks.

That's the great sin. As we look around society today, we're quick to point the finger at this is the worst sin or this is the worst sin. No, this is the worst sin.

But in fact, all these sins and all these maladies of our society are the result of one great sin, a hidden atheism, a professed atheism, an agnosticism, an ignorance, purposeful ignorance of God. The greatest sin is that you know him and you don't care. Sometimes I have to speak in universities and whenever, of course, you speak in university, there's great debate, great debate.

And someone will walk up to me and say that they are an atheist or they are an agnostic. And my reply to them will always be this. No, you're not.

You're not. They say, well, of course I am. No, you're not.

You see, at that moment I have to decide between two opinions. Either this one individual talking to me is telling me the truth or the Bible is not telling me the truth. I have to make a decision.

Which authority am I going to believe? This young student standing before me or the Scriptures? Because I want to tell you something. There is a reason why the Scriptures do not give arguments with regard to the existence of God. This is the main reason.

Because it's not necessary. Every person knows, not only that there is a God, but they know enough about Him and about His law to reject Him. Now, I want you to look just for a moment at Romans 1. Verse 18.

Listen to what it says. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Now, when I say this, particularly in Europe or a university setting in the United States, people always get angry.

Here you come now, once again, with your Neanderthal preaching about a Puritan God full of wrath. That's what they tell me. Let me talk to you for just a moment about wrath.

Wrath is a word that means anger. It does. Now, in our case, that anger can be unjustified.

Sometimes I get angry and I have no reason to do it. Or sometimes I get angry and my response is, of course, sinful. But God is holy and He's perfectly righteous.

And because He is holy, because He is righteous, He has anger. Now, let me say something to you that may... You might say, well, I've never heard it that way before. Do you know what man's greatest problem is? Do you know what man's greatest problem is? Well, I'm going to tell you.

Man's greatest problem is that... Get ready, this is pretty terrifying. Man's greatest problem is that God is good. Yep.

That's your greatest problem. Let me throw another one in there that's even more terrifying. Man's greatest problem is that God is love.

You say, well, that's absolutely absurd. At least that's what the university students tell me. Why should that be a problem, that God is good? And I have to look at them and say, because you're not.

Why is it a problem that God is loving? Because you're not loving. You see, let me share with you something. A criminal is not afraid of a corrupt judge.

A wicked man is not afraid of a wicked judge. Because they're just alike. They can buy one another off.

They can help one another in their wickedness. But a criminal is terrified of a good judge. Of a just judge.

You see, when the Bible talks about God's wrath or God's anger, we sometimes get mad. We say, well, you know, this angry God. And some preachers will come to you and lie.

Because they want their Christianity to be relevant. And they'll say things like, oh, God's not an angry God. Yes, He is.

Bible says so in many places. Let me ask you a question. Do you love Jewish people? If you love Jewish people, then you've got to hate the Holocaust.

You've got to be angry about it. Don't you? I mean, if I walked up to you and said, or you walked up to me and said, Brother Paul, what do you think about the Holocaust? And I said, well, you know, I don't think it's that big a deal. I think it's overrated.

People put too much emphasis on it. You know, I mean, it's really not that bad. It doesn't bother me.

I'm rather neutral. I'm apathetic. You would think that I was just as much a monster as the men who killed six million Jews.

Because there's something in you, isn't there, that says you should be angry about this. And as the Scriptures say, be angry and sin not. Do you love babies? I do.

Oh, man. If I could have a thousand children, I would. If you love babies, there's a sense in which you must hate abortion.

It kills them. Do you love Africans, African Americans? Then you can't tell me that you're neutral about slavery. You see, a lady came to me one time, and she was furious.

She said, God cannot hate. He cannot be angry because God is love. I said, no, ma'am.

God is love. Therefore, He must hate. He must be angry.

If He truly loves all that is life, all that is good, all that is beauty, all that benefits and prospers humanity, then to the same degree, He can't be apathetic toward that which destroys it. Do you see that? It's a manifestation of His goodness, of His love. You know, He's put that in you.

He has. And I can prove it. Just the concept of justice.

Think about it. If we are just a bunch of, I don't know, refined chimpanzees, if we are just the result of some random process, then there are many things that are totally inexplicable, like our sense of beauty, our love of poetry. There's one thing that's really inexplicable, and it goes something like this.

Let's say a man is walking down the street here, and he just carelessly throws a piece of paper on the ground. He litters, okay? And the police come by and they grab him, they beat him up, and they put him in prison for 50 years. What do you say to that? You scream out, that is injustice.

How do you know? Who told you that's not right? Who told you that? How do you know that that's not right? You know it's not right, because God created man in his own image, and God is a just God. And you become angry about it. That's not right.

Yes, he threw a piece of paper on the ground. Okay, we all agree. Give him a fine, but you can't beat him up and throw him in prison for 50 years.

That's not just. And the only thing that the law has to say to you is, prove it. How do you know it's not? Well, I just know.

Or a man kidnaps, a pedophile kidnaps a child, locks him away for 12 years in the basement. He's finally captured. They take him to court, and the judge sentences him five days of civic duty.

That's all. Five days of serving the city, picking up litter, and then he can go free. You get angry.

You call the judge corrupt. You say, what is happening to our society? Why? You have in yourself a sense of justice, don't you? Well, God is just. He is just.

And that, my friend, is a great blessing, but it is a great problem. It is a great blessing in this way. Would you really want an omnipotent Lord of Heaven, who has all power, who can do all things, would you want Him to be unjust? No.

But at the same time, since you and I are not just, and we are not loving, His justice at the same time presents a great problem. You say, well, now, wait a minute. Who are you to say that I'm not just, and I'm not loving? Well, I'm no one, but the Bible says you're not just, and you're not loving.

Well, it's just an archaic book written by a bunch of old, mean people. Okay. Okay.

You want to challenge me on this? Well, then let's have a little challenge. There's no reason for God to deal with you, reprimand you, judge you, condemn you. Are you sure? Let's say that I could take out your

heart, and let's say that it represented who you are, and it contained in there a heart.

It contained in there on its file every thought you've ever had, every word you've ever spoken, and every deed you've ever done. And I could just access that and put it on a DVD. And then I could play the DVD here this morning of every thought you have ever thought, every deed you have ever done, every word you have ever spoken.

You know, the English are much more refined than the Americans. We're just a bunch of cowboys. But the most refined English woman in this room right now would leap out of that balcony, run across the floor, and tackle me on this platform.

Is it not true? To stop me from showing what's going on in there. I mean, you thought things when I walked up in this pulpit that if I knew about it, you'd be ashamed. Here comes another yank to tell us all about what we're supposed to do.

You see? Now, I want you to think about something. I have accepted the Bible's testimony with regard to myself. Not that I'm broken, not that I'm needy, not that I'm dislocated by the society around me.

No, I've accepted the Bible's testimony that I have rebelled against God, that I am quite self-centered, have been most of my life, that there are many things about me that are wrong and I'm not the victim. It's my fault. I've accepted that.

That's the first step to Christianity. I want you to think for a moment. If your best friend knew what sometimes you have thought about him or her, or even what you have said about him or her, they would possibly not be your best friend anymore.

Let's talk about love. Because everyone says, I don't want a God that gets angry sometimes, or a God that has wrath, or any idea of eternal punishment. I want a God of love.

But let's talk about your love for a moment. How many of you are married? In your marriages, does anything like self-centeredness and lovelessness ever appear? I mean, sir, on the day of judgment, would you rather have God on the throne or your wife? Do you see what I'm saying? Because we say, we want a God of love. But if someone were to film our own lives, they would say, well, why? You don't love.

I remember a street preacher years ago, brilliant street preacher. And someone was standing there while he was debating out on the street. Someone was standing back there, heckling him, of course, and saying this, If God is a God of love, why are children starving to death? Kept going.

Same thing, over and over. If God is a God of love, why are children starving to death? Finally, this brother just stopped. He said, you, heckler, come here.

No, here. Out in the center where everyone can see you. So the guy comes out there.

Now, what's your problem? He said, well, if God is a God of love, if there's a God, why are children starving to death? He said, how much food did you throw away today in the university cafeteria? I thought so. Now, go back there and shut up. You see, we're making all... I want God to be a God of love.

Do you realize we're loveless? We do just what Paul tells us not to do. We try to rise above God and then judge Him. And yet, look at us.

We have... It's hard for us to even love the person we're married to. I mean, if God was as selfish with the universe as we are in our own marriages and our closest relationships, we'd have a great deal of problem. Well, God just ought to accept me.

Listen to me. A person can do one thing wrong to you and you write them off forever. It's true.

Well, I'm never going to talk to that person again. I've had it. I've had enough.

You see what I'm saying? You see, God is good. God is good. God is loving.

And that's our greatest problem because we're not. And you know what the Bible says? It says, For the wrath of God, in verse 18, is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who do what? Who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. This is what God is saying.

God is saying, You know I'm here and you know something of my law. Even if you were born on the top of the Andes Mountains in Peru, you know I'm here and you know something of my law. C.S. Lewis did something several years ago in a book that I find very, very interesting.

He went around to different cultures. And you know what he found out? In every culture, it's wrong to murder. I wonder how that happened.

In every culture, it's wrong to lie. In every culture, it is wrong to be unfaithful to your mate. How is it that we just all by coincidence figured out the same rules? Because what the Bible says is true.

He has written his law on the heart of men. You know who God is and you know what he has commanded. And you also know you have violated that.

And you also know that you work very hard at suppressing the truth, holding it down. That's what postmodernism is all about. I remember I was in La Universidad de Garcilaso in Lima, Peru, the university there.

And I was to speak to the professors and the student body and everything. And so I knew that it was sort of a very hostile situation. And so I thought, Lord, what can I do? How can I handle this so that they'll hear? Because, see, a preacher who preaches with love doesn't just want to say the truth.

He wants to say it in the best way he can that people might hear it without compromising, but that they might hear it. So I walked out on the platform and I said, Soy buscador de la verdad. I am a seeker of the truth.

Everybody stood to their feet. They applauded. I was like, all right.

This is good. And then they sat down and I said, and I have found the truth. And the truth is in Jesus Christ.

And they all booed me. Well, everything's back to normal now. Now, there is a famous Spanish philosopher.

And I talk about him a lot because he's really ahead of his time in a way. His name was Unamuno. And he wrote a book, La Vida es Un Sueño, Life is a Dream.

And what he said was this. The greatest virtue that a man can have is to seek the truth. And the most arrogant thing a man could ever do is claim that he found it.

Now, I was debating with a man from Spain years ago, just a private conversation. And he was just, he loved Unamuno. And he kept saying that he was a seeker like Unamuno of the truth, but you can't find the truth.

And then I said, well, why do you seek for something you can't find? But as we were talking, I said, you know what? After three hours, I said, I finally figured you out. You want to say that you're all about the truth and you're looking for the truth because there's virtue in that. But you don't want to find the truth.

Well, why wouldn't I want to find the truth? He said, because the moment you find it, you have to submit your life to it. And that's what you don't want to do. After the fall in the garden, the greatest characteristic of mankind is autonomy.

Autonomy. You want to be God of everything. You see, that's why I go back to marriage because it's a malady we all have in common.

You want to be God of that relationship. You want that relationship to go your way. You want your job to go your way.

You want your friendships around you to go your way. When you're seeking a husband or a wife out there, you're seeking someone who will go your way. That's what all these dating services are about.

Find someone who is compatible to you. That means find someone that will go everywhere you want to go. It's autonomy.

So one of man's great problems is this. He wants to be autonomous. He wants everything his way.

You want everything your way. But now here's another problem. And this is scandalous.

You're not going to like this. The Bible teaches that in the departure from God, something terrible has happened. It's much more terrible than just the act of sin.

It is that in our own natures, we have become corrupt. So that not only do we want to be autonomous, not only do we want to be separate from God and our own gods, but at the same time, we are driven by what we are. That our hearts have become like stone toward God.

We will not respond to divine stimuli. And also our hearts have become corrupt. Now, my dear friend, you can argue with me all day against this, but I can bring the scriptures in and show you that it does say the heart is morally corrupt.

But if you don't accept that, I can go to all of history, every newspaper, and show you that I have proof. Just look at human history for a moment. Look at it.

I think one time someone said, we're in a time of peace. And the philosopher answered, no. Whenever you hear no gunfire in the world, it's just because everyone is reloading.

Look at the malady that surrounds us. Look at what rulers have done. Genocide, the killing of millions of their own people.

Look at all the things that happen. And you say, well, I would never do something like that. Let me share something with you.

It may be the only reason you would never do anything like that is because you don't have the power to do it. That's why the old saying, absolute power corrupts absolutely. It really doesn't.

It just allows the corruption that is there to run free. Do you realize what a monster you yourself would be if made king of the world? You see, that is man's problem. Man knows there is a God, but he wants to be autonomous.

He knows God has revealed His law, but man hates that law. And why does man hate that law? Because that law is good, and man's heart has become corrupt. Look at what it says here in Romans 1, 19.

He's just told us in 18 that man is constantly suppressing what he knows to be true. Verse 19, Because that which is known about God is evident within them, for God made it evident to them. One of the great lies of our age is evolution.

Now, why is it such a lie? Because it is the attempt to eliminate God from the equation, to get rid of Him once and for all. But you know, I think it's quite amazing. I was reading one of the top scientists, proponent of evolution, a statement that he made prior to his death.

And he said this, and it's not an exact quote, but it is an accurate one. He said, Since Darwin, we have not one sure fact with regard to our theory. Not one.

But I must accept evolution by faith, because the only alternative is to accept an intelligent designer, a creator, and I cannot do that. Isn't it amazing? There are some of you right now, you heard me say evolution, and I don't agree with it, and you just bristled up. Yet, if I were to ask you, let me give you a question.

If I were to say to you, Oh, you believe in evolution, yes. Well, could you help me then? Because you know the problem of irreducible complexity. That's something I just can't get over.

It's really hard for me to accept about evolution, and since you've already studied all these matters, would you please explain that to me? Isn't it amazing? You will take that theory and swallow it up that fast without any study whatsoever. Punctuated equilibrium. I'm really struggling with that one.

Could you help me? Well, I don't know what you're talking about. But you've accepted the theory. You've bought into it hook, line, and sinker, and you call me an academic neanderthal because I don't believe it, but you can't explain your own belief to me.

Do you see that? Why is it that you're so quick and the world is so quick to grab a hold of something that still remains a theory? I'll tell you. Because it gives the world the alternative it needs. If we can grab a hold of this, we can say there's no God, and we're free to do whatever our heart desires.

See that? But what has it produced? Young people that are here, let me share with you something. Now, I'm not against swimming. I'm not against going to the beach, things like that.

So please, I'm just using this as an illustration. I'm not trying to push some moral code or dress code on anyone. I just want you to see something.

That's all. Okay? What people wear to the beach, or even in public today. But let's just say what people wear to the beach today, right now, 2009.

Now, I want you to think about this. If only 50 years ago, someone would have wore the same thing in public, they would have either been arrested or taken for counseling. No, serious.

They would have been taken to an asylum. Now, I want you to think about something. And I'm not talking about some Christian government.

I'm talking about secular authorities would have either locked them up or would have taken them to a ward to be analyzed. Now, think about this. Secular authorities would have done this.

So I want you to think about something. In only 50 years of the culture in the West, what 50 years ago, by unbelieving non-Christian people, only 50 years ago, what was considered criminal or insane is now accepted by everyone. Open up your newspaper.

If someone just 50 years ago would have opened up a newspaper and seen one of the crimes that's listed there, they would have almost fainted in disgust. It would have been a national scandal. And now it's all over the papers.

I was walking through the streets the other night in London. Went out to get something to eat, trying to find a place. It was rather late after preaching.

I heard young girls go by us, 15, 16 years old. The filth that came out of their mouths almost knocked me to the ground. And yet prior to my conversion, in the 70s, I ran wild, 70s and early 80s.

In my wildest days, I never heard such language come out of the filthiest man. So, all this post-modernism of yours, all this progress you're making, have you ever studied the curriculum? Have you ever studied the curriculum of a classical education just maybe 200 years ago? I'm taking my boys, I'm homeschooling, and I'm taking my boys through a classical curriculum. Well, Latin starts in the third grade.

He already must be consuming the Westminster Confession using the Geneva Study Bible, talking about doctrines in science and this and that. Look at our education system. Look at everything around us in the West is totally falling apart.

We can make computers work. We can play video games. But with regard to the things that really make us human, it's just a slide downhill to nothing.

We have departed from our God. And all the evidence points to the fact that God has turned the West over to itself. You wanted to be free? Free you shall be.

You reject my wisdom? Take your own and go. My dear friend, we are in such a predicament now. Ludicrous decisions made by authorities with no wisdom whatsoever.

Families disintegrating. Rebellion. Everything.

What will fix it? A returning to God. But how do you return to him? Do you return to him politically? No. That's something that's often, you know, these political Christian movements in the United States and everything.

No, that is not the way. Do you return to God by the sword? Absolutely not. The Christian has the privilege to die for Christ, but not to kill for Him.

You do it in the arena of ideas. You do it through speaking, through preaching, through debating. And that, my friend, is why so many want to shut us down.

They do not want us to speak. Because the power of Christianity is in the gospel. And the gospel must be proclaimed and no one wants us to do that.

You say, well, what is this gospel that can bring us back to God? It is this. That God is King. He is Creator.

And for that reason, He does have a claim upon you. Whether you want to kick against it, you can. You can kick against it all day long, but know this, God owns you.

He made you. And He made you for Him, you see. That's what you've got to see.

Have you ever... I used to do this all the time. I'd be out partying and everything else and come back to my university dormitory and I would, you know, pass out on the bed. I'd get up in the morning.

I'd wander into the shower and I'd turn it on and there would just be this absolute sense of just emptiness. Why am I alive? Why do I want to be a lawyer? Why do I want to do this stuff? What does it matter? I mean, just all these things, just darkness and I'd just be in that shower. It's one of the reasons why you'd go out at night and party so hard.

You'd forget about those questions. And that's why the great enemy, the devil himself, would seek to keep you entertained, distracted, following materialism and every other kind of nonsense and foolishness so that you won't think about what you really are and that is empty, darkness. Why am I alive? Walk through the streets of the United States.

Walk through the streets of England or Wales or Ireland where I was last week. You just see a lot of empty-faced people. Why? My dear friend, I make longbows and do archery.

My longbows, they can shoot an arrow hundreds of meters. They can. But you can't play music on them.

They weren't made for that purpose. One of the reasons why man is so hollowed out and just empty because you belong to him. You were made for him.

And you will be restless until he find thee. Do you understand that? But know this. You are a rebel.

I could say it a prettier way, but it wouldn't have the same impact. You are a rebel. You have broken God's law.

And if you say, well, I care not for God. Well, even the laws He made for you with regard to the way you're supposed to treat other people, you've broken them too. So if you don't think it's a bad thing to sin against some Puritan God, then realize this.

You've sinned against each other. Because of that sin, a good God must deal with you. If He simply turns His face away from you and does nothing about your sin, then He is as corrupt as any corrupt judge that sits in government today.

He must deal with your sin. He must be just. And how does He do that? I'll tell you how He does it.

This is the gospel. God becomes a man. The God-man.

And He walks upon this earth. And He lives the perfect life you could not live. He goes to that tree.

And when He is on the cross of Calvary, He, through a doctrine that we proclaim, yet we cannot fully understand, through the doctrine of imputation, He takes the sin, your sin, upon Himself. And then all the divine judgment that should fall down upon your head for all your crimes against God, God absorbs them. God suffers them.

The Christ on that tree dies under divine punishment. The very divine punishment that you deserve. And that is why right before He died, He cried out, It is finished.

Which means paid in full. All these people are criminal. Justice demands their death.

I've paid justice demands. It's finished. It's over.

I've paid for it. He dies and on the third day He rises again. God's public declaration that this is indeed My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.

And I accept His sacrifice on behalf of humanity. He ascends up to the right hand of God where He sits as ruler, as King and as Savior. What is Christianity? It is not primarily about a return to morality.

Not at all. What is Christianity? It is a return to God through faith in what God has done for man. Through His Son, Jesus Christ.

That is the very thing that separates Christianity from every other religion in the world. I challenge you. Go to every other religion in the world and this is what you'll find.

Men making sacrifices. Men even cutting their own bodies in hopes to appease a deity for their sin. Men who are trying to offer to God good works to somehow pay Him off so He won't be angry.

All these things of men trying to do something. Isn't it amazing? Now listen to me. Why is it that all the religions of the world, the major religions of the world, their main theme is trying to be rid of their guilt? Do you think it's because man really knows he's guilty? But they're all trying to do it by their own power.

Christianity is God comes down. God deals with the guilt. God does it all and we throw ourselves upon God in faith.

Upon what He has done for us in the person of Jesus Christ. You see that? If I died right now, I have great hope and assurance for heaven. Why? Not because I lived among the Agua Duna Indians in Peru to minister to them.

Not because we help orphanages. Not because we teach Romanian gypsies how to read. Not because we feed the poor.

Not because we build churches. And not even because we preach the gospel. If I died right now, I'd go to heaven because 2,000 years ago the Son of God died for my sin.

In Him I trust. In Him I trust. Two problems man has.

Only two. The condemnation of sin and the power of sin. The condemnation of sin, that problem, God dealt with it on Calvary.

Christ paid for our sins. And if we believe in Him, we are freed from all condemnation. But there's one problem left.

And that is the power of sin. I can tell you this. Back before my days of knowing Jesus Christ, I was probably, not probably, without a doubt, the most self-centered, egotistical, selfish person who ever walked the planet.

I mean, you look up the word jerk in the dictionary, it had my picture there. I didn't care about anybody. All I cared about was my car, my clothes, where I was going, where I was heading, who I knew.

But when Christ came, He not only takes away our sin, He changes our heart. So how is it that three years later, I'm living with street people in the inner city of Fort Worth, Texas, seeking to minister to their needs. How'd that happen? Some of my family still, they do not understand.

Because if any man be in Christ, he's a new creation. I have a wife, and I have three children that I adore. Oh, all I can think about.

I've got less than, I've got less than like 34 hours now, and I'll be home. People always ask me, what's the first thing you're going to do when you get to your house? I'm going to kiss my wife. What's the second thing you're going to do? I'm going to put my luggage down.

I mean, I've got these children, and this wife, and I had this opportunity, laid down my life for them, and loved them, and just, man, it's wonderful. I would have never thought about these things prior to knowing Christ. They would have all just been an extension of me.

A prize. Something to show off. If any man be in Christ, he's a new creation.

I met him in the most vile state imaginable. Just a drunk. A well-behaved one, and a well-studied one.

But just a drunk. If any man be in Christ, he's a new creature. I met him as an empty hull.

Going from one party to the next, one person to the next, in order to try to find some reason to be alive. One hobby, one car, one this, one that. And then Christ came.

Christ came. I'm going to close in prayer. I invite you to come to Christ.

How do I do that? Well, we're going to play some music that's really soft and manipulate you, and then we're going to play on your emotions and get you to come forward. No. Not going to do that.

But I tell you what I will do. I will miss lunch, if necessary. Sit here and talk to you as long as you need to be talked to.

And so will the other believers here. Let's pray. Father, I pray that you would use this to strengthen your people, but those who do not count themselves among your people, that Lord, it would bring them to Christ, or at least one step closer to realizing that apart from Him they have nothing, but in Him there is life and life in abundance.

In Jesus' name, amen.

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