

The Love of God Part 1 (Tharptown Baptist Church)

by Paul Washer

The love of God is a difficult concept to understand, but it is revealed in Jesus Christ and the cross of Calvary, and it is unconditional and unchanging.

Duration: 44:46

Scripture: Exodus 34:6-7, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Gods Love", "Sin Nature"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of understanding the darkness of sin in order to fully appreciate the love of God. He highlights how sin is often trivialized and joked about in today's society, but it is crucial to recognize our own sinful nature and the consequences it brings. The preacher shares personal experiences of preaching and distributing Bibles, noting the different reactions he received in the United States compared to third world countries. He concludes by urging the audience to truly grasp the depth of God's love and not take His blessings for granted.

Transcript

Well, thank you very much for that wonderful song. My goodness, you have to be very tall to preach in this church, don't you? It's a tall pulpit. Let's open up our Bibles to the book of Psalms, chapter seven, the book of Psalms, chapter seven.

Today, I'm going to be preaching today and possibly tonight on the love of God. On the love of God. It's one of why I don't want to say it's one of my favorite themes.

It's my favorite theme. If it were not for the love of God, there would be no hope. There would be no hope, at least I know for me, there would be no hope.

When I look in the mirror, even today, after twenty six years of walking with the Lord, when I look in the mirror of God's word. And I see what I still am, although hopefully there have been improvements and changes in my life. If it were not for the love of God, I'd lose my mind.

There would be no hope. For this preacher. If God was not who he says he is, as a matter of fact, I often tell Christians who are struggling in their faith, especially struggling with whether or not God loves them, I tell them this is the most difficult task you are ever going to have to overcome is to look in the mirror of

God's word and see your sin as it truly is, and then to believe that God loves you as much as he says he does.

That's going to be the hardest thing you're ever going to have to do. That's a good thing. That's a good thing.

We come to the love of God. It's very, very difficult, very difficult. Why? Because we just can't point to anything.

Do you remember when God first confronted Moses and Moses was to be sent down to Egypt and before going to Egypt, Moses said, well, if I'm going to go down there, who do I tell them has sent me? And of course, God responds with I am who I am or I am that I am. And what he's basically saying is this, if you were if a if a Martian were to land here in Russellville or wherever we are, and I understand there's already a lot of Martians here, if a Martian were to land in Russellville and come up to you and say, who are you? You could look around at six billion other people and point to them and say, well, I am like him and to some degree I am like her. And well, there's just a whole bunch of examples of who I am.

But when when God came to Moses and Moses asked, who are you? God could not say, well, I am like that man over there or even I'm like that angel. There's no one with whom God can compare himself. He's in a completely other category.

He's not like you, just bigger. He's not like you at all, and that's a wonderful thing because I don't want to offend you, but I would hate to know there was an all powerful, omnipotent being governing the universe that was like you. I would be very, very afraid, and especially if he was like me.

And so God said, I am who I am. Now, when we get to the love of God, we also see the same thing. What's the love of God like? There's nothing I can point to except one person and one spectacular event, the person of Jesus Christ and the cross of Calvary.

If you want to know what the love of God is like, then there you have to look. That is the only he is the only person and that is the only place that is a perfect manifestation of how much God loves his people. Now, before I get on my sermon, let me just say this, and many of you will understand this, and there's a grandfather here today who soon to be grandfather who understands this.

You can. You can pull me out of a car, you can beat me up, you can say all kinds of bad things about me, and I'll just kind of stand back up, dust myself off and go on. Been there, done that.

Got the T-shirt. No problem. You touch one of my children and I just don't know what I do.

I know this. I throw my body in front of a train. I would do anything.

I honestly, I think it's God is my witness and my conscience bearing witness. I don't I don't know any limit. Now, if I being evil, that's what Jesus said, if you being evil can give good gifts to your children, if I being man and frail and self-centered, everything that I am, if I could love my children in that way, then how much does God love his son? My love for my children is hatred compared to God's love for his son.

I can tell you that. But then how much does God love his people? If God gives his son. To die a death that no one could even begin to describe, you know, it is not a humble thing when you as a Christian doubt God's love.

It's wrong because you're saying something about the character of God. You're saying he's not who he says he is. Or he hasn't done what he says he's done.

He's given us no reason to doubt his love and you say, oh, but Brother Paul, you don't know my sin. No, you don't know your God. Now, there are lost people who are church members and that's a completely different issue, but I'm talking about people who truly love the Lord in all their frailty and all their brokenness and all their sin.

You need to know that all of that cannot overcome the grace and love of God toward you. And that's a wonderful thing now. Here's the problem, though, with that.

A true Christian, one who struggles with their sin, sometimes even doubts their own salvation, that it looks in the mirror sometimes and doesn't like what they say. They hear about the love of God and they go, I want to be more if he loves me that way, if he loves me unconditionally. If he just loves me beyond description, then I want to be more for him.

I want to be more holy. I want to follow him with greater devotion. Now, the lost church member.

We'll hear. That God's love is that way, and you know what they'll say, well, if it's that way, let's just go on and live in the world and drink up sin like it was water because God loves us anyway. Do you see the difference? There's a tremendous difference.

The unconditional, unchanging love of God toward the church member who really doesn't know Jesus will cause them just to say, well, I'll just live in the world and go to heaven. But the true Christian who's a church member, when he hears about the love of God, when she hears about the love of God, he or she says to themselves, well, if it's that way, then I want to be more like Jesus. I want to follow after him in a greater way.

Now, in Psalm seven, we're going to study about the love of God. We're going to begin in verse 12 or let's go back to verse 11. God is a righteous judge and a God who has indignation every day.

If a man does not repent, he will sharpen his sword. He has bent his bow and made it ready. He has also prepared for himself deadly weapons.

He makes his arrows fiery shafts. You say, well, brother Paul, what does that have to do with the love of God? Well, you see, let me give you an example. I dare you all to go outside right now and find a star in the sky.

Just go try. Now, they were there last night. Where did they all go? Did someone come by and put them in a basket and carry them off? Where did the stars go this morning? Well, they didn't go anywhere.

Well, why can't I see them well, because there's so much light, there's so much light that you can't see the stars, but the darker the night, the more brilliantly you can see the stars. Is that not true? It is true. So the darker the night, the more brilliant are the stars in the same way.

This is what I want you to see. I read this passage to create, first of all, in your view, a very dark night. You see, this is the way God should respond to us.

Now, see, that's the problem. People can't understand the love of God because they don't understand some terribly dark things first. And what are those terribly dark things? You.

And me, you see, we have sinned. Now, in our world today, sin is not that big a deal, is it? People laugh about sin, they tell jokes about sin, they revel in their sin, as it says in the Bible, they drink down iniquity or sin like it was water. Many of you who are older, you turn on a television set or you read a newspaper or a magazine or something and you think to yourself, in my day, things like this would have never been permitted.

I mean, as we go on further and further, it seems men enjoy their sin more. And so when we speak about sin today, no one sees it as what it is. Filthy, sewer, horrible immorality that what deserves and should be judged.

You see, we would all look, especially some of you who maybe lived during that time, my dad fought in World War Two, you looked at Hitler and the killing of six million Jews and the desire to rampage all of Europe and control the world. And you look at him and you say this passage should apply to Hitler. You see, God is a righteous judge.

He's angry with Hitler. If Hitler does not repent, God will sharpen his sword and he's bent his bow and made it ready. God has also prepared for himself deadly weapons and he makes his arrows, fiery shafts against somebody like Hitler.

But see, here's the problem that you and I must come to grips with. Adam and Eve sinned one time. They broke one small commandment, didn't they? Well, it seems small.

Don't eat of the fruit of the tree. But here's the problem. One sin before God.

Is so horrible that it cast the entire universe into chaos and judgment and condemnation. So what I want you to see, what you must see before you can understand the magnitude of the love of God is your own sin. Jesus isn't merely doing us a favor.

We weren't people who just needed a little bit of help. We weren't lost sheep looking for God. We weren't deserving of him sending his son.

Do you see all that now that may offend you, but to be honest with you, it makes me happy. The more I see. Of what I really was and still am, the more I see of what I deserved and still deserve, the bigger God's love gets.

Do you see that? It's like some of you women may understand this, a man who just thinks that. He deserves everything you can give him. You sit there, you cook, you clean, you prepare the house, you try to keep yourself looking nice and everything, and the man just doesn't appreciate it when he doesn't appreciate it.

You say, you know, who do you think you are? You think you just deserve everything. Nothing I can do shocks you. You think you're worthy of every good thing I give you.

And you look at that man and you say he is so hard hearted. Well, it's the same way, unless you and I understand what we were. Sinners.

Enemies of God. Under judgment, deserving death, hell, condemnation. Unless we understand all that, we kind of sit back like so many people do that actually think they're doing God a favor because they believe in his son.

And not being literally overwhelmed, I'll give you another example. I have stood on street corners here in the United States and preached, handed out tracks, handed out Bibles, and most of the people, they don't want to hear what I'm saying. They don't want a Bible and I've had tracks crumbled up and thrown back at me.

They just don't want it. Yet I've gone into third world countries, into deep, dark places and handed out Bibles. Little vinyl covered Bibles to believers and had them come up to me weeping and kiss my hands.

Why? Because they have nothing. They have nothing. Nothing.

So there's a sense that when we understand the darkness of our own heart and what we actually deserve before God, that then we can begin to rejoice and appreciate the love of God. That is why. You will find oftentimes that people like me.

Who were saved being the worst of the worst drunkards or drug addicts or just people that society itself would say this person doesn't even deserve to live, that when a person like that gets saved, they seem to be so full of zeal, why they know what they were. They've seen themselves in a mirror. Are.

And they're just literally overwhelmed, how could God love somebody like me? It must be all of grace, it must be all of God. It can't have anything to do with me, he must love me. Why? Because he's love.

Do you remember there is some degree of saying theologically that God has something and this will offend some people, I guess, but God has something of a sense of humor, because when Israel asked him basically. In a sense, why do you love us? He said. I love you because I loved you.

Well, why did you love us, though? Well, because I loved you. And what he's telling Israel, it's almost a taunt. What he's telling Israel is, look, Israel, I loved you because of me.

I loved you because I am love. That's why I loved you. You could put it this way, negatively or positively.

First, Israel, I loved you because of me. I loved you in spite of you. Does anyone ever feel that way? I hope you do.

I don't think you can be saved unless you feel that way. Now you think, well, I don't like that. I do, because if the love of God at the beginning.

Had nothing to do with Paul Washer and did not depend on my ability to perform, then the love of God does not depend upon my ability to perform today. That means I'm loved because I'm loved and not because of my performance. Now, I don't know about you, but that's a very freeing thing.

Let me give you an example, two women, both of them again, let's go back to a marriage illustration. Both women serve and seek to bless their husband with everything in their power. They wear themselves out seeking to honor and serve their husband.

But one of the women is very, very just full of joy. Peace, just a joyful spirit around the house. The other woman is wore out, worried almost to the point of sickness.

Now, what's the difference between the two women? Here's the difference. The one woman serves her husband, the one who is wore out and sick, almost unto death. She serves her husband so that he will love her.

The woman so full of joy serves her husband because he does love her. Just a few words are changed, but it's two worlds apart. Some people serve God so that God will love them.

And if they have any understanding of the righteous requirements of God and their own sin, they'll be absolutely miserable because they'll realize no matter how much I serve God, I can't make my sin go away and I can't serve him as I ought. And if I've done everything I can possibly do to serve him, I'm still condemned. But then there are people who are free, they're just free.

They serve God because God does love them. Not only that, but while we were yet sinners. God loved us.

I think about that while we were yet sinners. Now, I don't don't do this in detail because I don't want to break your heart, but just have a flashback, a moment of maybe a moment of maybe the ugliest moment of your life. When you were the ugliest and dirtiest possible, think back to one moment in your life when you said that was the worst thing I have ever done.

If you are now a believer in Jesus Christ, I can tell you that even at that moment. He loved you and was working to bring you to reconciliation through his son. Now, if while we were sinners and enemies of God, he loved us.

To that degree, at the moment, most, most ugly of your life, if he loved you at that moment enough to send his own son, how much does he love you now that you're reconciled to him through the blood of his son? Now, again, a lost church member will go, hey, that's great. Let's go sin. But a true Christian.

We'll say. If that's the case, then I want to serve him more. I want to bless him, I want to be devoted to him now, let's go over and I want to show you a wonderful passage that presents one of the greatest problems are the greatest problem, in my opinion, you'll see in the entire Bible, and it's found in the book of Exodus chapter thirty four.

And you remember when Moses, he comes up to God and and he basically says, show me your glory. Now, that's a very dangerous thing to do since no man can behold the glory of God and live. I sometimes wonder if Moses passion for God was so great that he was willing to commit suicide to see him to a greater degree.

Well, anyways, the Lord tells him, look, you cannot see my glory, my face, I'll let you see my back. He hides him in the cleft of the rock and God passed by in verse six of chapter thirty four. Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord God's.

Make no mistake who this is. This is truly and really God. Compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in loving kindness and truth.

My dear friend, if we truly understood these words and what they meant, you would all be acting not like a bunch of Baptists. You'd be acting like a bunch of Pentecostals. You'd be jumping up on the seats and probably running across them.

I mean, the most dearly and elderly lady here would probably be doing a jig down the aisle. Could you imagine what you think about this for a moment, how much we take for granted? Like if you have a good husband. You can take that for granted, why have you ever gotten down on your knees and said, God, I thank you that he's not a an adulterer, a drunk, a wife beater, child molester.

We take things for granted. You get a good husband, you get a good wife. Maybe your children are acting well and we take that for granted.

How often have you got down on your knees and say, I thank you for what he's not? I'm always complaining about things. He's not what I want him to be. But just to appreciate the fact of.

He's not in prison. Now, I also want you to look how sometimes we take for granted who God is. You take for granted that he is compassionate and gracious, that he's slow to anger and abounding and loving kindness and truth.

What if he was not? What if God was an omnipotent, which means all powerful God, and he was the very opposite of compassionate, he was demanding and heartless. He was not gracious, but rude and angry. He was not slow to anger, but he get anger that quick.

He'd hit anger that quick and kill every one of his foes. But he was not abounding and loving kindness, but abounding in sort of a legalistic, stringent, strict rule keeping and demanding every ounce of obedience from his people. And what if he wasn't a God of truth, but was a liar? You see, sometimes we just take for granted things, don't we? Maybe it would be good to get down on your knees.

As soon as you get the time. And thank God. That he's not like men, that he's not like man, that he's something and someone far, far beyond anything we could ever imagine and all these characteristics now.

He says in verse seven, who keeps loving kindness, what does that mean? He's already told us that he's abounding in loving kindness, but he says he also keeps loving kindness. That means he's something that Paul Washer is not. He's faithful.

You see, anybody can do just about anything for a short period of time, really. You know, those who suffer from chronic pain will tell you this, a sharp. Horrible pain.

That last a moment. Is no problem compared to a lesser pain that endures every day, every moment, pain, pain, pain. Faithfulness for a moment, a man and a woman are married, they're on their honeymoon and they're just full of love, but it lasts only the length of the honeymoon.

Faithfulness for a moment is no faithfulness at all. But it says here that he is faithful. He keeps loving kindness for thousands.

Once he sets his seal of love upon you, he is faithful to keep it there. He does not retract it. Even though you are faithless, he is faithful.

You know, so many times preaching in different places around the world and the things that the Lord has done, people will come up to me and they'll say, man, you just must. You know, they think things that aren't true. They think, man, Paul Washer doesn't eat.

Paul Washer fasts seven days a week, 24 hours a day, and he prays all the time and he reads his Bible and he's always loving to his wife and everything. If anyone thinks that way, the only thing they have to do is come stay with me for about a day. And after that, they'll leave in their car praying for my salvation.

You see, there are no great men of God. There are only tiny, pathetic men of a great and merciful God. But God's not like us.

He truly is faithful and he keeps loving kindness. And he says that he does it for thousands. This doesn't mean just a few thousand people, nor does it mean a hundred thousand people.

It's just a way of saying to a number that goes beyond anything we can imagine. His love is not miserly. He's not got a hold of it like this and kind of giving little scraps of it out to people.

Or nor is he got this little select group of people and he's kind of dishing out love to them and leaving everybody else behind. No, his love is abounding. His loving kindness is abounding.

Every man who goes to hell on the day of judgment, they'll have to lift up their right hand and swear that they have gone to hell against the loving kindness of God, that God was loving toward them because he says he commands us in the Sermon on the Mount to do what? To be perfect like our father. And how is our father perfect? He loves his enemies. He pours rain.

As a blessing down on the evil and the good, he lets his son shine on the evil and the good. I had a guy tell me one time, well, God hasn't been loving to me. And I said, you're not in hell.

So there God has been loving to you, you see, his problem was what I talked about earlier, he thought he deserved stuff. I had a young man one time I was praying, there had been people coming down to the front of the church and I came down to the front of church where actually I was preaching and I got down, was praying with everyone who had come forward and that were weeping and things like that. And a young man came down beside me and young men, if you're here, I don't want to offend you, but just know this.

I've been a young man. I'm still fairly young. Young men can be really stupid.

OK, that's just something that you need to look in the mirror every day and say that a few times. I'm young. I have the great potential of being stupid today, so I need to really be careful what I say.

But he came down forward. He plopped down there and was crying out to God. And he said, God, I just want you to give me what I deserve.

I've never done this before or since. I stopped praying and I tapped him on the shoulder and he kept praying, so I tapped harder. And when he looked at me, I said, don't you ever say that again? I said, because if God gives you what you deserve, young man, you die right now and go to hell.

Don't ever ask God to give you what you deserve and be very careful of asking God. To give other people what they deserve. If he has shown you mercy, you ought to be asking that he show mercy unto them.

OK, now, for thousands, for thousands, I want you to know something, there is no person on this planet, on this planet that is going to be able to say on the day of judgment, God did not love me. No one. No one.

You understand that if men go to hell, whose fault will it be? It's kind of a no brainer, isn't it to be theirs? It will be theirs and God will be justified. Now, he says this and here's the problem, he says, who keeps loving kindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin. Now, we haven't got to the problem that yet.

Let me explain this. He doesn't just use one word. He uses three, iniquity, transgression and sin.

This is what he forgives, iniquity, transgression and sin. Now, I don't need to go into a word study in Hebrew on every one of these words because we would be missing the point. What is the point that he's making? I forgive all kinds of sin.

I forgive every sin. Do you see that there's no sin that can be committed against me that I cannot forgive. Now, we know, though, we get to the we get to the Gospels and we hear Jesus saying, and it's not a contradiction, that there is a sin, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit that cannot be forgiven.

What do I believe that is? Well, let me ask you a question. When a preacher is preaching the forgiveness of God to a group of lost people. Now, the preacher, of course, is preaching, but who else is working there when the preacher is preaching? Who else is calling men and convincing men and talking to men in their heart? Who is it? It's the Holy Spirit, isn't it? It's the Holy Spirit.

Now, if a murderer, a blasphemer hears the Holy Spirit calling to him and obeys, can he be forgiven? Absolutely. But if a man hears a preacher preaching about the forgiveness of God and the Holy Spirit is convincing him of his sin, tugging on his heart, pulling him everything, and he resists the Holy Spirit and he denies the Holy Spirit and he rejects the Holy Spirit, is there any way he can be saved? No. You see, if you don't listen to the Holy Spirit, when he's drawing you to Christ, when he's telling you about Christ, then I'm afraid, my friend, there is no salvation for you.

Do you understand now that's a very, very simplistic kind of answer. There's more to it than that. But what I want you to see is I don't care what you've done or what you have become.

He forgives all kinds of sin. He forgives every sinner. Do you want to know a fact, a biblical, historical fact? No one, no one has ever come to God seeking salvation that God hasn't saved them.

The worst kinds of sinners and the best kinds of sinners and the best kinds of sinners are usually the worst kind of sinners because they believe their best. My dear friend, I don't know about you. He saved me.

I don't need anything else. I mean, if he if he had just said, OK, Paul, I'm going to put you in the coolest spot in hell, that would have been more than I deserved. That would have been more than I deserve if he would have said, OK, I'm not going to send you to hell, I'm just going to send you to a place that's kind of neutral.

You're not going to heaven or anything, but you're just not going to be in hell. That would have been infinitely more than I deserved. Do you see that? And I don't want to ruin your day, but infinitely more than you deserve.

If he had said, OK, I'm going to make you a doorkeeper, a floor cleaner in heaven, I would have said, yeah, great, that's infinitely more than I deserve. If he had said, OK, I'm going to make you an angel. That would have been absolutely marvelous, but that's not what he did.

He said, I'm going to make you a son. A co-heir with my son, Jesus Christ, you see that, and that's why you have to understand the dark picture. I worked a little bit and we still work through other indigenous missionaries with a tribe in the northern part of Peru and Departamento Amazonas in a place called Condor Kanki.

With a tribe called the Aguaduna tribe. Now, none of you walked in this building today marveling at the lights or looking at the stained glass, you just I didn't see anybody over there with their nose pressed up

against the stained glass, just going, this is the most amazing thing I've ever seen. Am I in heaven? Or seen the lights and said, never seen anything like that in my life.

None of you did that, hopefully. If I would have brought a group of Agvaduna tribesmen in here, that's exactly what they would have done, they would have gone over and put their hands on those lights and said, I've never seen anything like this. What is this? They can appreciate something that to you is common.

Folks, don't ever let that happen with regard to your salvation. Maybe you weren't a drug addict or a prostitute, maybe you weren't a murderer or a drunk, but know this, you deserve to die and go to hell with all of them. And if you weren't any of those things, it was the grace of God that kept you from it.

You see that. And that's why we need to be very careful that maybe one of the greatest. Well, someone asked me one time, they said, Brother Paul, what's the greatest sin you can commit? You ever thought about that? Well, I got an answer for you.

It's just something to think about. What's the greatest sin I can commit? Well, break the greatest command God ever gave. And what's that? Love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.

And how can you love him only because he loved you first? How do you grow in the Christian life? Jude tells us keeping ourselves in the love of God. Study. To know how much God loves you.

You know, some of you ladies, when you received. Before you were married, you know, your husband was much more romantic, wasn't he? Send all kinds of cards and little letters. Now you're lucky if you get like a little stick up on the refrigerator, send little cards and letters and things like that.

And when you first found out this guy was interested, you interested in you. Maybe you read that letter like six trillion times to find some secret meaning. Does he really like me? Is he really saying something here? Is there what's going on in this letter? I need to know.

That's the way you and I should approach the scriptures. I've got to find out how much does this God love me? How much does he love me? You know, it's a big, big thing of people wanting to know more and more theology and doctrine, and that's absolutely essential. I can tell you that it's one of the things I do.

But when you take the Bible and it just becomes a big book of theology and doctrine, you're in a whole lot of trouble. You need to read that book like a child, like a lover. I've got to know how much does he love me? What did you say? Does he love me that much? Where's that verse? I want to know.

Because it's that love that's going to motivate you to be the child of God that you need to be. Now, we're not even getting to the sermon yet. This was the introduction, but I am going to let you go because many of the seniors, citizens here look rather anorexic and I know that they really must go and eat.

OK, but I just want us to glimpse at the problem here for a second. And here's the problem. And we're going to touch on it tonight.

Now, he says. In verse seven, who keeps loving kindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin, yet he will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. Now, there's the problem.

Think about it. It's a big one. It almost seems like a contradiction.

Now, it's not really a contradiction. It's what we call an apparent contradiction. It seems like one, but it's not.

Like when you say when the guys from Chicago come down and hunt on my farm in Illinois, that looks like a deer, but it turns out to be a Hereford. It's apparent, but it's not real. And then we lose a lot of cattle that way.

But I think that's why my father began to breed Charlay cattle instead of Hereford's because they were white and no one would mistake it for a deer. But it's it seems like a contradiction, but it's not. And it's this, how can he forgive all kinds of sin of all kinds of sinners? And yet at the same time, he says he will by no means leave the guilty unpunished.

How can he say, I will forgive. All the sin of all the sinners, but at the same time, everyone who's guilty, everyone who's a sinner, I will punish them. Now, think about that and say, well, brother Paul, what's the answer? Come back tonight and I'll tell you, I can tell you this on this answer, your salvation depends.

How can God forgive wicked men and yet at the same time says he will punish every wicked man? Now, that's a that's a good question. Now, if you're here today and the Holy Spirit. Has done something in your life now, what do I mean by that, you've probably heard a lot of sermons, heard a lot of things, but today it seemed like there was a voice within a voice.

That someone was not only speaking to your ears, but someone else was speaking to your heart. And not only that, you begin to think things and be concerned about things, maybe troubled, maybe happy about things that you've never even seen before. I want to tell you that we're here today.

I'm not one of these guys, here's what I don't do, OK, just to let you know, the evangelist who comes and gives you 20 verses of just as I am, dims the lights. If you raise your hand, he's got you, he'll get you up front no matter what. I'll never do that.

I don't do that. You say, well, you don't care about souls. I most certainly do, because they'll spend 20 minutes trying to get you up front and someone will counsel you for five minutes and then the evangelist goes eat at Denny's.

Now, what I'll do is tell you this. If God's working on your heart, working in your mind, here's what you do. You come talk to me.

I will not manipulate you. I will not dim the lights. I will not try to get you to raise your hand.

I will not do any of that. But you come and talk to me, can any of the other leaders, but I will do this. I won't go to Denny's and I will stay here all day if I have to.

You see, you say, well, Brother Paul, you need to strike while the iron's heart hot, brother, if God's the one heating up the iron, you don't have to worry about it cooling off. So so you I'm going to turn the service back over to the leaders. But if God's dealing with your heart.

The preaching, that's just a part of what preachers are supposed to do, the real work comes after that, if souls are troubled. All right, let's pray, Father, I pray that you would use your word in the lives of people. That you would strengthen those who need to be strengthened, you weaken those who need to be weakened, that you would give great assurance to those who are truly saved and you would take away

false assurance from anyone who believes themselves to be Christian when they are not.

Father, that you would strengthen the weak, that you would tear down the strong and that your son would be glorified in the salvation of men, women and children in Jesus name. Amen.

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