

God Is Good

by Ralph Sexton

The sermon emphasizes the importance of remembering God's blessings, living a life of integrity and values, and seeking revival and a return to God in order to avoid spiritual blindness and judgment.

Duration: 26:26

Scripture: Genesis 2:24, 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 51:10, Proverbs 14:34, Proverbs 29:1, Jeremiah 1:12, Matthew 5:13-16, Luke 19:41, 1 Timothy 5:8, James 4:8

Topics: "Gods Mercy", "Spiritual Revival"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing God's blessings and mercy in our lives, warning about the consequences of neglecting Him and the potential for His anger. It calls for a return to faith, moral values, and integrity, highlighting the significance of repentance and spiritual revival in the face of societal challenges and materialism.

Transcript

I begin to realize more and more that everything I have is a gift from a great and merciful God. The very air in my lungs and the blood circulating in my body is because of his tender mercies. He's a good God.

He's a great God. If it hadn't been for his hand, none of us would be here today. We would have been consumed.

And how easy it is to get busy living, doing your job, and to forget his bountiful blessings. Jeremiah chapter 1, verse 12. Jeremiah 1, 12.

Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow which is done unto me. Wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger. The image and thoughts I have of God are a God of love, a God of mercy, a God of giving, a God of provision.

Jeremiah said this same God that is so good, so kind, so loving, the God that gave his only begotten Son, if you neglect him, if you forget him, if you ignore him, this same God can become a God that is angry. And Pastor Jackie not only said angry, but he said fierce anger. That rattles my cage to know that it is not only an angry God, but a God with fierce anger.

He describes the intensity of that anger. In Luke chapter 19 in the New Testament, verse 41. And when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, if thou hast known.

The reason we felt so burdened to open the church for prayer tomorrow is I got to thinking about, I wonder if anyone has wept over Asheville. I wonder if anyone has wept over Buncombe County. I wonder if anyone even cares enough to weep and pray over North Carolina and America.

Are we so busy gathering material things that we have forgotten what really matters? What really matters is eternity. What God ordained this church for is to get people to go to heaven. The business meeting we had here Wednesday night after the service, that business meeting, what did we reiterate and restate as a church family? That the purpose of the pulpit is the preaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That we will not pervert what God hath ordained. That God has established us and put us here. And God has planted us here to be salt and light, without fear, without favor, uncompromising in the inerrant and infallible Word of God.

That we will stand for righteousness. Do you understand today, as we gather here, there is a falling away that is actually soaking the churches of America. It is actually seeping into the sacred spaces of America.

That we're caught up in socializing the gospel. And we're actually watering down the power and the authority of God's Word. We're more interested in being politically correct than we are being right with a holy God.

I'm telling you, we've got a problem when the church begins to allow the fire to go out and the fervor to go out in the house of the Lord. What do we expect the world to do if the church loses its salt and its light? God's Word says that there was weeping over the city because they had neglected the things and the opportunities that could be done in their congregation and in their community. I realized this morning that all of us are given a gift of time.

And time has several opportunities for us. I have the past opportunity. There are things in my life I cannot do over.

There are days that I cannot. I'd give anything if I could do them over. I said with 815 Church about the day that my best friend came to me broken and distressed and crying because I was in a backslidden condition.

I couldn't talk to him about God. I had to make light and joke and talk about music and him weeping and crying, begging me to help. And finally, after eight or nine minutes, he became so desperate.

He said, isn't your daddy a preacher? Aren't you a Christian? Don't you go to church? Reaching out for somebody to help him, someone to give him hope in his time of crisis. And just a few moments after that encounter, while I was not sincere and I was not genuine, he went around and took an automobile and went down into South Carolina, got on the interstate and drove that car into the bridge abutment at over 100 miles an hour. And the last person he talked to before he went into eternity was a hypocrite.

A guy that went to church on Sunday, but I lived another way on Monday. I had Sunday talk, but I had Monday talk. I had Sunday friends and I had Monday friends.

I'd go to church and carry a Bible and make my mom and dad happy, but I wasn't a real deal. I wasn't a real deal. I was putting on an act just to get all those good Christian people not to look at me.

I wasn't real. And the last person he talked to before he got in such a state of hopelessness, nobody can help me, nobody cares about me, nobody can talk to me, was an old hypocrite, an old two-faced guy, talks one way on Sunday, lives like the rest of the world on Monday. I can't bring that day back.

I can't live it over. And some of you got some nights you wish you could live over. Some of you got days you wish you could live over.

Conversations you wish you could play again. Places you wish you could back out of. Things you've seen.

Things you've heard. Things you've said. I wish to God I could forget that.

I wish I'd never done that. Wish I'd never said that. Past opportunity.

You say, what do we do with those days? You have to pray, you have to confess to God you're sorry, and you put it under the blood. I remember stuff God doesn't remember. What about that? He's told us never to remember it against me.

He allows me to remember it so it'll be a scar in my spiritual growth, that I won't be that foolish again. We learn from our mistakes. If we're men and women of faith, we take the past opportunities and we say, by the helping grace of God, I will not make that error again.

We also see in the course of time that if I do not repent, as Proverbs 29, 1 talks about, I become blind. I become hard-hearted. I become stiff-necked.

Nothing reaches me. Nothing touches me. The Bible goes on to say that if I continue in that route, that if I have been saved, I can continue in a backslidden condition so long that I can even forget I got saved.

That's pretty strong stuff. Because I have allowed that spiritual blindness to permeate my very thought pattern. But also, if I refuse to repent, not only in time will I see that past opportunity in time, I will develop that blindness, but in time, I can expect the judgment and the accountability of a holy God.

God will get my attention. God will get your attention. God will get a husband or wife's attention that neglects Him.

God can get the attention of a family. God can get the attention of a church. God can get the attention of a town.

God can get the attention of a country. Right now, it appears God's getting the attention of the world. Their house of cards is crumbling.

Seventeen banks in America have already collapsed. Another major bank this weekend. Seventeen already major banks this year.

Iceland, the company, the whole country went bankrupt. Russia had to close its stock market over six times in the last three weeks. The Ukraine just went bankrupt, had to be bailed out by the International Monetary Fund.

We're not seeing companies go out of business. We're seeing countries go out of business. Japan lowered its interest rate again overnight trying to salvage its economy.

We're seeing that all of a sudden around the world, all of a sudden a communist country who doesn't even recognize the private ownership, doesn't recognize capitalism, and all of a sudden we've got Red China's finance minister saying, what we need to solve this problem is we need one world money. If we could have a global economy, we wouldn't have this kind of problem. Isn't that interesting? What we're seeing, ladies and gentlemen, is you're seeing your Bible being fulfilled moment by moment.

The sign that that's taking place is the spiritual blindness, the judgment that is about to come. Proverbs 14:34 says, righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to what? Any people. July the 4th, 1776, the 13 colonies of Great Britain in America declared their independence of the mother country.

The oppression and tyranny of Great Britain could no longer be tolerated. They no longer wanted another country telling them how to divide their sandwich. They didn't want another country telling them how to spend their money.

They didn't want to be taxed and not be represented. The American colonies wanted to be free, and they went after four special freedoms. They went after freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, and freedom of assembly.

And after eight years, most people don't realize it, it took eight years, they thought, dying that we might be free under God in 2008. On April the 19th, 1783, Washington declared the war was at an end. The final treaty was signed on September the 3rd on 1783.

Ladies and gentlemen, it just didn't happen like that. People invested, they gave everything. We had American citizens giving their entire wealth and being impoverished the rest of their life so that the colonies could be free.

You think about, they didn't bow down to the gods of materialism. They didn't bow down and say, the most important thing to me is my house and my investments. Many American not only went out on a limb and invested their money and their wealth to buy powder and guns and lead, but we even had Americans going to Europe, some even to France, and borrowing money.

Borrowing money for the government, because there wasn't a government. It was just a bunch of people that wanted to be free. But the most important thing to them wasn't materialism.

It wasn't that they wanted to have more toys and trinkets. The most important thing to them was to be a free people and to worship God. And now in America, we're so blind that the latest survey says that only 9% of Americans even thinks integrity and values even matter in Tuesday's election.

91% says it does not matter. What matters is, will I get another incentive check? Will I get another piece of money? And ladies and gentlemen, where do you think your government's going to get any more money to give you when they don't have any money? They're borrowing money every single day. Somebody wake up and smell the coffee.

The last incentive check they gave you, they borrowed from communist red China. And then they gave it to you so you could go to Walmart and spend it on products made in China so we could send it back to them. And that way your children's children will be working for the Chinese communists when they're adults.

Because we'll be paying off a debt. Ladies and gentlemen, the answer is not materialism. That's not what we need.

I'm going to tell you something. If we don't wake up and get back to what got us here, and that was being a people of faith, a people of morals, and a people of values, you think God's going to bless us while we're murdering 3,600 babies a day? You think God's going to smile on us? You think God's going to bless us while we're murdering 3,600 babies a day? No, ladies and gentlemen. And you can't go in the voting booth and ignore 3,600 babies a day.

You can't ignore that. You've got to be a person of faith. God's going to hold us accountable.

They're babies and nobody cares about them. Unless you care. We have to be held accountable.

Who's going to pray for them? Who's going to defend them? Who's going to have a church for them? It's got to be men and women of courage and character. What's wrong with this country? Democrats can't fix. Republicans don't have a prayer.

Libertarians cannot put an answer together. It's a spiritual problem. It always has been.

And until we get right with God, there's no answer. Other than God have mercy on us. Forgive us for bowing down to the gods of materialism.

We worship pleasure. We worship good times. We worship cars.

We worship houses and clothes. And we're giving our souls for toys. We've got to have another DVD player.

We don't have one. We've got five in the house. We don't have one TV.

We've got seven TVs. We don't have one car. We've got three cars.

Do you understand? We're choking to death on things. And we're losing our babies in the process. They don't need you working overtime to buy them another toy.

They need you to take them on a walk in the mountains. And take them fishing. And spend some time with them.

And let them know you love them. If mama cares and daddy cares and grandmother cares and granddaddy cares. It's not what you can buy them that matters.

It's what you can get for them in the holy of holies. In prayer and dedication and supplication before the Lord. We've got to beg God to have mercy on us.

That we'll be a broken people. With a broken heart before God. God's not impressed with my intellect.

God's not impressed with how I can excuse the word of God. God's not impressed with my Greek and Hebrew study. God wants my heart.

God wants me broken before Him. God wants me clay that is moldable and shapeable into His image. That I can be salt and light for this day and for this generation.

And He wants moms and dads to be tender. And to be broken before Him. I'm afraid we're blinded by the gods of materialism.

By the gods of pleasure. By the gods of lust. We have families in our church that have situations in their families.

They cannot control. You know me and I know you and you know me well enough to know that we love everyone. Everybody's welcome at this church.

It is a hospital of hope. But there's a reason God put a sacredness on marriage. There's a reason God said that there'd be a man and a woman get married.

God didn't ordain two men to get married. Didn't ordain two women to get married. That's not what God ordained.

You say, Pastor Ralph, you can't preach that. That's not politically correct. Ladies and gentlemen, you say, well, it's in the privacy of someone's bedroom.

The church shouldn't be sticking their nose in there. If two men want to get married, it's their business. Two women want to get married, it's their business.

Well, then I submit to you one question. If it doesn't matter, then why does the state of North Carolina require that if you're going to get married, you've got to go get a marriage license? If it's not important, then why does North Carolina require a marriage license? I'll tell you why they require that. It is the foundation stone.

It is the building stone of our culture, our society. If we don't have a foundation that is secure and firm, there is no future. There has to be a mommy.

There has to be a daddy that honors God and to build that home and to build that marriage. And that's why God honors that type of lifestyle. Does that mean that we're ugly to someone that doesn't follow our tenets of faith? No, but you need to know and understand that God ordained the home, the marriage.

Why? Because if that crumbles, nothing else is going to stand. If we don't have homes that honor God, if we don't have husbands that are faithful to their wives and wives that are faithful to their husbands, listen, it's going to crumble. There's nothing.

Your little kids will never have security until they know daddy loves mama and mama loves daddy. We're going to just raise a generation of nervous wrecks. Little old kids, they don't know who they're going to be with this weekend.

They don't know who loves them. Parents using them as toys. I'll buy you this.

If you'll talk about mama, tell me this. I'll tell you something on daddy. God have mercy on us.

Mamas get in front of their children and cut down daddy and make fun of him, call him names and wives that are humiliated by their husbands in front of their children. You think God's going to wink at that? No, he's not going to wink at that because you're destroying the building block of our society, our culture, our church. If it is a man and a woman that love God and love each other and the greatest insurance policy you can give your child is to be a man of God and to be a woman of God and to love your husband, love

your wife and stand together and make sure your children have a future.

There is a world that's falling apart. It's crumbling. They're terrified to live.

They watch the news. They go to school. Listen, we've got kids in the middle schools of Buncombe County.

They're afraid to go to school because of the crime, the violence, the drugs, the things that are taking place. You need to know the hope for our community is God to send revival, God to touch us again, that we'd not be so callous and hard-hearted. We're caught up in materialism.

All we think about is another dollar, get another payday, buy another toy. Just let one of your little boys or one of your little girls be over there in the emergency room and the doctor walk out and say, we've done all we can do. Your toys won't help.

You can have all the trinkets and toys in the world, but what you'll hope is I taught my children to be faithful to the house of God, the things of God. Sunday morning, Sunday night, I made every effort to be there on Wednesday night when I wasn't working. We honored God with prayer and devotions in our home.

Our kids heard me praising God, not fussing at mama. So, Brother Ralph, we wish you'd have left yesterday, but I didn't. Hey, church, we've got to get back to being men and women of faith.

God is not going to wink at us if he doesn't judge us. You listen to me this morning. If we don't repent and do business with God, God will visit us.

God will get our attention, and if he doesn't, he'll have to resurrect Sodom and Gomorrah and apologize, because we're bigger sinners than they were. We're doing it in satellite TV. We're sending with HD, high definition, and four-color printers, cell phones, text messages.

Sodom had none of that technology. We're the world's most sophisticated sinners. We need revival.

We're blinded by the gods of materialism, the gods of pleasure, the gods of greed. Our nation has been rattled by the Wall Street collapse, but to get down to the bottom line, it was nothing but greed, just greed. We bailed one company out, and they celebrated the bailout by having a \$460,000 cocktail party.

Greed. Greed. Ladies and gentlemen, what if God gives us what we want? I quit praying for what I wanted this week.

I started praying, God, your will be done Tuesday. God, your will be done. You say, well, what will happen to us? God's people will be just fine, because our hope's not in this world, but God permitted us to be here to be salt and light.

Character and commitment is what God wants out of us. God will grow this church. If you're willing to take this church into 2009, you're willing to be that Christian of courage.

You're willing to say, I'm going to ask God to touch my prayer life this morning. I'm going to ask God to forgive me for playing church. I want to ask God to forgive me for having grudges and hard feelings and being disrespectful.

I want revival, and I want it to begin in me. I want you to join me standing in this altar for a closing prayer. I'm not going to take time to finish this message.

I got 48 pages of notes, 48 pages. We're on page one and a half. But I believe God wants us to be that.

Let's stand together. I want you to join me in the altar for that commitment prayer. If you mean business, you just gather in this altar.

We'll stand together as a church family. God, by your help and grace, I'll be that person. I'll be the kind of daddy you want me to be, the kind of husband, the kind of wife.

I'll be the kind of grandparent. I'm committing my

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