

The Beloved

by Randy Jones

The sermon emphasizes the necessity of knowing Jesus personally and being conformed to His image rather than settling for a mere religious existence.

Duration: 44:28

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 7:21, Matthew 7:23, Luke 6:46, John 14:9, John 17:3, Colossians 1:15

Topics: "Beloved"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of staying focused on Jesus and not getting distracted by religious rituals or the enemy's tactics. He emphasizes the need to know and be conformed to Jesus, desiring to look like His son when standing before God. The speaker shares personal experiences of struggling with spiritual growth and settling for religion instead of pursuing a deeper relationship with Jesus. He encourages the audience to preach Jesus and trust in His power, as signs and miracles will follow those who are focused on Him. The sermon concludes with the assurance that nothing can separate believers from the love of God, even in the face of tribulation and distress.

Transcript

Colossians chapter 1, verse 15. I kind of gave an introduction to this Sunday night on knowing the Lord, and tonight I want to start on this series called The Beloved, or The Beloved. And the reason I'm doing this is God has dealt with me so much about getting off track, and losing spiritual focus.

We get saved, and we get on fire for God, we meet Jesus Christ, we fall in love with Him, but in our human nature, our flesh, we're easily distracted. How many know that? We're very easily distracted, especially in spiritual things. And then the enemy comes along, and he has a way of distracting us, and always causing turmoil and confusion if we let him.

And it keeps us from being on the main track. And that's the part I drew down the middle Sunday night. The main thing is Jesus Christ, and knowing Him.

But so many times we end up just religious, and I've done this many, many times myself. In fact, I regret many months, and weeks, and sometimes years I've wasted by settling for religion when I could have had the Lord. And that's the theme of what I'm teaching on, that maybe it'll help someone stay on track.

And by the end of our lives, this is a lifetime thing, in case you haven't noticed this. You didn't get saved and get filled with the Holy Spirit, and then perfected and raptured like the first day you got saved. But there's a growing in the Lord.

So what I want to address the next few weeks is, why does God put so much stock in His Son? Why does He love Him so much? Why is He so proud, if I can put that in a good way? Why is He so proud of His Son? Why does He carry on so much about it? While Jesus was in this world, God spoke out of heaven audibly several times. Audibly. But the very first one I talked about, and that's what I'm basing this series on, the beloved, or the beloved, is His baptism.

When Jesus came up out of the water, please forgive my crude artwork. Would it be okay if I borrowed a picture out of the senior Bible class for a second? Somebody like the one of Jesus in prayer. It's one of my favorite pictures.

I'll be very careful with it. I wanted to bring my own, and I forgot what I did with it. It's a great big picture.

I think it's in my closet somewhere. But that'll do a little better than my artwork here. In fact, that's so bad, I'm going to erase that.

Believe it or not, I actually was in a gifted art student at school for like one semester until they discovered I wasn't gifted. Thank you, Mike. This would be good.

If I can figure out a place to put it here. I'll tell you what, I'll put it right here for a second. Okay, this is one of my all-time favorite pictures.

My grandmother, when I was a young child, had this above her couch in the living room. And I'll never forget, she would sit there telling me stories about Jesus Christ. And I'll remember this picture.

Of course, this probably isn't exactly how Jesus really looked. But we know who this represents. And everything God measures is by His Son.

There's no other measuring stick that God has. It's just His Son. God only considers and He judges the value of everything by how much it conforms to His Son.

He judges us by how much of Christ is manifested in us. So this is going to be, I wish I had this great big giant picture, but this is the measuring stick. This is God's yardstick.

This picture just represents Him. Jesus is God's measure. And you've got to remember that in everything we talk about.

He has no other measure. And I don't want to, anybody accuse me of heresy here, so listen real close. It's not even a matter so much of being judged about sin.

Because sin is not being Christlike. So what He's going to judge us by is Christ. And everything that's not like Christ has got to go.

And will go. People who have no Christ at all, they'll all go to hell. Because there's nothing God can do with that.

If there's no Christ in them, if there's no manifestation of His Son in them at all, there's nothing God can work with. So they can't go to heaven. There's no entrance into heaven for them because the new creation is only one person, Jesus Christ.

That's all that's in the new creation. He's the firstborn of all creation. And He's going to bring many sons into glory.

And He started this, and if I can put it this way, there's an old humanity and there's a new humanity. And I mean men and women, not just men. The old humanity, the old creation has been done away with.

Judgment has been pronounced on it. It's got to go. And it will go.

It'll all be burned up with fervent heat. Everything man has touched and made, it'll be burned up with fervent heat and the whole world's going to be cleansed. Now all that'll be left will be Christ.

And everybody that's in Christ. And as I tried to illustrate Sunday night with Brother Deal, if I'm in Christ, I'm safe. If I'm in Christ, God loves me.

If I believe and trust in Christ, I'm accepted and a beloved. But I can't get outside of Christ. And unfortunately, the way we human beings do anything to do with God, anything to do with God, when we get our hands on it, we mess it up.

We make it mean or bad or cruel or ugly. That's why you see all these religions where they're killing each other and rejoicing. When 9-1-1 happened, we saw pictures of Middle Eastern countries, not all of them, but some of them rejoicing and dancing in the streets because 2,000 people were killed.

Well, that's not normal. That's not normal. Even, you know, even just rank heathen sinners don't act like that.

But when we touch religion or try to touch divine things or things to do with God, we always mess it up and make it something that's perverted and twisted and deformed. God's always going to get us back to this, to his son. Every time we try to get away, he's got to have something bad happen or put us in the corner or hit us in the head with a two-by-four.

Got to get back to this. If you want to know why God does things in your life you don't understand sometimes, please listen to me. Everything he's doing is to get you back to Christ.

All of his dealings are that you'll know his son. Now you got to understand this, that God has revealed himself through his son. There's a father in heaven, Almighty God.

And I don't understand how, but he didn't create a son. He didn't adopt a son. He had a son.

His very nature is in Jesus Christ. But God took everything he had, all of his divine perfections, all of his power, all of his glory, everything that's wonderful about God, and he wrapped it up in a person called Jesus Christ. And he sent him into this world for one purpose to reveal, well many purposes, but the main purpose that as far as the father was concerned was to reveal himself.

And Jesus said to Philip and his disciples, if you've seen me, you've seen the father. But the Bible said, let's read it here. This is one of the most, remember I was talking about the things Paul wrote? We're still trying to understand them 2,000 years later.

They're so big and comprehensive. Look in Colossians 1 verse 15. This is one of the deepest passages in the Bible.

It's almost incomprehensible because it's so, I got stuff on me from something. I'm reading from the King James. Who is the image, the Greek is the express image, of the invisible God.

The firstborn of every creature. For by him were all things created that are in heaven, that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers. All things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things, let me understand the word all. That's a word that includes everything. That in all things, he might have the preeminence.

For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. After all the things Paul wrote, all the things that he suffered and went through, at the end of his life in Philippians 3, the handout that I gave you, after all that he knew about the Lord, caught up to the third heaven, he was still saying the same thing. I want to know him.

I want to know him. I want to be one with him. It's not just knowledge about the Lord.

You could go to seminary. I had a friend tell me he went to a certain seminary up north, took a class on Bible prophecy, first class. The professor came out, smoking a cigar, had a beard, and he looked at the students in the Bible seminary there, and he said this.

First class, first thing he said. Second coming of Christ. First of all, it's not the second.

Second of all, he's not coming. That was his introduction to prophecy. In other words, it's not true.

It's not going to come to pass. Well, I got news for all of us who think God's word won't come to pass. Nothing you can do about it.

It's going to happen whether you believe it or not. If you believe the moon's made out of green cheese, that doesn't make it so, right? If I believe this chair's not real, it's not here, that doesn't change anything. So when we get into spiritual things, there's only one guide.

This is it. And I don't understand people that say, I don't believe the Bible. I don't believe it's God's word.

But I'm a Christian. Where did you get what you knew? Everything we know about God, except the stars and the sun and the moon and all that, is in this book. God revealed himself in this book.

What we know about Jesus is through this book and it's revealed to us by the Holy Spirit out of this book. So this must be the guide. And when we start going through here and the passage we just read, Paul said this, he's got to be number one.

That he might have the preeminence. If he's not number one, if you're a Christian and you're a believer and he's not number one in your life, God is going to start working on this very point. He has to have the preeminence in your life.

You can't tack Jesus onto your life. You can't be a homosexual for Jesus or, you know, an alcoholic for Jesus. You can't just tack him on to your sin.

He took over your life. And one of the most powerful passages in the Bible is right here. Let's look in Colossians chapter one, verse 27.

How many still with me? To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Christ in you, the hope of glory. God is dealing with us on two things regarding his son.

Number one, that we know him. The word no doesn't mean just have mental knowledge. That's what you can get in Bible schools and teaching.

It's not just teaching or doctrine or mental knowledge. It's a revelation. A personal experience with the Lord.

One time I was in a church, Nancy and I took Micah when he was maybe two or three, maybe a little bit older than that, to this huge big church. We sat in the back, we were visiting and we were on the back row and this guy came in dressed up like Colonel Sanders. And I told Nancy, I said, this guy thinks he's Colonel Sanders.

It's ridiculous coming into church looking like that. A little white suit, you know. And the pastor looked back and said, we're glad to have Colonel Harlan Sanders here this morning.

It was Colonel Sanders. And after church, I actually got to meet Colonel Sanders. And he autographed a little picture for Micah.

And I have actually personally talked to and met Colonel Sanders. Anybody else in this room met him or talked to him? Nancy. I have personal experience that you don't have.

You've seen him on the signs and the billboards and the cartoons and the pictures. But I have met him, talked to him and shook his hand. You don't have that experience.

You don't have that knowledge. There's a lot of Christians that sit in church and don't personally know the Lord. And that's miserable because that's what's exciting about being a Christian.

It's not this chair that's exciting. It's Jesus Christ, the son of the living God and knowing him. And that's God's first goal is that you know him.

And number two, that you be conformed to his image. Christ is within. What did we just read? Christ in you is the hope of glory.

Not my training, not my education, not what I learned about the Bible, but how much of Christ I have in me. That's my hope of glory. Not just being a religious person or learning stuff, but Christ in me.

And then Paul said, Romans 8, 29. For this is the will of God, that you be conformed into the image of his son. So since this is God's measure and God's measuring stick and his yardstick, we better learn about him as much as we can through the revelation of the Holy Spirit, because we're going to be judged according to this pattern.

When we stand before God, he's not going to say, did you give up chewing tobacco? You know, it's like the church up in Kentucky. I heard about the pastor's preaching. He said, boy, you need to quit smoking cigars.

Everybody said, amen. You need to quit smoking cigarettes. Everybody said, amen.

Need to quit drinking whiskey. Everybody said, amen. He said, you need to quit dipping snuff.

And it got real quiet. One lady said he's done, quit preaching, gone to meddling. Because they happen to be doing that.

Well, that's what God's going to be interested in. Although that'll be some of it, I'm sure. But that's not what he's looking for.

Did you give up stuff? That's not what he's looking at. Yes, I gave up some things to know the Lord. Like Paul said, and we read in Philippians 2, he gave up everything.

He said, I gave up everything and counted all loss for the surpassing privilege of knowing Jesus Christ my Lord. This is what God's going to look at us. And this is what scares me with a good fear of God is I don't want to stand there and not look anything like Jesus.

That's going to be embarrassing. We're going to be tried by fire. And what's gold, silver and precious stone will remain and shine even brighter.

And that's our foundation, which is Jesus Christ. And what's wood, hay and stubble is going to be burned up. And this is what God's going to look at in every single one of us.

Did you have him? Did you know him? Remember the two parables? And what's amazing to me, after all the things Paul went through, he's still crying out, I want to know him. And Jesus came along and told the parables, the one parable of the people who said, Lord, Lord, we prophesied in your name. We cast out demons in your name.

We did wonderful miracles in your name. It sounds like pretty powerful people. And our generation is the same way.

We're we're looking for a sign. People run all over America looking for a sign. Well, God gave us a sign.

This is it. I like everything else, but I want this. I want him.

And when we realize that the point of that parable was you can do all that and not know the Lord. That's pretty scary. Cast out demons, prophesied.

And the Greek says worked powerful miracles in your name, in Jesus name. What does he say? Depart from me, you workers of iniquity. I never knew you.

That's pretty shocking. Let me show you what I think Jesus was talking about. Before I forget, I want to share this quotation.

I think I shared this about two years ago. This quotation changed my view of all Christian ministry for good. I was reading an old book called Preaching with Power.

I don't remember some about preaching. And I ran across this little paragraph, a quotation. And here's what it said.

We need an expression of the experience of Christ in which we think everything about Christ and nothing about the experience. That's pretty deep. We're an experience seeking generation.

And we'll almost do anything to have some kind of experience. And this old preacher said, we need an experience of Christ. In other words, we have experienced Christ to such a degree that we don't care about the experience.

We just care about Christ. We need an experience of Christ in which we think everything of Christ and nothing of the experience. And then he went on to say this.

And we need preachers who won't keep demanding a faith or a love that we cannot rise to. But who will preach Jesus so wonderfully and so powerfully that he will produce and compel faith and love. In other words, that's why Paul said, you know why I get in the shipwrecks? You know why I get beaten all the time and it doesn't stop me or faze me? Because I love Jesus Christ so much.

That's what he was saying. You can preach love and faith and everybody can't do it. But if you preach Jesus and the Holy Spirit shares him with us and reveals him, he produces faith and love.

And that's the picture I want to draw. And I was talking about dissecting the pig Sunday night. We try to separate things, spiritual things from the Lord.

Let me put it this way. Here's Christ. When he came up out of the water at the Jordan River at his introduction to the world.

Here's God's secret. Paul said it was hidden in ages past. God had a secret, a mystery that was hidden in himself that he never told anyone about, except there were a few people in heaven that knew something about it.

And then at the Jordan River, he came up out of the water and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form as a dove and God thundered out of heaven. This is my son, the beloved and whom I have always been delighted. In other words, this didn't just start at the Jordan River when he came up out of the water.

This started back in eternity past that there is a relationship between the father. And this is a deep mystery. The Bible said a deep mystery.

Great is the mystery of godliness that Christ was manifest in the flesh that God was willing to share. You know, how many has ever gotten something really, really nice and really, really cool or really, really expensive or really, really great. You don't want to share it sometimes.

You know, I just want to keep it for a while. And in other words, if I bought a \$100,000 car, I saw a car a while back that cost \$4 million. If I had that car, you wouldn't get to drive it.

I wouldn't be sharing that with you. I couldn't even afford the insurance. Yeah.

Well, sometimes we get a little selfish and God, since he's not selfish, but he knew the pain and the heartbreak and the agony that he would himself have to go through to watch his. And there's so much here, but the thing that always breaks my heart is how Jesus stepped out and totally committed himself to

the father's hand and the father's will, not knowing what was going to happen. He didn't know what was going to happen.

He just stepped out and said, father, I'm trusting you and I give my life in your hands and I'm going to whatever comes, I'm going to stay true and in love with you and faithful to you. And all the horrible, the Bible said, we've not resisted unto blood like Jesus did who resisted sinners coming against his mind and attacking him and all the demons of hell. We, we get, we, we quit if one little tiny demon, a baby newborn demon, I don't know if that's theologically correct, but a little bitty, tiny baby newborn demon who's never even tormented a mouse comes up to us and goes, why don't you just quit? It's too hard.

Okay. And we immediately give in. Can you imagine if every demon and devil and held the dragon and the devil and the serpent and Satan attacked you your whole life and every religious person hated you, they just hated you so much.

They wanted to literally kill you. You know why? Because they were so jealous. He had power and they didn't, they came to hear Jesus and they said, he has authority.

He speaks with authority. He's not like the Pharisees. It's like the one pastor I heard about.

He hired his church, just went way downhill, started off with 3000 people and he was down to 50 in just six months. So the denomination said, well, we got to check this out. What are you doing wrong? So the expert came up to the pastor after the service and he said, I think I figured out what's wrong.

And he said, really, what is it? He said, it's what you say at the end of every sermon. When you get done with your sermon, you always look at everybody and go, but then what do I know? That's kind of the way the Pharisees taught, you know, maybe, maybe it's true. Maybe it's not, I don't know.

But then what do I know? Well, Jesus came along and the Bible said he taught with authority. And when he was faced with a demon, he didn't, you know, some of these demon cast outers just cracked me up because it takes them so long to cast out a demon. You know, I'll use Brother Allen, couldn't use him, John either.

You know, they work and they work. Please come out. Please come out.

What's your name? You know, and they go off on this. Jesus walked and said, get out. And they were with authority.

He commands the unclean spirits, not like the Pharisees. And because his, his reality and his power in his authority was a constant rebuke to their hypocrisy and unreality and lack of power. They wanted to kill him.

They plotted all the time to kill him. Well, this relationship back in eternity past between the father and son has been going on. I don't know how long.

I mean, I don't understand this, but I know it's in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. And I really like when he goes on to say, John said, and we beheld his glory.

You know, if you, if you want to get encouraged. By the time John was an old man on the Isle of Patmos, the church had already started going downhill. Now think about this.

The church was born on the day of Pentecost and they went out with power. Peter's shadow, he'll people on the way to church. Can you imagine that for eight years, the apostles preached at Jerusalem and some church historians believe there was 20,000 in that church, 20,000 meeting behind Solomon's temple.

I mean, behind the temple on Solomon's porch and the apostles were preaching the word with power and authority and praying all the time and in the word all the time. And they came out and can you imagine they'd get up and denounce tonight? Peter's preaching on when I walked on the water, Jesus pretty powerful message tomorrow nights, John is preaching on what I saw on the Mount of transfiguration. That'd be pretty exciting.

It got so exciting. Those people got so full of Jesus that God then sent persecution along to scatter them all over the world. And they had, they were so, if you go back and read the book of Acts from looking at Jesus in that book, not the apostles.

And all of a sudden there was a something changed in Jerusalem because the disciples were healing people at the gate, beautiful in the name of Jesus. Martin Luther, there's a story of Martin Luther, the Pope took Martin Luther into the church treasury and opened the door in his room bigger than this, full of gold, silver, and precious jewels. And the Pope looked at Martin Luther and said, the church can no longer say silver and gold have I none.

And Martin Luther said, and the church can no longer say in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. Within 75 years, the church started declining. They started losing their power.

And I believe this is what God's shown me. You don't have to agree with it, but I believe this is the truth. We quit making Jesus the number one, all in all.

And as soon as we do that, God's going to lift his power. He will not, we can fake it and get little earpieces and pretend we're getting words of knowledge and all that stuff, but you don't have to fake it when we're preaching Jesus. And he's the all in all.

The Bible said they went everywhere preaching the word and the Lord working with them, confirming the word was signs following. You don't have to go seeking signs. They follow you when you're preaching Jesus.

And they were so Jesus focused. They said in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And then they took them in and questioned them and said, you're going to have to quit preaching Jesus.

And they said, well, we can't do that because God told us to do it all the way through there in the name of Jesus, because of Jesus, they rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Jesus sake. Can you see us? If we got beaten, call the ambulance. Oh, this is horrible.

And I'm missing my favorite TV program on top of everything else. They, they had walked with Jesus for three and a half years. They saw him on the Mount of transfiguration.

Three of them did. They saw him walk on the water. They saw him stand at Lazarus tomb and say, Lazarus come forth.

And he came out of the tomb. They saw him cleanse the temple. They walked with him and talked with him for three and a half years.

And then on the day of Pentecost, the Holy spirit came back and put Jesus inside of them. That same Jesus was now inside of them with power and authority and glory. And the Bible said with great power, the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

He appeared in the room with them. He appeared on the road to Emmaus and they were so wrapped up in Jesus Christ that they turned the world upside down. That's what God wants us to get back to.

And maybe you're there. I want to be there more and more every day, but God had this relationship with his son. That's been going on for ages and ages and eternity past.

And it'll always be going on. And God said, this is just too good. I want to share this.

I want to share this. So created us. And he said, you know, I'll let you share my secret.

I'll let you share this relationship that I have with my son. And God's goal is he's making himself a family. And maybe in a few weeks God's making himself a family.

And the firstborn is called Jesus Christ. He's the only begotten son. Some of the modern translations have tried to soften that down.

I did a major Greek study of that word and it means only begotten. They've tried to soften that down. John said, and here's what, if you want to encourage yourself, go to the book of Acts, look for Jesus, and then realize that when John was an old man on the Isle of Patmos, the church declined, already declined.

And to fight, whenever the church starts declining and losing power and authority in the world, then God has a plan. He gets us back to his son. He reveals his son, afresh and anew.

And John, through the Holy Spirit, wrote the gospel of John at the end of his life, around AD 85 or 90. He wrote the book of John. It's not an early gospel.

It's what God brought back to bring the church back to Jesus Christ, his son. In the first chapter, he said, we beheld his glory. The glory is of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

First John 1, he said, we declare that which our eyes have seen and our hands have handled, the word of life. John's saying, we touched him. I leaned on his bosom.

I'm telling you things I saw personally and I know. Then he wrote the book of Revelation, which is the unveiling of Jesus Christ for all eternity. What's God doing? Getting us back to his son.

And the last books written were John and Revelation. So he would say, here's where I want you back here. And what we do is, though, we start getting all fragmented.

And we think, let me think of some doctrines. Salvation. We try to take this off and make it something by itself.

God doesn't save us just to be saving us because he didn't have anything better to do. He's building the body of Christ, his son. The church.

Oh, here's one we do, the church. We want to take the church and make it a separate thing. It's not.

The church is Jesus Christ. It's called his body. And you start looking in the word.

Everything God does is wrapped up in his son. And the Bible says someday his fullness is going to fill the whole universe and I could go to Pluto or the moons of Jupiter and pick up a rock and that rock's going to be full of Christ. He is so big and so significant and so immense and so great.

And this is something you need to just never forget. Took me a long time and I'm still learning this. I wish I knew it better.

The kind of Christian you are is determined by how much you know Jesus Christ, how much I have comprehended him, how much I have laid hold of him, how much I have apprehended of Christ and my personal experience. And I'm sorry to say this, but sometimes those are painful experiences. Because we go along, we go, oh, it's all in the church or it's all in tongues or, you know, you could make a long list here or prophecy.

I see this a lot. Prophecy. Prophecy's everything.

This is prophetic worship, prophetic prayer meeting. This is a prophetic microphone. I mean, I literally have seen it that bad.

I've seen Christians going around with notebooks trying to get a word from everybody. And that's okay if God gives you a word. Sometimes you need it and he knows it.

But he already gave us a big word. Right here. And sometimes we want to take a shortcut, not fast and pray and study.

That's the hard way. And what we do is we take all these things and we divorce them or cut them off and make them a separate thing. And when it becomes a thing, you've missed it.

And when I look back on my Christian life, the ministry is one of the biggest enemies you'll have to know in Christ if you're a minister. That'll be your biggest enemy. Believe it or not, you'll focus on the ministry instead of Christ and you'll get off and you'll go, well, the ministry is everything.

I like Edward Payson's approach. He died when he was 29, I think, or something like that. If you look in secular history books, I saw one that said in the 1820s, the town of Portland, Maine experienced continual revival under the ministry of Edward Payson.

He died when he was so young. His nickname was Prayin' Payson. And he would go down the street, walking down the street, and he would just go, thank you, Lord, that I'm a minister of Christ.

He would be just so excited that he could be a minister of Christ. And he would always tell his church, I'm not a minister. I'm a minister of Christ.

I'm not a preacher. I'm a preacher of Christ. And if you ever divorce that, or let's say you're a Sunday school teacher or a musician or you can, I used to be a musician in church.

And you get wrapped up in that to where that becomes an idol in your life and replaces Christ. So God has to say, okay, I'm going to take your toys away until I can get your attention again. I wish God didn't have to do that to me so much.

George McDonald, the old Victorian preacher said, God takes our stuff and puts it away. And we beg and we plead and we cry for it until someday it doesn't matter anymore. And then he gives it back to us.

And when we get away from Christ, if you don't understand God's dealings in your life, this is it. You've lost Christ. You can be a Christian in church and lose Christ and get wrapped up.

The Pharisees looked at Christ and all they saw was somebody they hated and were jealous of. And the last part, I want to get to that didn't even get anywhere. As far as God's concerned, this is all there is.

And this is the foundation where we're concerned. We keep trying to build something else in there. And God says, okay, let me take that.

He'll take your reputation. He'll take your friends if he has to. I'm not saying he will, but that's what it takes.

Thank God. God left it up to us. We'd never make it.

He'll take your finances, whatever it takes to get you back on your knees saying, Lord, what are you trying to say to me? You've forgotten my son. You've left him out. And he's all there is.

He's all I'm looking at. He's all I can see. I can't see you.

I can only see him. And if you're not in him and knowing him, then I can't help you. I can't bless you.

I can't be with you. And the greatest eternal blessing will be knowing the Lord and being like him. And the battle, the devil always tried to come in here.

And maybe we'll get to that, but he did this in many different ways, but he always tried to come between Jesus and the father. And that's the way he does us. The first little thing that happens, the enemy comes to say, God's left you.

He doesn't love you anymore. Look what happened. This is what I've had him tell me.

This is it, pal. This is the one you've messed up too bad this time. This is unforgivable.

This is worse than blaspheming the Holy Spirit. That's the way you feel. And the devil just beat you up.

What's he doing? And this may be a blow to some of our pride. The devil doesn't care about us. He's not even interested in us.

He's only against Christ. And if you stay away from Christ, he'll leave you alone. He'll help you.

He'll bless you. He'll give you sinner friends to come and encourage you and offer you beer. But if you get around Christ, then he notices you because he hates Jesus Christ.

And the battle of this whole universe is over one issue. And that's the air getting what he deserves. What's it going to be? Everything.

Even Satan, he's going to get on his knees and confess at the top of his voice, I don't want to. I hate this. But the truth is, Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

The whole universe is going to fall on its knees. We may not get to know him in this world, but someday we'll wish we had. That's what I want to urge you to do is cry out to God day and night and fast and pray.

I want to know you, Lord. Don't let me get off track. Don't let me miss it.

And the battle of this whole universe is this ground right here, whether the air is going to get his inheritance. And I've got news for you. He will.

And he's going to get it with glory and power. And everybody that's with him, they're going to shine like the sun, the moon and the stars at reflected glory of God's son. God's son is so glorious that in the days to come, in the ages to come, we won't even need light.

Our sun, our moon, our stars, his glory is going to light the universe. And don't you think we ought to get to know somebody that's so glorious that God said, that's the only thing I can see is my son. And someday this is where the battle is.

And this is where you're going to have a battle when you get on that ground and say, I'm going to stand. Jesus told the parable of the, the guy who had a vineyard and he went away and he sent back workers to collect it and they killed the workers. Then he said, they'll respect my son.

And he sent his son and they said, this is the air. And Jesus was talking about Israel and the Pharisees. They said, this is the air let's kill him.

And then we'll get the inheritance. And there's been such when Satan sinned and fell, it wasn't just an act of sin. A spirit entered this whole universe and filled it from one end to the other.

Have you ever noticed sin just seems to spray it everywhere easily. You can go anywhere and somebody's sinning, but righteousness seems to like a flickering candle about to go out, but it's not because God always has a remnant people where Jesus is real and alive in them. And they're going to exist in this world where the devil likes it or not, because God defends them with the very powers of heaven and the host of heaven.

But the battle is, will the air receive his inheritance? Yes, he will, including his bride, which we'll talk about next week and his honeymoon and his eternal inheritance. He will receive it. And then Romans eight, Paul goes on to say, who shall separate us from the love of God, tribulation, distress.

That's what the enemy tries to do to separate you from God. Some tribulations, some distress, peril, famine, nakedness, sword, all these things, height, nor death, nor creatures, nor demons, nor powers. Nothing can separate us from the love of Jesus Christ, my Lord.

So what is our anchor? We're going to stand on this ground, say, I want to know you, Lord. I want to be conformed to you. When I stand before you, Father, I want to look like your son.

And whatever it takes, do that in me. Don't listen to my whining. It took me about 30 years to get out of preschool spiritually, because every time God tried to graduate me, I start crying and whining.

It's too hard. But when I stand before the Lord, I want him to say, that's my son, too. That's my son, too.

That's my daughter, too. He looks like my son. And that's where the issue is and the fight is.

And then Paul said nothing can separate us. And that anchor is that God loves us because we're in Christ. And he doesn't stop loving you when you mess up or when you do good, because he loves Christ unchangingly.

Let's stand and pray. Thank you for your attention.

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