

(A Divine Visitation) Hope Renewed

by Richard Owen Roberts

Richard Owen Roberts' sermon emphasizes the transformative power of divine visitations and the hope they bring for renewal and repentance.

Duration: 1:19:31

Scripture: Luke 3:16, Acts 3:19-24, Jude 1:24-25

Topics: "Repentance", "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of repentance and the opportunity for sinners to turn to God. He references five scriptures, including the book of Jude, to emphasize the importance of repentance and the power of God in bringing about revival. The preacher also highlights the compassion and forgiveness shown by Peter and John towards those who crucified Jesus, and encourages other preachers to examine their own effectiveness in leading people to repentance. The sermon emphasizes the need for confrontational preaching that moves people to repentance and a genuine transformation of heart.

Transcript

Now it's been my wonderful privilege to speak these few days with you. Along a very definite line, I've been speaking of divine visitations. I don't know why the Lord is so good and so kind to us.

I constantly marvel over the fact that an old man who's lost many of his friends in death and others have been forced to retire by health and circumstances, yet I'm privileged to go on proclaiming the Word of God. I have the happiest opportunities. Recently I was able to give a series of 13 sermons on Romans 8. And my, did I have a good time.

And I'm sort of hoping that I'll live long enough to do another real series on the book of Hebrews. What an incredible book it is. And oh, how relevant to our day because there are so many believers who do not understand that Christianity is not a good beginning, but a marvelous ending.

Doesn't matter how you start, it's how you finish that counts. And Hebrews speaks so profoundly to that particular issue. But these days we've been thinking of divine visitations and most of you know, but a few have slipped in since I had the privilege of speaking on Monday.

And I want simply to trace where we've been before we approach our fourth and final message at this hour. We began by looking at that incredibly beautiful song of the priest Zacharias that he sang on the eighth day at the circumcision of his son John the Baptist. And in which he described in two utterly beautiful terms the visitations from on high.

Speaking first of the visit of the horn of salvation. And then the day spring on high or the sunrise from on high will visit us. I entitled that divine visitations, man's greatest hope.

And we were looking on Saturday of last week at the third chapter of the gospel of John. The preparation necessary for divine visitations. Thinking in terms of John the Baptist and his message and his incredible work.

And this week we're looking at that passage in Luke 19 and supplementing that with Matthew 23. And focusing upon the great tragedy of not recognizing our season or time of visitation. But today's message has to do with a second chance.

A renewed hope. Divine visitations and renewed hope. We're going to read several scriptures.

Someone once accused me of reading more scripture in a sermon. And taking more time to do so than the typical sermon length in its entirety. I hope that's not unfair.

But I have read as many as five full chapters in a sermon. And I don't see the problem with it. But that's not the intent this morning.

But rather to read three brief passages and then a chapter. And then following that another brief passage. So let's begin by looking at Luke chapter 3. And let me read one single verse of such incredible consequence.

Luke chapter 3 at verse 16. John answered and said to them, As for me, I baptize you with water. But he who is mightier than I is coming.

And I'm not fit to untie the thong of his sandals. He himself will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. And I spoke briefly, that is briefly by my standards, on that matter last Saturday.

And I simply want to restate. That in Luke 3, John the Baptist is drawing contrast. And he contrasts first his person with the person of Christ.

And secondly, his baptism with the baptism of Christ. And in the contrast of persons, Although John the Baptist was the greatest of men born normally of women. John makes it crystal clear.

I'm not worthy to untie the thongs of his sandals. And as you see the contrast between the person of John and Christ. It helps to sense then the consequence of the contrast.

Between the baptism in water and the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire. Many of us have grown afraid of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We have seen so many ridiculous and extreme persons.

And heard such silly statements and claims made. That we just kind of tend to shy away from it. But oh brothers and sisters.

As important as baptism in water is. And there's no degrading it. There's no more a degrading of baptism in water in the passage.

Than there is a degrading of John the Baptist himself. But in comparison baptism in water. And baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire.

Simply cannot really be compared. And I hope, I pray. That all of you will truly understand.

Long for, pray continually. For the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire. Not only in your own life.

But in the church. And if you pursue the matter at all. I've had the joy of preaching.

A significant I believe in terms of length. If in no other fashion series of sermons. On this passage.

But surely if you pursue it. It is crystal clear. The baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Refers to fire. Or excuse me to power. And the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Refers to purity. And passion. I've had the joyful privilege of knowing.

A great many of the men who have labored. In the field of revival. Armand Gaswine for instance.

Of whom we heard a few moments ago. I counted as a very dear friend. J. Edwin Orr.

Stephen Oldford. Leonard Ravenhill. To name a few.

All now in the glory. With all men. Who understood the contrast.

Between water baptism. And baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire. And all men of passion.

And of purity. All would to God. That each one here without exception.

Would know. In increasing fullness. The baptism of the Holy Spirit.

And fire. The second passage. Is in Luke chapter 24.

A single verse. And indeed. A familiar verse as well.

Luke 24. Verse 49. And behold.

I am sending forth. The promise of my father. Upon you.

But you are to stay in the city. Until you are clothed. With power.

From on high. Wouldn't it be wonderful. If as a result.

Of these several days together. Each one. In company with others of like mind.

Were to have a tearing experience. Somewhere. And meet together.

And wait. For the promise of the father. Oh of course.

Pentecost cannot be repeated. But each of us. Can have our own.

Tearing time. And our fresh encounter. And our baptism.
In the Holy Spirit and fire. My dear friend. J Edwin Orr.
Frequently when I was with him. Would say to people. Don't shy away.
From this baptism. Of the Holy Spirit and fire. Don't worry about the extremist.
After all. The safeguard is. In this matter of the spirit.
And especially in speaking. In tongues. Two great things to keep in mind.
Neither command. Nor forbid. It can't go wrong.
If you take that approach. But our dear. Savior.
Called upon his followers. To tarry. In the city.
And to wait. The third passage. You could almost anticipate in advance.
What it would be. The book of Acts. And chapter one.
Verses. Four to eight. Acts.
One four to eight. And gathering them together. He commanded them.
Not to leave Jerusalem. But to wait. For what the father.
Had promised. Which he said. You heard of.
From me. For John baptized. With water.
But you shall be baptized. With the Holy Spirit. Not many days.
From now. And so when they had come together. They were asking him saying.
Lord is it at this time. You are restoring. The kingdom to Israel.
He said to them. It is not for you to know. Times or epics.
Which the father. Has fixed. By his own authority.
But you shall receive. Power. When the Holy Spirit.
Has come upon you. And you shall be my witnesses. Both in Jerusalem.
And in all Judea. And Samaria. And even.
To the remotest parts. Of the earth. And then.
The fourth of these readings. And the passage. Upon which we focus.
This morning. The third chapter. Of the book of Acts.

And as I indicated earlier. I shall read it in its entirety. So Acts 3. Starting at verse 1. Now Peter and John. Were going up to the temple. At the ninth hour. That would be three. In the afternoon. The hour of prayer. And a certain man. Who had been lame from his mother's womb. Was being carried along. Whom they used. To set down every day. At the gate of the temple. Which is called beautiful. In order to beg. Alms of those. Who were entering the temple. And when he saw. Peter and John about to go into the temple. He began. Asking. To receive alms. And Peter. Along with John. Fixed his gaze. Upon him and said. Look at me. Look at us. And he began to give them his attention. Expecting to receive. Something from them. But Peter said. I do not possess silver. And gold. But what I. Do have. I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ. The Nazarene. Walk. And seizing him by the right hand. He raised him up. And immediately. His feet and his ankles. Were strengthened and with a leap. He stood upright. And began to walk. And he entered the temple with them. Walking and leaping. And praising God. And all the people. Saw him walking. And praising God. And they were taking. Note of him. As being the one. Who used to sit. At the beautiful gate of the temple. To beg alms. And they were filled. With wonder. And astonishment. At what had happened. To him. Now there's a paragraph break. At this point. And. Verse eleven. Moves along. Perhaps an hour or two. Verses one to ten. When they were entering. The temple. And now verse eleven. The service of prayer is over. And they are coming out. And while. He was clinging. To Peter and John. All the people ran together. To them.

At the so called portico. Of Solomon. Full of amazement.
And when Peter saw this. He replied to the people. Men of Israel.
Why do you marvel at this. Or why do you gaze at us. As if by our.
Own power. We had made him walk. The God of Abraham.
Isaac. And Jacob. The God of our fathers.
Has glorified. His servant Jesus. The one whom you.
Delivered up. And disowned. In the presence of Pilate.
When he had decided. To release him. But you disowned.
The holy. And the righteous one. And look for a murderer.
To be granted. To you. But put to death.
The prince. Of life. The one whom God had raised.
From the dead. A fact of which we are. Now witnesses.
And on the basis. Of faith in his. Name.
It is the name. Of Jesus which has. Strengthened this man.
Whom you see and know. And the faith. Which comes through him.
Has given him this. Perfect health. In the presence of you all.
And now. Brethren. I know that you.
Acted in ignorance. As did your rulers. Also.
But the things which. God announced beforehand. By the mouth.
Of the prophets. That his Christ should suffer. He has.
Fulfilled. Repent therefore. And return.
That your sins. May be wiped away. In order that.
Times of refreshing. May come. From the presence of the Lord.
And that. He may send Jesus. The Christ appointed.
For you. Whom heaven must receive. Until the period.
Of restoration of all things. About which God spoke. In the mouth of his holy prophets.
From ancient times. Moses said. The Lord God.

Shall raise up for you. A prophet like me. From your brethren.
To him. Shall you give heed. In everything.
He says to you. And it shall be. He didn't say this lightly.
And it shall be. That every soul. That does not heed.
That. Prophet. Shall be utterly destroyed.
From among the people. And likewise. All the prophets who have spoken.
From Samuel. And his successors onward. Also announced.
These days. It is you. Who are the sons.
Of the prophets. And of the covenant which God. Made with your father.
Saying to Abraham. And in your seed. All the families of the earth.
Shall be blessed. For you first. God raised up his.
Servant. And sent him to bless you. By turning every.
One of you. From your wicked way. But now there's a problem.
In this passage. In one sense. It almost.
Seems to contradict. That portion. Of Matthew 23.
Which we. Looked at briefly. On Monday.
Where. Our Lord. Said concerning these people.
Who were to crucify him. Go on. Fill up.
The measure. Of the sins of your father. And in a few words.
I urge you. To pay attention to that passage. In 1st Thessalonians 2. That discusses.
And lays out. With such crisp. And clear.
Truth. That every entity is granted. A measure of sin.
And when. That measure is full. That entity is under.
The wrath of God. To the utmost. So looking on.
These matters. At surface level. It almost seems as if Christ.
Had pronounced. The final doom. Upon these very persons.
Whom Peter. Is now offering. Not merely a ray.

Of hope. But an incredible opportunity. To repent.
And to return. And to enjoy. Seasons.
Of refreshing. From the presence of the Lord. Now I said there would be five.
Scriptures. And I ask you now. To turn to the fifth.
And the last of these. In that. Amazing little epistle.
Of Jude. It has been. My happy joy.
As a servant of the Lord. Jesus Christ. To preach.
Many sermons from the book of Jude. One time I had the lovely. Opportunity of preaching.
Fifteen sermons. From this epistle. Oh what a happy time I had.
But now dear friends. It's just to a few words. In Jude.
That I draw your attention. Verses twenty two. And twenty three.
And I must be quick. About this but. One.
Gains great help. In the study of scripture. When you are able.
To enter into the mind. Of the individual. Of the individual.
That the Holy Spirit. Inspired to write. And no one.
Can with any care. Read the book of Jude. Without understanding.
He had a very analytical mind. And he loved. Systematic.
Arrangement. Of truth. And in this little epistle.
He gives us. Not less than. A dozen.
Combinations of three. That is his standard. Pattern.
But in one incredible passage. He violates. His normal pattern.
And gives us five. But we focus. Then just upon these two.
Verses twenty two and twenty three. This happens to be. One of these several.
Portions. Where a combination of three. Appears.
Let me read. These two verses. And have mercy on.
Some. Who are doubting. Save others.
Snatching them out. Of the fire. And on some have mercy.

With fear. Hating even the garment. Polluted.
By the flesh. Jude is. Helping us to understand.
That there are three. Categories. Of sinners.
That need. Rescue. The doubters.
The contaminated. And the contaminator. My dear friends.
I wonder if you understand. That you cannot engage. In the ministry of rescue.
With all personages. In the same way. There are.
Doubters. When I was a boy. There were multitudes of them.
And many of these doubters. Were much better. People.
Than the believers around them. They practiced. Very.
Moral. Living. They were very diligent in.
Living in a way. That was. Acceptable.
Both to society. And to God. But they were serious.
Doubters. They had no inner convictions. That governed them.
Concerning Jesus Christ. His death. His burial.
His resurrection. They didn't live in hope. Their moral purity.
Was not. An expression. Of their great love.
To the Savior for his deliverance. From sin in their lives. They just simply.
Were trained to live. With high standard. There are still around us today.
Multitudes of doubters. It's the second. Category.
Where we see. Great change. There were relatively few.
In my boyhood. Who gave overwhelming evidence. Of living contaminated.
Lives. You rarely ever. Met an adulterer.
Though they existed. I was in my twenties. Before I even knew there was.
Such a thing as homosexuality. Other than what I had read. In scripture.
I certainly had never encountered. Such vile beings. But in recent years.
There has been this incredible. Increase of contamination. So.

Most doubters now. Are not clean and pure. In any sense of the word.
But badly defiled. By gross sin. But still.
There is a dramatic. Difference. Between those who have been.
Contaminated. And those who are. The contaminator.
And the passage makes it crystal clear. That we must not think. That we can reach.
Each of these three. Categories of sinners. By the same means.
And indeed. Jude makes it clear. It is dangerous.
When you're dealing with the contaminators. You have got to be. Ever so careful.
That their. Commitment to evil. And to drawing others.
Into their web of iniquity. Does not lay hold of you. I mentioned this passage.
Not because it's my intent. To pursue it. But to raise.
Again you see the issue. To which I have made reference. The statement of our.
Lord that these men. Were simply to proceed. To fill up the measure.
Of the sins of their fathers. They were already under wrath. We noted at the end.
Of Matthew 23. That their house was left. Unto them desolate.
That Christ did weep. Over the city of Jerusalem. And yet here.
In Acts chapter 3. We have the apostle Peter. Specifically. Describing.
The Christ crucifiers. And. Commanding them.
In the name of Jesus. To repent. And return.
And enjoy. Seasons of refreshing. Is it not quite clear.
That those. To whom Peter speaks. In Acts 3. Are those.
Doubters. Who were contaminated. By the contaminators.
Because their religious. Leaders had set their hearts. To destroy Christ.
These people. Who in many respects. Were doubtless good people.
Had been drawn. Into this terrible action. Of saying to Pilate.
Don't you dare. Release Christ. Give us a murderer.
Instead. Crucify him. Crucify him.

We all know. At least a little. About mob psychology.
And the ease. With which people can be drawn. Into action.
That they would have been horrified. To contemplate in advance. And are ashamed of.
After it has happened. What a wonderful thing though. That even those.
Who helped. Crucify Christ. Are offered.
A second chance. That indeed there is for them. This.
Wonderful. Holy. Command.
To repent. And return. And enjoy.
Seasons of refreshing. Now let's go over the chapter. With a bit of care.
Obviously the chapter. Is introduced by the miracle. Verses.
One to eight. It is a lovely story. It is so easy for me.
To envision this. Right now in my mind. I am seeing this man.
Laying hold of Peter and John. As they came back out of the temple. After the service of prayer.
And while hanging on to them. As if hanging on to this pulpit. He is having himself.
Incredible. Oh man look at me. Look at these feet.
They never did work before. He was full of joy and excitement. What a. Marvelous occasion.
And there this man. Who had apparently. For years.
Right from his mother's womb. Then totally. Unable to walk.
Sitting there. At the gate. At the most prominent position.
Apparently that a beggar could have. He was a favored man. In that all the other beggars.
Got inferior spots. And his was the commanding place. For collecting alms.
And when. Peter and John. Are on their way.
Into the service of prayer. And he reaches out to them. And begs his alms.
Oh isn't it a lovely record. Silver and gold. We have none.
But what we have. We give to you. I remember as a boy.
Hearing that great. Philadelphia preacher. Donald Gray Barnhouse.
Speak upon this passage. And he talked. About an experience.

In which he had been at the Vatican. With a friend. And the guide who was showing them.
Some of the Vatican treasures. Got somewhat of a smirk. Upon his face.
And he said well. We can no longer say. Silver and gold.
Have we none. And Barnhouse's friend. Said to the guide.
Nor can you say. Rise up. And walk.
And we can laugh at somebody else. But is that not pretty much. A description of us.
Most of us. Are well to do. And certainly by the standards.
With which our dear brother Sammy. Is observing the world. In these many places.
Where they have virtually nothing. We are loaded. With material blessing.
But have lost. The power. And what a tragedy.
If we should come and hear. All these beautiful. Truths this week.
And then should return to our lives. And our ministries. With no more power.
Than that. Which we brought with us. When we can.
This miracle is indeed. A very precious. Account.
You can almost see it. Can't you in your own mind. Here's the poor fellow.
He's been carried to this position. He's probably laid out. On some kind of a pallet.
He reaches up. And Peter takes him by the hand. And even as he.
Commands him. In the name of Jesus. To rise and walk.
Suddenly the man leaps. Peter doesn't get finished. Drawing him up.
And there he is standing. And shouting. And enjoying.
But also captivating attention. We often. Try to capture the attention.
Of the masses by ads. And clever stunts. And whatever other.
Means we can discover. That all. All for the day.
When the power. Of Jesus Christ. Commands the attention.
Of the masses. You see that's what a real revival is. I don't know whether any of you.
Are acquainted with Albert Barnes. He happened to be a Presbyterian. Minister also from the city of Philadelphia.
Like Barnhouse. He wrote a series of commentaries. On the Bible.

Which have been wonderfully helpful. To tens of thousands of people. Over the years.
They're simple. They're straightforward. They're really geared for laymen.
If you need a good Bible commentary. There's a recommendation for you. But he also wrote a little book.
Which is very obscure. And almost totally unknown. Entitled.
The theory. And the desirability. Of revivals.
And the thesis of his book. Was that. Metropolitan areas.
Are moved by. Colossal events. And this is way back.
About 1840 when this book was written. But the situation then. Is as now.
We live in a suburb of Chicago. And it's amazing to us. How that whole city.
Is gripped by sensational events. I mean. Often in Chicago.
It's some political scandal. They're unceasing. But.
Sporting events. I don't have an interest in the world. In any of those things.
But almost everybody. You can't go anywhere. But what they're talking about.
Their team. And the latest event. And the last victory.
Or the last defeat. The nature of large. Metropolitan areas.
Is they are moved. By colossal events. And the theory.
And desirability of revival. Makes it crystal clear. The ordinary outreach ministry.
Of the church. Scarcely touches the city. It's a colossal move.
Of the spirit of God. In revival. And arouses the entire city.
And sets everybody to talking. About the Lord Jesus Christ. That's one of the blessed aspects.
Of these mass evangelistic crusades. People's attention. Is focused.
For a change. Upon the eternal. And upon the almighty.
And there is nothing. Like a true revival. To arouse the attention.
In a season. Of revival it seems. No one escapes.
A knowledge that God. Is moving and working. And stirring.
And if you came here. With an inadequate. Longing or heart cry.
For revival. Face this solemn fact. Our cities.

Will not be reached. Adequately. By any normal means.
But oh. When God visits his people. There.
There we have hope. For the masses. And I don't see how.
We can fail. To be stirred by that. If you can't think of any other reason.
To have a heart cry for revival. That ought to do it. There are plenty of other reasons.
But I dare not get into those. Or else I'll. Cheat on the time factor here today.
Which I'm trying very hard not to. The miracle. Is what drew.
The incredible crowd. Now personally I don't think. The day of miracles has passed.
I don't really think. We ought to focus upon. The miracle.
But upon the miracle worker. Upon the Lord himself. I love.
The ministry of A.B. Simpson. The founder of the Christian Missionary Alliance. He wrote a wonderful poem.
Entitled himself. In which he made it crystal clear. He once sought the blessing.
But now the one who blesses. And he went through a whole series of stanzas. Making it crystal clear.
That our focus is upon. The Lord Jesus Christ. And certainly in a heart cry.
For revival conference. It's Christ in our midst. That we're focusing upon.
Our hearts are hungry. Not so much for what he can do. But for who he is.
Our longing. Is for his presence. In our midst.
Well we have the issue of the miracle. We have to think too. In terms of the impact.
Verses 9 to 11. The magnitude of the miracle. Was quite obvious.
You could scarcely miss it. All the people saw. This man.
Walking and praising God. Isn't it marvelous. That the very man.
That God chose to touch. Through the words of Peter and John. Was the most.
Prominent beggar. On the temple compound. Everybody knew him.
You couldn't get in. Without passing. That's why I said he was given this prominent spot.
So when he began. Leaping and dancing. And shouting and praising God.
And jigging around. These two precious brothers. Everybody said oh my word.
That's the beggar. That's the fellow. That always is laid out there.

With his hand out. He's never walked. We've known him.
For years. And now look. What has happened.
That's why often. In revivals. The first prominent converts.
Are apt to be notorious. Sinners. Persons who the whole community.
Is aware of. Persons who are known. To have wasted their lives.
On riotous living. The man. Here.
Instantly recognized. And thus. Wonder and amazement.
Grips the people. And a huge crowd. Immediately gathers.
And so Peter. Has the opportunity to speak. And these are the issues.
Peter deals with. Number one who did this? And he makes it crystal clear. Certainly not me.
Not my brother John. Men of Israel. He says.
Why do you marvel at this? Or why do you gaze at us? As if by our own power. Or piety. We had made
him walk.
But the God of Abraham. Isaac and Jacob. The God of our fathers.
That's the one you need to focus upon. That's the one. Who you need to understand.
Is responsible. And then. He deals with the question.
Why did God do it? And he makes it crystal clear. He did it. For the sake of his servant.
Jesus. Whom he. Has glorified.
And he did it for your sakes. So that you would know. That the father.
Has glorified. His son. The one whom you.
Delivered up. I'll come back to this in a few moments. But over and over.
As I watch men preach. And pay close attention. That all that's going around me.
I discover that the vast majority. Of our preachers. Know nothing about preaching.
Maggie and I have. Had a relatively large. Antiquarian.
Theological book business. I had it. When she married me.
So she's had it all her married life. We have somewhere around. 200,000 books.
In our stock. And have had over the years. Contact with most of the major.
Theological booksellers. In the world. And we were very well acquainted.

We had bought tens of thousands of books. From the most prominent. Bookseller in England.
And out of the blue. One day he called me. And he said.
I'm going to make a trip to America. I wonder if Maggie and you. Would be willing to have me as a guest.
In your home. I had often been a guest in his home. It was a very.
Proper thing for him to call. And ask. Oh I said we'd be delighted.
Now I had often. Sought to witness to this man. His wife was tender hearted.
I had many a serious. Conversation with her. But I never was able to speak to him.
Though he was. A thoroughly educated. Theologian.
I never met a bookseller who knew more. About theology. And the books he was selling.
Than this dear man. So he came to see us. And we sought.
Repeatedly during the few days. Of his visit to bear witness. But without any success.
Whatsoever. But he told us that he had decided. To come to America.
Because he was longing. To hear. Some of the great American preacher.
That flabbergasted me. I didn't suppose he'd have any interest. Whatsoever.
So after a few days. With us he went on. And made his American tour.
Shortly after he returned to England. I was at his home. Buying books again.
But the first thing. I said to him. You told me.
You had come to America. To listen to great preachers. Now tell me.
What you found. We were seated at the dining room table. He was a large man.
With a giant fist. And a very placid type. Of an individual normally.
But he folded his hand. And he pounded on the table. So that all on the table leaped.
Dishes and silverware. Etcetera. And he looked at me.
With a great deal of earnestness. He said. I never heard a single preacher.
In America. I said. What happened? Were you ill or something? No he said.
I went to all the places. I had selected in advance. I never heard a single preacher.
I said. What did you hear? He said. Teacher.
They don't know how to preach. So naively I said to him. Well in your mind.

What's the difference between a teacher. And a preacher. He got outraged.
I mean if I thought he had. Pounded the table the first time. I hadn't yet seen his capacity.
And he said to me. It's not a matter. Of my opinion.
It's a thoroughly. Established fact. To preach is to move.
People. To teach is to inform. He said.
The great problem in America. Is that your preachers. Have soaked people.
In truth. Which they cannot live up to. And don't wish to.
What a word from an unsaved man. How many here. Who call themselves preachers.
Have never moved anybody. He made it so clear. This is where the people are.
This is where they belong. And it's the preaching. Under the power of the Holy Spirit.
That moves them. From where they are. To where they belong.
Now Peter. Peter. Was a preacher.
And what about you. Let's be honest with ourselves. One simple way.
Of analyzing even ourselves. Is to ask what do people say. When I get finished preaching.
Oh pastor. That was interesting. I never thought of that.
Oh what a lovely insight. Or do they come. By the door.
Tears trickling down their cheeks. And saying. I have got.
To repent. I cannot. Keep pushing.
Christ away. Do they cry out. Help me.
Or are they. Merely instructed. So the question.
Why did God do it? He did it. For the sake of his servant Jesus. He did it for your sake.
So that you would know. That the one whom you delivered up. The one whom you disowned.
In the presence of Pilate. When he had already. Decided to release him.
That even though you disowned. The holy and the righteous one. And asked for a murderer.
To be granted unto you. Despite the fact. That you put to death.
The prince of life. He wanted you to know. That he is the one whom God.
Raised from the dead. I don't believe. Those people missed the message.

I think. They felt deeply. Their role.
In the crucifixion of Christ. They understood. That Christ was.
Raised up. For them. But how many people understand.
These truths. When you get through with your little. Plover on Sunday.
And then Peter deals with the issue. How can you know. That I'm speaking the truth.
And I am here. Says Peter to say to you. This is a fact of which we.
John and myself. Are witnesses. This miracle.
That you are now wondering concerning. Was based on faith. In his name.
It is the name of Jesus. That has strengthened this man. Whom you see and know.
It is the faith. That comes through him. That has given this man.
Perfect health. In the presence of all of you. What a sermon.
But then he confronts them with the issue. Of their own ignorance. You acted.
In ignorance. Just as your rulers. Did also.
And then he adds. A matter of incredible. Importance.
You didn't realize it. You thought you were eliminating a problem. You thought you were.
Getting rid of this fellow. Who was under your skin. And making life extremely.
Difficult to bear. And all you did was. To fulfill God's purpose.
For from the beginning. If you had known the scriptures. You would have understood.
That it was God's will. That the Messiah should suffer. You thought you had.
Resolved a matter. You got rid of one. And now you've got.
Three thousand on your hands. And in a few days. Five thousand.
And before very long. Tens of thousands. You never win against God.
And when God. Is purposed in his heart. To allow.
His only begotten son. To suffer. That's all.
That can be managed. Nothing more. No one ever goes beyond.
What God has intended. And Peter. Is helping these people.
To understand. They merely served as. Pawns.

In God's plan. And we all have to. Deal with this as well.
But now we come. In verses 19. And 22.
To the precious message. Of repentance. Repent.
Therefore. And return. That your sins may be.
Wiped away. In order that. Times of refreshing.
May come. From the presence of the Lord. So the command to repent.
Is before us. The command to return. Is right in front of us.
But read as well. Verse 22. Moses said.
The Lord God shall raise up. For you a prophet. Like me.
From your brethren. To him. You shall give heed.
In everything he says to you. Repent. Return.
Obey. And the beautiful, beautiful part of this is. The repentance.
Is a gift from God. The return. Is God's enabling.
And even the obedience. Was purchased. For us.
By the Lord. Jesus Christ. Some of you came.
To this conference. Sensing how often. You have been defeated.
In your determination. To serve the Lord. Jesus Christ.
May I tell you brothers and sisters. The one who died. And was buried.
Is the one. Who rose again. Do you know these precious.
Words from 1st Corinthians. 130. But of him.
Are ye. In Christ Jesus. Who of God.
Was made. Unto us. Wisdom.
That is. Righteousness. Sanctification.
And redemption. You see the problem with many of us is. We believe Christ.
Is our justifier. And we are struggling to be. Our own sanctifier.
And it's a mighty. Discouraging task. I can't imagine.
Anything more tiring. Than trying to be good. And most of us.

By our very nature. Even if we've had a few days. Of relative victory.

Sort of get a notion from Satan. I've lived 7 days wholly. Now I'm just going to take a day off.

And enjoy myself. But dear friends. Our justifier.

Is our sanctifier. Many of you know the words. In Ephesians 1 verse 4. But you may have stumbled over them.

Because you have a little problem. With such things as predestination. And election.

Oh just lay that aside now. Don't let yourself be tripped. By anything like that.

In verse 4 of Ephesians 1. We are elected. To holiness. Now who elected us? The one who's never lost a battle.

The one who's never determined anything. And failed. The one who always triumphs.

Christ. Is our sanctification. Now how are we justified? By faith.

And how are we sanctified? By faith. And how are we glorified? Now don't say what you think. Glorification.

Is death. And to be glorified. All I have to do.

Is drop dead. For Christ justified. And Christ sanctified.

And he's prepared. The royal road to glory. But dear friends.

Isn't it beautiful? That Peter. Is telling the very people. That crucified Christ.

That if they will repent. And believe. They will enjoy.

Seasons of refreshing. These divine visitations. From the presence.

Of the Lord. And they will discover. That what they could not.

Have done by themselves. They are enabled to do. In obeying.

The very son of God. Who loved them. And gave himself for them.

Now it's one thing to. Sense that Christ saves. Doubters.

But it's another thing. To think about those who have been contaminated. But when you bring it into the realm.

Of contaminated. To such a degree. That you actually are part.

And parcel of the crucifixion. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's another matter.

And yet every Christ crucifier. Is commanded. To repent.

And believe. And enjoy. And then walk in obedience.

But there are urgent reasons. Stated here. And I simply want to call them.
To your attention. In verses 19 to 24. The reasons that are.
Behind the command. In verse 19. That your sins.
May be wiped away. Or better yet plotted out. Number two.
I've already singled out. In order that times of refreshing. May come from the presence.
Of the Lord. And number three. That he may send Jesus.
The Christ. Appointed for you. But there's also a warning.
In this passage. And I draw to your attention. In verse 23.
It shall be that every soul. That does not heed. That prophet.
Shall be utterly destroyed. From among the people. Is this not Peter.
Picking up on what Christ said. God. In his incredible mercy.
Is offering. These Christ crucifiers. A second chance.
But. He will not. Forever.
Offer these chances. And they must face the fact. That if they will not.
Take heed. They shall be. Utterly destroyed.
And finally. In the last two verses. There's a wonderful encouragement.
Provided. It is to you. Who are the sons of the prophets.
And of the covenant. Which God made with your fathers. Saying to Abraham.
And in your seed. Shall all the families. Of the earth be blessed.
And what a lovely thing. For us to face the fact. That many of these.
Rich promises of scripture. Have not yet been. Entirely fulfilled.
And when we. Repent. And.
Return. And obey. The seasons of refreshing.
The divine. Visitation. Will mightily work.
To the completion. Of these promises. I am satisfied.
That there is yet. For the world. Another.
Great awakening. There are too many promises. That hang upon it.

To be overlooked. God. Is going to come again.
In mighty awakening power. And oh how wonderful. If it were to begin.
In your heart. And that everyone here. Because they truly.
Did repent. And return. And obey.
Might be part of the fulfillment. Of God's eternal plan. And purpose in touching.
And affecting all the nations. Of the earth look at verse 26. For you first.
God raised up. His servant. And sent him to bless you.
By turning every. One of you. From your wicked way.
But now I leave. The text. And draw to your attention.
Nine. Incredibly important. Matter.
Based upon the text. Number one. And these nine statements.
All have to do with the power. Of God. Think first of the power.
Of God manifested. In this passage. In raising Jesus.
From the dead. What incredible power. Verses 13, 15.
And 26. All refer. To this great power.
Number two. I don't see how we could possibly. Look at this passage.
Without seeing. The incredible change. In Peter.
As a result of the power. Of God. What a ridiculous fellow he was.
What a tragic. Case of unbelief. We found.
In his earlier life. Can you imagine. In a relatively short time.
This Christ denying. Sinner. Is now speaking.
In this powerful way. To these Christ crucifying. Sinners which was worse.
Peter's denial. Or their crucifixion. I can't see there's any real difference.
If they had known. The story of Peter. They could have taken heart for themselves.
You know they may have been thinking. Well it's true now. We've got overwhelming evidence.
That God. Has raised from the dead the very one. We crucified.
Now we've got it coming. But no. It's Peter.

That miserable wreck of a fisherman. Who had made such. A careless mess.
Of things. Is the one. Who in the power of God.
Calls them. To repent and believe. Have we some Peter like folk here? Have you made.
A mess of things? Have you got your foot in the mouth? A good share of the time? Are you the bold one
always out front. Making wild. Proclamations of your loyalty.
And of your diligence. Only to prove. A bit later.
What kind of a person you really are. Here's Peter. Touched by the resurrected Christ.
Under the power. And the influence. Of the very Jesus.
Whom he denied. But number three. In my mind.
It is absolutely wonderful. To realize. How this chapter opens.
Peter. And John. Were on their way to the temple.
Some of you men who've been beat up. In the ministry. May have thought seriously.
About just. Abandoning. The whole mess.
I'm regularly meeting pastors. Former pastors. Who've just given up.
Now listen. Whatever beating you've taken. It can't be compared with the beating.
That Peter and John took. Now they were a part of it. And we all know.
Of Peter's failure. Though we have no specific details. That I'm aware of.
Concerning John's failure. But imagine now. These two men.
As if the crucifixion had never occurred. Making their way. To the temple.
For afternoon prayer. And that's important. But.
The second half of this comment. I believe is much the greater. Can you imagine yourself.
Standing before this gang. Of Christ crucifying people. And speaking to them.
With the grace. And the love. And the forgiveness.
With which Peter spoke. Is there not incredible power. That God has demonstrated here.
In taking all the bitterness. Out of their hearts. It was their dearest friend.
Tommy has spoken from his heart. About friends. Who were separated by death.
All of us know something. Of this. But these dear brothers.
Had their dearest friend. Taken prisoner. And crucified unjustly.

And yet. With incredible compassion. And peace.

They are offering. These wretched sinners. The very salvation.

That God. Granted them. I've spoken of the miracle.

But I'm just giving a list now. Of what this passage illustrates. In terms of the power of God.

I've said the power of God. In the resurrection. The power of God.

Actually in delivering Peter. From himself. The power of God in enabling.

Peter and John. To offer. Free grace.

And the true gospel. To these Christ crucifiers. The power of God number four.

In the miracle. And while I've spoken of it. I'll speak of it again number five.

The power of God. In confrontational preaching. Brothers who preach.

You may have. Some very serious repenting to do. You may be too gracious.

Too timid. There may be many. In your congregation who desperately.

Need to be confronted. And we have a lovely pattern here. Of confrontation.

With grace. With love. It would seem to me before you leave this conference.

Many of you. Need to commit yourself. To preaching.

The word of God. As directly. With the same urgency.

And the same power. That God granted Peter. And then number six.

The power of God is demonstrated. In God. Enabling.

These Christ. Crucifiers. To repent.

And return. And obey. And experience.

Obedience. To the Lord. I hope all of you are well aware.

That repentance. Is a gift. As is faith.

And may I ask how many of you who preach. Make one of the most. Prominent petitions.

Before you go to preach. Oh God. Will you visit.

This congregation. With repentance. And faith.

Surely Peter. Must have done that. And every one of us.

Must. Call upon the Lord. To unleash.

In plentiful supply. These wondrous gifts. Of repentance.
And faith. Number seven. We can't help but notice.
The incredible. Power of God. In enabling these persons.
Who were drawn. Into the web of the contaminators. And viciously joined them.
In trying to crucify him. Suddenly to be enabled. Not only to repent and believe.
But to obey. And I hope. Every one of you understands.
That the power of God. Is available to you. On a constant basis.
To obey. Everything the Lord. Has called upon you to do.
And as I said a few moments ago. Don't struggle. Trying to be good.
Believe. Sanctification is ours. As in faith.
We laid hold. Of the finished work of Christ. That's why the Apostle Paul.
Stated so crisply. Consider yourself. To be.
Dead. Indeed to sin. And alive unto God.
What would be wrong. With saying to Satan. When he tempts you.
Go bother the non-elect. I've been elected to be holy. And why not just live.
In that spirit of election. That the Father. Who never fails.
In anything he sets out to accomplish. Has elected me to be holy. And today.
I'm going to enjoy it. And then I add. As number 8. Look again at verse 23.
It shall be that every soul. That does not heed. That prophet shall be utterly.
Destroyed. From among the people. Not only this incredible power.
To enable us repent. And believe and obey. But the power.
To destroy. Absolutely. Everyone.
Who will not give heed. And brothers who preach. I hope every sermon.
Is thoroughly. Saturated. With the grievous knowledge.
That all those. Who will not give heed. Will indeed pay.
The price. Since Maggie and I have not been. In our own home church.
For weeks and months. Until. The Sunday before last.

I was scheduled to be out of town. On some business not ministry. And I was feeling so.
Worn out. I just couldn't seem to get myself. Into my vehicle.
And drive the distance. And I felt ashamed of myself. But still.
You got to deal. With reality. And I did.
And we ended up. Going to our own church. For the first time since August.
And our dear blessed pastor. Was preaching a series on Isaiah. Powerful.
Powerful sermon. And the thrust of the sermon was. Everybody's got to face this fact.
You either pay. Your debt. In sin.
In the fall. Or it's paid for you. By Christ.
There's no alternatives. No other options. You pay it or he pays it.
And then in the most beautiful way. He was describing. How Christ paid it.
And made his provision. Available to all. And then he came to that point.
Where he cried out. It is finished. But then he went on to say.
Some of you thus far. Have chosen to pay. Your own debt.
And I must tell you. That there are three words. That will never be spoken.
In hell. Never. Will anybody be able to say.
It is finished. If you're going to pay your own debt. You'll be forever.
Paying it. Millions and billions of years. Still paying a debt.
That Christ gladly. Paid for you. What an incredible thing.
That the Lord God almighty. The God of power. Is willing.
And able to pay the debt. But oh. What an awesome.
And frightening thing to realize. That the multitudes of people. With whom we meet.
Who have rejected the Savior. Must truly pay. Their own debt.
I finish. With my ninth observation. The power of God.
In this passage. In keeping his word. And fulfilling his promises.
Let me read again. Verses 17 and 18. And now brethren.
I know. That you acted in ignorance. Just as your rulers did also.

But the things. Which God. Announced beforehand.
In the mouth of all. The prophets. That his Christ.
Should suffer. He has fulfilled. We all know.
That not one. Word of God. Will be broken.
But look as well at verses 20 and 22. Once more. That he may send Jesus.
To Christ. Appointed for you. Whom heaven must receive.
Until the period of restoration. Of all things about which God spoke. By the mouth.
Of his holy prophets. From ancient times. Christ.
Is coming. And nothing. Can block.
That every word of God. Shall be fulfilled. And finally.
Verses 25 and 26. It is you. Who are the sons of the prophets.
And of the covenant. Which God made with your fathers. Saying to Abraham.
And in your seed. All the families of the earth. Shall be blessed.
For you first. God raised up. His servant.
And sent him to bless you. By turning every one of you. From your wicked ways.
The power of God. Will absolutely guarantee. That the word of God.
Will indeed triumph. But I finish. With this simple.
And yet delightful. Focus once more. Upon this.
Lovely expression. Seasons. Of refreshing.
From the presence of the Lord. This is such a dry. Season in which we live.
So many multitudes. In the church. Who are thirsty.
So few who have found. Sole satisfaction. And oh to think.
That something we do. Will truly result. In that incredible.
Blessing. That they need. Thank you Lord.
That we're privileged. On behalf. Of the multitudes.
Who want. To repent. And return.
And obey. And to be those channels. Through whom.

A tidal wave. Of refreshment. May it be true.

For every individual. To the glory. Of our King Jesus.

Amen.

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