

Knowledge of the Father

by Robert B. Thompson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of knowing God, fulfilling our divine purpose, and understanding the significance of life after death.

Duration: 1:00:06

Scripture: Exodus 20:1-17, Nehemiah 3:1, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 19:16-22, John 15:16, John 17:1-5, Ephesians 4:13

Topics: "Gods Purpose", "Kingdom Living"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of completing the work that God has given us to do. He emphasizes that many people go through life without a sense of purpose or destiny, unaware of the specific work they are meant to accomplish. The speaker highlights the importance of knowing and fulfilling our God-given purpose before we reach the end of our lives. He also addresses the idea that the kingdom of God does not operate according to democratic principles, as Jesus revealed himself only to those whom God had given him out of the world.

Transcript

Alright, we're still reading John 17, verses 1 through 5. It isn't because I didn't have time to pray. I did, and that's what I came up with. We don't have any afterglows around here, I'll tell you.

Everything is fresh, no canned fruit. Alright, and here we are. After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed.

Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people, that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.

Now this is eternal life, that they may know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

Now when we finished up last Sunday morning, we were talking about eternal life and how Paul was seeking to know Christ in Philippians, which is eternal life. So this morning we'll go on with verse 4. I have brought you glory on earth, and I gave the definition before of giving glory or glorifying, is to enlarge, make more important, ascribe more value to, lift up to an exalted position, give honor to, make worthy of allegiance or worship, empower with authority and strength, give praise to and make radiant in

appearance. So when he says, I have brought you glory on earth, he's saying I have lifted you up and exalted you.

He's talking about his Father. And notice this, by completing the work you gave me to do. Now, that to me is an extremely important concept.

And the idea is that God has given people some specific work to do. I think a good many people go through life and never have a sense of destiny or a sense that there's something they're supposed to do. They just kind of breathe and eat and sleep and work and play.

And there's really no focus. When they finish their life on earth, they can't say I finished the work that you gave me to do because they don't know what it is in the first place. And they don't know whether they've finished it.

All they know is they're approaching death, and they may be in a hospice, and they're scared and angry, and the worst possible thing that could happen to them is happening to them. They're dying. Well, that is not really a very nice way to look at things.

Not very comforting. The idea is that you have something to do, and you have to find out from God what it is. And then you have to finish it.

And when you finish it, you're out of here. Most of us have seen fruit on a tree. Well, there comes a time when the fruit is ripe.

And that's when it's plucked. And the Bible says that. It says that God plants things and it grows, comes to maturity, and then he puts in the sickle because the harvest is ripe.

So there's a time in your life when you're ripe. We don't die because we've spun out so many trips around the sun. If we lived in God, there's a growth that goes on.

And when we're ripe, then God picks us. Ah, nice thought. The fruit hangs on a tree, and it isn't picked.

Eventually, it gets rotten, and the hornets get in it, and it falls to the ground. It's a mess. You've got to get it when it's ripe.

And, of course, in our culture, we put people through long, drawn-out, they're on tubes and electric life support and everything else. I know that people don't have that hope of life after death, and their relatives don't have that hope of life after death. And the end of it is they'll go up beyond the stars, and they'll never really see them again.

And so you plug the machine in, and you keep it going as long as possible. Well, what a way to go. That's no way.

That's like an animal. We certainly ought to have a better view of life after death than that we'll never see anybody again, and we'll be up there somewhere beyond the stars, and the bells will tinkle, and God knows what's happening up there. Well, that isn't any kind of a Christian view at all.

Dying is going to another stage of life where we're waiting for the resurrection. I mean, it's only a waiting area up there, waiting for the resurrection. And how alive we are and what we do will depend on how we've lived on the earth.

And we see Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration, and they were discussing with Christ his crucifixion because they were interested in the atonement. They were as alive as they had ever been. But I don't think everybody's like that.

You go wherever you're prepared to go. And if you've just been, you know, an ordinary decent person, you go into the great sea of mankind and wait for the resurrection. If you've attained resurrection life in this world, then when you die, you're conscious, and maybe the Lord will give you something to do while you're waiting for the resurrection.

So, the way we live, we ought to really be living in two worlds at the same time. Jesus did. We ought to be living in two worlds at the same time.

We ought to have one foot in this world and one foot in the next. And if we don't, we're missing out on all the security and good thoughts and everything that when the life gets rough, we can just think about where we're going in the next life and rejoice in it, and that puts this life in perspective. We don't get crushed with the problems of this world because we realize someday we'll be out of here.

It isn't an escape, it's reality. And so, when we die, it's not at the end of everything at all. It's out of the most miserable time we'll ever experience in our existence, which is our life on the earth, filled with pain and dread and worry and every other kind of problem.

Well, we were created to play. We were not created to live in this valley of the shadow of death. God created us to play.

That's why we were created. And we see Adam and Eve in the garden before they sinned. What they did, they took care of the orchard there, and it was play.

Whenever you like what you're doing, you're playing. Whenever you're having to do something that you don't like, you're working. And they were driven from the garden to work in the fields.

Well, I don't know how many of you have worked in fields. I have. And there is no harder work on earth than farm work.

Boy, is that hard. And people may look at it and say, isn't that lovely? Well, it isn't. You want to go out sometime and get a job, work along with the Mexicans and pick some cucumbers and string beans and see what it's like to work eight hours in the sun.

Your back is broke. And you see, they were playing in Eden. That's all God created them to play.

God created the angels to play, and they were playing until Satan sinned. And it's sin that prevents us from playing. And you have to earn the right to play.

What goes wrong in this life is we try to play before we've earned the right to play. So you have to earn the right to play. Satan cannot play because he's filled with sin.

When you're filled with sin, you cannot play. You cannot play with a child. You can only destroy it with your lust.

Satan cannot play. The ability to play has been lost to him forever. And God has created us to play, but we can't play until we get the sin out of us.

We've got all eternity to play. Now, what goes wrong in people's lives is they try to play now before they have earned the right to play. And whenever you do that, you sin.

You avoid responsibility. You betray those who trust in you. You're a treacherous person without integrity.

We see that. I saw in the paper two instances of that this last week. One man they interviewed, a criminal who was convicted, said, I'm not like everybody else.

I take what I want when I want, and I do whatever I please. I mean, here is a convicted criminal, and he's explaining to the newspaper reporters what kind of a person he is. He says, I do whatever I want when I want.

In other words, he wants to play. But he's playing. He hasn't earned the right to play.

And when you haven't earned the right to play, you play at someone else's expense. And that ain't good. Because then you'll have eternity.

You won't get to play at all. So God has created us to play, but we have to earn the right to play. Now, earning that right, part of it is finishing the work which God gave us to do.

And if we don't know what it is or what our purpose on being on the earth is, we should ask the Lord. Why am I here? What is it that you have for me to do? God is a businessman, and he doesn't waste time or personnel or money or anything else. He has something for you to do.

And you can look forward to finishing that work. If you're serving the Lord, you will not die until that work is finished. I have finished the work which you gave me to do.

What a wonderful sense. You know, there's people who knew when they were ripe. Aaron knew when he was ripe.

Moses knew when he was ripe. Paul knew when he was ripe. Jesus knew when he was ripe.

What a wonderful thing it is to know when you're ripe. And then when the Lord takes you, it's all glory. And if the relatives have any faith at all, they won't crave.

They'll just say, see you later. That's right. See you later.

Like that sign up there that Grace put up there. How did that go, Grace? It was something about Brian. What was it? You don't remember how it went? You put the sign up there? Bye for now.

Bye for now. Isn't that perfect? Brian, bye for now. It's not forever.

For heaven's sake, Brian is very much alive and having a wonderful time. Bye for now. So that's a wonderful thing.

When we die, we lose some relationships, but we regain others that were lost. Faces long gone are suddenly there. So the spirit realm is a very real place.

It's inhabited by conscious people. Many of them surround us as witnesses because they're learning and they're growing and we're learning and we're growing. And it says, the Lord said, I have brought you glory on the earth.

Speaking of His Father, He lifted you up. I've made you more important. I brought honor to you by completing the work that you gave me to do.

What is your work? Do you know? Do you know what it is? It's a good idea to find out, don't you think? You'll never know when it's finished if you don't know what it is. You can find out, you know, if you ask God what it is, He'll tell you what it is. Isn't that neat? Or direct you into it.

He may not speak words to it, but if you are willing and obedient, God will lead you into the thing He wants you to do. And it isn't two things. It's one thing.

He's got something for you. And the trick in life is to find out what it is. That's called entering the rest of God.

Where you say, well, you tried it your way and that wasn't great. Why not try it God's way? Find out. And when you enter into that which God has for you, you'll find you're really suited for that.

And you'll have peace. That's the rest of God. But otherwise, you're just scrambling around trying to make money and more money and pay the bills and everything.

That isn't life. That's part of the curse. Amen.

And now, Father, glorify me in your... No. I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. I complete it.

He finished it. It was 33 years old. It was finished.

Your work can be finished when you're 10 years old. It can be finished when you're 15. And why drag out a miserable existence on earth after your work is done? Have faith.

The next world is better. God always moves from the lesser to the greater. So don't persevere on this earth and think this is all there is and clutch it.

Get a sense of eternity. Alright. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world was.

And God did that. God did that. But in between that prayer and the restoration of his glory, there was the crucifixion.

And sometimes when we pray for the things we really want, not some superficial thing, the thing that comes up out of our viscera, the next thing that happens is trouble. So Christ prayed for glory and what he got was crucifixion. But he ended up in the glory and we see that in Revelation 1, verses 12 through 19.

This is the glory that he had with the Father before the world was. This is what Christ looked like before the world was. Revelation 1, 12 through 19.

I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me and when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands. What are the golden lampstands? The churches. And among the lampstands was someone like a son of man.

That expression comes from Daniel. Son of man. Son of man.

Christ often referred to himself as the son of man. He's son of God and son of man. And so are you.

So are you. You are born of God. You are born of man.

And he likes this. Could have said he is someone like a son of God, but he says someone like a son of man. This is what man is destined to look like.

We're being made in this image. Isn't that something? You'll look like this someday if you make it. Dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet.

Which speaks of the fact that he's a priest. With a golden sash around his chest. Which speaks of the strength of God in him.

His head and his hair were white like wool. Speaking of the righteousness that comes from those who are older. Gaining the righteousness that comes with experience.

And his eyes were like blazing fire. Because when he looks, he does not see the external. When we want to see something in science, we use an instrument.

A spectroscope. And what it does, it heats the element under observation until it incandesces. That until it glows.

And the spectroscope will, as it glows, will analyze that glow. And detect all the elements that are present. Spectroanalysis.

And that's why his eyes are like fire. Because when he looks at you, he doesn't see the obvious. He sees what there really is to see.

You cannot fool Jesus. Because his eyes are not like our eyes. They're fire.

And he looks with fire. When he wants to see what you're made of, he brings you into fire. And then you incandesce.

And then he is able to see what is present in your life. You can't fool Jesus. You can fool people.

But you can't fool Jesus. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace. Bronze in the Bible represents judgment.

The reason for that is that bronze can withstand fire. And in World War II in England, when they had a room that had to be protected, they put a layer of bronze on the door. It will not burn.

And so, the feet of the Lord, where they go, they bring judgment. When you and I are in the image of the Lord, and are following the Holy Spirit, everywhere we go, we bring judgment. Everywhere we go, we bring judgment.

When we're walking in the Spirit of the Lord, the ultimate will be when Satan is crushed under our feet. Romans 16.20 My God shall crush Satan under your feet. Now, if you have not been through judgment with the Lord, if your sins are unjudged, if they haven't been confessed and repented of, and you go trying treading on serpents, Psalm 91, you're going to get burned.

Because your feet are still flammable. But when God brings you through judgment, and you incandesce, and He can read what's in you, and He shows Himself and He shows you what is in your personality, and you confess those, and ask the Lord to help you turn away from them, you develop bronze in your personality. We have to have silver redemption, gold divinity, bronze fireproofing.

All of this must cover the wood, so that you don't burn in the judgment, because you will be judging men and angels. So now, for God's victorious saints, one of the real buzzes now in the spirit realm, one of the real pressure points in the spirit realm for people that have been saved and filled with God's Spirit, one of the real pressure points is judgment. And when you're in a church for a while, as is true of this church where judgment is practiced, and then you go in a church where it has not been practiced, you will see the difference.

It may not be tangible to you. There's something different there. It's like when you are used to Pentecost, and you go back to a church where they don't speak in tongues.

There's something different. It's not the same. It's not the same level of worship or assembly at all.

The same thing is true when you're used to a church that practices judgment, and then you go into a church where the people are oblivious of judgment. They're waiting to be caught up into the presence of Christ, which would be the most excruciating pain they ever suffered in their life, because they haven't been judged yet. Well, God wants everyone in this church to be judged.

Remember 1 Corinthians 11? If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. And you don't go out seeking what's wrong with you. You wait and let the Lord show you.

But you see, when He shows you, it's important then that you do not blame people. That's so important. You do not blame the tools or circumstances that God uses.

You do not do that. If you do, the program of judgment and deliverance will stop, and you will become bitter. And when God is using people to cause you to incandesce, to glow so that the impurity in your personality is revealed, there's a great temptation to develop hatred and bitterness.

You get your eyes off the Lord. When these things go up, the temptation is to look at people. It's your fault.

You're the one that caused this. You caused this. And you don't do that.

You will never grow if you do that. You'll never grow. You don't look at the people that are causing you pain.

You think about them as little as you possibly can. You look to Jesus and say, Jesus, why am I losing my rest over this? What is it in my personality that's causing me to lose my rest, my peace? And if you'll do that, the Lord will show you. Because when someone takes your rest from you, it's because there's something wrong in you.

He's just using them. See, you've come forth out of the tomb like Lazarus, but you're bound with grave clothes. But Jesus did not take off those grave clothes.

He let the people standing around there take the grave clothes off Lazarus. And you've been saved. You've been brought into eternal life, but you have grave clothes.

And the Lord doesn't take them. He lets the people around you take them. And they peel them off you in God's time.

And it hurts. It hurts. You don't want to let it go.

But you have to keep turning to the Lord. Keep turning to the Lord. Keep turning to the Lord.

Just refuse to blame people. Just keep turning to the Lord and saying, Lord, why is this taking my rest from me? If you'll do that, the Lord will show you. Then you say, that's right, that's wrong in me.

Not wrong in the person that's causing this pain. That's wrong in me, Lord. I repent of this.

I turn from it by your grace. It's history. Every time you do that, you add bronze to your personality.

Every time you do that, you add bronze to your personality. Then you'll be qualified to ride behind the Lord when He comes like that banner. When He that is faithful and true comes, you'll be with Him.

But if you don't, but if you pass this off and blame people, blame circumstances, blame the world, blame the government, blame the homosexuals, blame whoever you want to blame, you won't grow. You'll remain a baby. And when you die, you'll be whimpering and crying and full of pain and fear because you didn't handle life correctly.

You didn't learn obedience through the things you suffered. The pain didn't remove sin from you. 1 Peter 4.1, He that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.

You didn't let that happen. Instead, you turn and said, this is not right what this person has done. This is unjust.

You can't do that. If you're looking for justice in life, you're in the wrong life. There's no justice in this world.

The wicked prevail and have a ball while you're suffering because of their selfishness. Okay? If you fret about that, you're only destroying yourself. Let it turn you to the Lord.

No one suffered perversity worse than the Lord Jesus. No one suffered perversity. But He's a man full of joy.

Why? Because He gave it all to God. He didn't point the finger and say, it's your fault that I'm suffering. It's your fault.

Why don't you believe me, etc., and so on. Save your strength. It's an unjust world.

I've got a nice amen corner over here. Thank you very much. Everybody else is thinking.

Alright. So we find that His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of rushing waters. When I was in Iceland, Einar took me to one of the waterfalls, the mammoth waterfalls they have there in Iceland.

And it makes a tremendous sound. And he said, this is like the voice of the Lord. Power.

Power. Power. All speech is water.

And the more power we get, the more it turns into a river, finally into a great rushing waterfall, a great cataract, so that when you speak, the communication is immense. In His right hand, He held seven stars. That's the angel of the churches.

See, that's all under the control of Christ. Nothing to worry about angels. And out of His mouth came a sharp, double-edged sword, the Word of God, the mightiest power in the universe.

His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance. That's the radiance of righteousness. Then shall the righteous shine as the sun in the glory of their Father.

When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as though dead. And that was John that had leaned on Him all the time when they were eating. The beloved John was scared to death until he fainted.

Well, that's the glory. It says, glorify Me. Lift Me up in Your presence with the glory that I had with You before the world began.

And that's the glory that He had. But in between this prayer and that glorifying was what? The crucifixion. And so it is with us.

We want the glory of the Lord. I pray for the glory of the Lord. But there may come first a necessary crucifixion.

Of course, in His case it was to make atonement for the sins of the world, which we never do. Sometimes we have to fill up the sufferings that are behind for His body's sake. But, you know what? If you don't exercise, you lose your muscle tone.

Did you know that? You get flabby. It also affects your bones. You lose calcium.

You have to exercise to keep muscle tone. Otherwise, you get to be like a jellyfish. You just kind of flop around.

Look for the nearest chair. Well, the same thing is true in the spirit realm. And the reason that we have the trouble that we do is so that we'll keep our spiritual muscle tone.

That's exactly why we have it. Because if we didn't have problems, we wouldn't pray, and pretty soon we'd get flabby spiritually. So the Lord keeps us praying, keeps us praying.

Well, it keeps spiritual muscle tone. That's the truth. It isn't because He doesn't love us.

It's because otherwise we get flabby. And we become vulnerable to Satan. Alright, He says, I have revealed you.

Now, I like that because there's been so much confusion about the Trinity as though Christ and the Father are the same person. If Christ and the Father were the same person, this whole prayer is a racket. It doesn't mean anything.

If Christ is the Father, He's praying to Himself. Me, answer my prayer, me. Ah, it's craziness.

Theology can get you into more trouble. I tell you, it's amazing the light that the Bible throws on the commentaries. He said, I have revealed you.

You're talking about two people here. One is I and one is you. So, there's a Father there.

There's a Father. And the Father is not Jesus. Jesus here is praying to the Father.

Does that make sense to you? To me, that's so simple. Why gum it up with all this stuff you can't understand? Alright. Now, there's several things here.

First of all, I want to mention the revelation of the Father. That is Matthew 11.27. Matthew 11.27. God, it is sure a big mystery, isn't it? Jesus is God's Son. What mystery? Oh, Lord.

Talk about making something simple difficult. All things, Matthew 11.27, all things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father.

No one knows the Father except the Son. And those to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him. Then He says, Come unto Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

That rest is the knowledge of the Father. That's what it is. So, if you don't know the Father, you can look forward to it.

When we're saved, we know about Jesus. When we get the baptism, we know about the Holy Spirit. Now we're coming to a third... It isn't revelation, because when we have Christ, we have the Holy Spirit and the Father and everything.

But it's a third platform, whatever you want to call it. But Christ is typified by salvation through the blood and the Holy Spirit gives us wisdom and power. But when we come to the Father, the big issue is obedience.

I just finished a booklet on that. Mark, it's in my room. Obedience.

I think sometimes Christian people don't have a clue as to how important it is to obey God. We've been taught that we're saved by grace and nobody can serve God. Blah, blah, blah.

Well, the most important thing for a son is obedience. Obedience. Well, I can't obey God.

Nobody can obey God. That's the devil's lie. Well, whenever that comes... I say we're supposed to keep the commandments and then you know what's brought up.

But the Lord commanded us to be perfect and nobody's perfect, so therefore we don't have to keep the rest of the commandments. Did the Lord command us to be perfect? You don't know, do you? Well, He did. You say, that's impossible.

Well, let me tell you something. He told a man how to be perfect. Yeah, He did.

You know who it was? The rich young ruler. He says, I kept all the commandments. And the Lord said, well, if you'll be perfect, sell what you have and give it to the poor.

So much for all this baloney. Of course, you're not perfected. There's such a thing as a perfect child, a perfect teenager, a perfect adult.

You're perfect for the moment. What do you think? God wants you imperfect? He wants you disobedient? He wants you to obey Him strictly, promptly, without having to have everything explained to you. You say,

well, that's impossible.

Well, it's nothing of the kind. It's impossible to please the devil, but it's easy to please God. The Bible says His commandments are not grievous, not grievous, grievous.

Okay? His commandments are not grievous. They're not a pain in the neck. They're simple and straightforward, and He expects them to be obeyed.

Imagine if you said to your child, I want you to go upstairs and go to sleep at nine o'clock and not a second later. And your child says, well, you've got three wills, a good will, a better will, and a best will, a perfect will, whatever. So I'll go up at ten o'clock, and then I'm keeping your acceptable will, but not your perfect will.

You know, that's what church people do. If you tell your child to go to bed at nine o'clock, turn off the television and go to sleep, what is your will? Is it that he goes to bed at 930? No. So you don't have two wills for your father, and God does not have two wills for you.

He only has one will. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth. That doesn't have a good, perfect, and acceptable will.

That's a phenomenon associated with the King James Translation. In another new translation, they say God's will, which is good, acceptable, and perfect. They're not three wills of God.

How in the world can every dozen God know what He's doing or what He wants? Well, what I told you to do is this, but this is okay and that's okay. We have been taught more nonsense First of all, you have to obey God. If you don't obey God, what are you doing? Disobeying God.

It's as simple as that. You're either obeying your parents or you're disobeying your parents. There's no middle ground where you're almost kind of sort of.

And it certainly is possible to please God. You'd think God was giving us a whole bunch of stuff to do that no one in his right mind could ever do. Well, that's a devil's lie to keep us separated from God.

You want to realize that Satan's big motive is to keep us separated from God. And everything he does has the purpose to keep us separated from God. Like just making Jesus and the Father the same person.

It keeps us separated from God. You're telling us that we're saved by a state of grace and we don't have to keep God's commandments. It's to keep us separated from God.

God wants us to come to Him. God wants us to be close to Him. He's a Father.

God is our Father. He wants us to be close to Him. Satan wants us to be removed from Him.

It's as simple as that. And when we're told we don't have to obey God, that is coming from Satan. Of course we have to obey God.

And if we don't obey God, there's a price to pay. God loves us. Indeed, He loves us.

And He's always gently trying to bring us along to where we will trust Him and love Him and accept Him and draw near to Him. He's always doing this. And religion is always pushing them off in a box.

Let us make three tabernacles. Whatever we do, get them out of sight. Can't stand here talking to Jesus, Moses and Elijah.

Put them in a box. Get them out of sight. Charge admission.

That's why there's no temple in the New Jerusalem. God wants His children all around Him climbing all over Him. Audrey was talking about coming back on the plane.

Were you going to talk about the Jewish father? Can I talk about the Jewish father? Is it okay? She was watching a Jewish father. And His children were climbing all over Him. And He was just laughing and grinning and having a great time.

And then what? You saw a contrast to that. What was it? Yeah, the child was horsing around the garden too and the father... Well, I don't say he did wrong, but I'm pointing out God wants His children climbing all over Him. And any doctrine you hear that separates you from God is not of the Lord.

Because God loves you. And the closer you are to God climbing all over Him, you know how kids do, because they're of the kingdom. And when we're adults, we get educated beyond our intelligence and we don't know what we're doing.

It's a simple father-son relationship. And God sends His Spirit into us crying, Abba, dear Father, He wants us to love Him. No one knows the Son except the Father.

And no one the Father except the Son. And He to Whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. But then in another place He said to receive children because their angels always see the face of My Father.

So we want to draw near to God. Not develop theological positions that put God in a box. Am I making any sense to you? I'm talking about the knowledge of the Father.

And the only way you can walk with God is to obey Him. He wants you to come to Him like I told the Lord I was willing to go anywhere as a missionary and God says I love you. So much for my zeal.

If you go to God and say I'll do whatever you want. Give me the grace, I'll do it. You'll find out that you're probably doing it anyway and you don't have the satisfaction of knowing that you're serving Him.

Because you're afraid to call His hand. Get down sometime. Maybe today.

Maybe after I get through yakking. And tell God you'll do whatever He says. When you take communion this morning, tell God I'm here.

Here's one Son that's going to obey you no matter what. And see what happens. Huh? I dare you.

I double dare you. I dare you with sugar on it. Tell God you'll do whatever He says that you want to find out what your work is.

Get it done and complete it and get out of here. And not mess up the world when you're not needed. Well, anyway, something like that.

Alright, now, here's another angle here on this fifth verse. Is that what we're on? The fifth verse or sixth verse? Sixth verse. I have revealed You to those whom You gave Me out of the world.

They were Yours. You gave them to Me. And they have obeyed Your Word.

They have obeyed Your Word. Now, this opens up a can of peas. Big time.

Because it suggests that the kingdom does not operate according to democratic principles. I mean, there's no way you can get anything democratic out of this. Those whom You gave Me out of the world.

He said, I have revealed You to those whom You gave Me out of the world. Well, how about the other people? What about them? This isn't fair. Call your lawyer.

It isn't fair, Hal. How can He have given some people out of the world and not other people? Well, that's the way the kingdom is. You know, this causes an immense problem to people with a philosophical turn of mind.

Because they say, if God's doing everything like this, how in the world can He judge us for doing evil? Well, Paul got up to that point and he said, don't be sassy. He didn't really solve it. But I'll tell you how it works once.

At least, this is the way I see it. God, it's very clear in the Scripture, and we'll go over some if we have time. That salvation and everything, the priesthood, the whole thing, the setup of the kingdom all comes from God.

All comes from God. The Scripture is very clear and this is just one instance here. It all comes from God.

In fact, later on in the chapter, he says, I don't pray for the world. I pray for those that you gave me. Well, okay.

But there's a couple other Scriptures. There's one in 2 Timothy that says God made some vessels unto honor and some unto dishonor. And then it says, but if any man will purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor.

So, what God has done, this is very crafty, very cunning. He's doing everything of Himself. His own wisdom, His own decisions.

But He's telling you in His Word, you can come to Me if you want to. Now, that's very, very cunning. Because nobody can ever stand before God and say, but I was predestined to be lost.

God says, but I told you, whoever comes to Me, I will not cast out. Why don't you come to Me? So, it's very, very cunningly done. Because you see that, Judge? You see how that is? It tells us that the whole thing is of God, and yet God says, but I said you can come if you want to.

I'm not willing that any should be lost. All should come to repentance. Why didn't you come? See? Now, that runs very deep.

We can say, but I wasn't predestined. According to your words, you did everything by your own wisdom. But God said, but I told you if you would come, so you can't blame Me.

I told you if you'll come to Me, I will not cast you out. Why didn't you do it? And so then every mouth is shut. You see that? That's what you call balance.

That's balance in the doctrine. One doesn't wipe out the other. They're both equally true.

No man can come to Me except My Father draw him. Absolutely true. Him that comes to Me, I want to know why he's cast out.

Absolutely true. You said, I can't reconcile it. You don't have to.

Make up your mind. Are you going to come to Him or not? You'll be judged on that basis. See, that's wisdom that goes beyond human wisdom.

And nobody can say anything to God because God said, I told you. Here it is. Here's the cross.

I died for the sins of all men. Why didn't you come? Well, I wasn't destined to come. Who told you you weren't predestined to come? Did you make up your mind? The truth is, if you'd wanted to come, you'd have come.

You didn't want to come. Well, you didn't make me want to come. But I told you, you could have come if you wanted to.

Both of those things are scriptural. You say, why are you stressing that? Because before, see, we've gotten away from predestination. Predestination used to be preached heavily in the Presbyterian church.

And it still is in some churches. I believe strongly in predestination. But the problem is that people then came to church with this attitude, you know, I don't know whether I'm destined to be saved or lost.

And this was a very real problem for many people. And they would wait for some sign. They used to wait for tears.

When the tears came, then everybody said, oh, you were predestined. They were waiting for that. Well, that has shot its wad and we're over now into whoever will, the idea is predestination doesn't even exist in the Bible.

Yet, it's a major topic. And there's a reason why it's there. You see? So now, God wants an imbalance.

He wants us to accept predestination full-blown. Every word of God you say, Amen. There's no but, but, but, but.

Every word of God you say Amen, whether you can understand it or not. But the Bible also says, whosoever will may come. That is absolutely the will of God.

The Word of God. And so, no one can say to God, I couldn't come. God said you can come.

And you could have come. Why didn't you come? So, we're preaching the all-pressed predestination and also to whoever will because they're both taught in the Scriptures. And because we do not understand everything about it, it makes no difference in the world.

Because if we understood God, we could define Him. And if we could define God, we could control Him. And God cannot be defined.

And He cannot be controlled. He is God. And if His wisdom says, I planned all this and it's all my moving, Amen.

And whosoever will may come, Amen. And so, you and I have a choice. We can come or not.

And you know, in all the things of salvation, what you do is, what we all do is use a lot of words to justify what we really want. And what God knows is, what do you really want? And that's what you'll get. He opens up the desire, He opens His hand, satisfies the desire of every living thing.

If you really want God, then nobody's going to talk you out of it and say there is no God. Because you have cast your want in that direction. If there's no God, I don't even want to be here.

Everything I have is in God. Everything I hope is in God. Everything I want is in God.

That's me. That's it. And then nobody can shake you.

But if you don't really love God that much, and you're kind of tantalized with the things of Satan, then you'll use a lot of words to prove why you're justified in what you do. That's why the Lord has eyes of fire. Because He doesn't listen to all our reasoning.

If you want God, you can have God as much as you want. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. And if you don't, you can find a reason in the Bible why you don't have to be righteous and still can be saved.

You'll find that because that's what you want. And God has written the Bible so that you can prove to yourself what you want. Because He wants to know what is in your heart.

Do you love God? Do you crave God? Do you want God? Or don't you? And all the rest is just reasoning. And no one likes to reason more than the demons. They are the greatest reasoners in the world.

Well, we've got time to look at a couple of these. Now, what we're talking about is the fact that Christ selects people. He selects them.

Like you said, you have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. Now, that should make a difference in us when we're preaching to the unsaved. We have to realize that what we're doing is fishing in God's pond.

We're not trying to convince anybody or sell anything. We're fishing in God's pond to find out who God has ordained to life. I'm talking Bible talk now.

That's something I made up. Alright, now, having said all that, let's look for a moment at John 7, verses 16 and 17. And then we'll get into the... We probably won't have time.

We'll probably have to do it tonight. John 7, verses 16 and 17. Now, this is a verse that brought me to the Lord.

Right here. If you want to blame anything, this is the thing to blame for my being here. Because I was not raised in a Christian home.

I believed in God, kinda, but I had me dutes. I had me dutes. And I was praying for faith, and I read in a book about this verse.

These verses here. My teaching is not my own. It comes from Him who sent me.

See, now, that was a question in my mind. Can I believe this stuff? And then I saw the deal. If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether I'm talking out of myself or talking from God.

And I saw that as a deal. I saw that as a deal. I said, alright.

Alright, you're on. I will do whatever I think is God's will. And then you show me.

Okay? Not, you show me first, and then I'll do it. I'll do it, and then you show me. And I did what I thought was God's will.

I quit drinking beer and smoking cigarettes and swearing and going to the movies. Well, I was in the Marine Corps at the time, and that was about the limit of my consecration. But God did reveal Himself to me.

And He gave me faith. And He gave me the assurance that He was from God and what He said was from God. Shelley was talking about some kids that are in college now, and they're losing their faith.

They were raised in Christian homes. They're questioning now whether there even is a God. They argue back and forth.

You don't get nowhere like that. Trying to argue about whether there's a God or there isn't a God. What you do is pray.

Pray. You'll find out whether there's a God or not. You're not going to reason yourself into it.

Pray. And see, again, if you want God, you're going to pray and you're going to find God. But if you don't, you're going to justify yourself and say, well, what I really believe in is evolution and my grandfather was an orangutan.

You'll convince yourself. You know, it's amazing to me that people in the bush with no education at all pray to the spirits and worship God and fear God. And here we've got a country full of PhDs that don't believe there is a God.

Now, what does that tell us? You're better off in the bush without an education because you get educated beyond your ability to cope. You become a fool. All right.

Now, start talking about predestination. First of all, we're not talking so much about predestination, but about the fact that there's a difference between those that the Lord calls out and those that he doesn't. And the first one is Ephesians 4.13. I want you to notice this very important.

I'm almost through now. Hold your breath. And by the time you have to exhale, I'll be through.

All right. Now, Ephesians 4.13. I see people turning blue. Ephesians 4.13. That's what God is after.

That's what God has given the ministries for. That is what he wants. Do you see it? How many see it? God wants maturity as measured by the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Now, the reason I emphasize that is because there's so much talk about people sitting in the pews and they're not going out and saving a lost and dying world. That is not the emphasis of the New Testament. This is the emphasis.

This is why God gave apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists, and pastors. This is what God wants in this day. The sheep gate is the first gate to be built in the third chapter of Nehemiah.

After that comes the fish gate. That's telling us that God says, build up the saints. And then, we'll go after the fish.

There's no use bringing more babies into churches that are already all babies and never grow. The church is called out from the world to be the priesthood of God. It is a lampstand.

It is not a social club. The church is not a social club in the community whose job is to tell everybody in the community they ought to be part of this because we don't even know what we're doing half the time. The church is full of babies.

They don't wait on the Lord enough to know what God wants. And to get more people in, and more people in, and more people in. And God's plan is frustrated.

Because what God is creating is a royal priesthood that can bring righteousness and justice to the nations. And they can't do it when they're babies. So that's why we go out and look for those who were ordained to life.

And that's why we don't push in this church to bring in more people, bring in more people. My goodness, when people come in off the street or off another church and hear what's being preached in here, they run for their lives. You think the average American wants to come in, even the average American Christian, and hear somebody say you're not a Christian until you take up your cross and follow Jesus? So God is building this church.

God is building. And I can see it. When a need's coming up, He's already got someone here to fill that need, like Lloyd, as an example.

Now, we didn't ask Lloyd to come here. God moved on Lloyd to come here because he's a man of prayer. And boy, have we needed him.

And all the rest of you that God has brought God upon this rock, I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. It is not democratic. It is not going out and canvassing.

I'm not saying there's not a time for that or God will not move on that or anything of the kind. I'm pointing out a point of view that is not always preached. What God wants is people to come and then the pastors and teachers to build them up until they are mature, as measured by the stature of the fullness of Christ.

When God gets that done, then He's got Himself a lampstand that He can use to bear witness of Himself, His person, His will, and His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus. So, what we are doing, I pray every day, God, don't let anybody come. Bring the people you want, not one more and not one less.

Make this your church. Call it out by your power. Build it up by your spirit.

And then use it according to your wisdom. Hallelujah. Can you say amen to that?

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