

Prepare the Way of the Lord

by Roy Daniel

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God, focusing on the need to uncover and confess our sins, the hindrances that prevent us from truly seeing Jesus, and the transformation that occurs when we surrender our hearts to Him. It highlights the danger of covering our sins with good works or experiences, stressing the necessity of genuine repentance and faith in Jesus for salvation.

Scripture: Luke 16:16, Matthew 3:3, Isaiah 40:3, Proverbs 28:13, Hebrews 4:13

Topics: "Surrender", "Genuine Repentance"

Description

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Transcript

You can open up your Bibles specifically to Luke chapter 16, verse 16. Actually, skip that. I'll read that to you.

Open up your Bibles to Matthew 3, verse 3. And keep a tab on Isaiah chapter 40. So keep a tab on Isaiah chapter 40. Okay, now I'm going to speak this morning, and we're going to pray soon, on John the Baptist.

And I'm not going to speak on his entire life, and the fact that he was put in prison, and the struggles he had there, when he wondered if Jesus was the Christ, and how he died, and why he died, and why he was the greatest of the Old Testament prophets. I'm going to focus in on one verse, which is Matthew 3, verse 3, which you find in four times in the New Testament, one time in the Old Testament. And I'd like to look at this, and then bring out some things that some of you might not know already, unless you're different to many of the other people I've spoken to in life.

And this is precious. This is really wonderful. This is life-changing to many people.

So I'm excited about this. But here we have, in Luke chapter 16, it says, the law and the prophets were unto John. We read the same in Matthew 11, verse 13.

And then in Matthew 11, verse 11, we read, Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist, notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of

heaven is greater than he. So the law and the prophets were preached until John. Now the kingdom of God is preached.

And he was the greatest who was born of a woman. But anybody in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he, Jesus says. Now I'm not going to go into every little bit of meaning of all that.

But that's my background to this great guy. And we're going to look at one little part of his life and what that means. And let's read it together.

Matthew 3, verse 3, before we pray. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord. And then it says these words, Make his paths straight.

So with that, let's go over to prayer. Father, thank you so much for the Bible. Thank you that it is full of phenomenal things.

And all of them in some way, shape, form, or size point us away from ourselves, except in the sense that it shows us who we are before thee and points us to Christ. And Father, I just ask this morning, with a very little time as I lay myself before thee, and I just ask thee to speak to every single heart today. Speak to my heart, and that you will be present, and that you will bind the devil and his demons in the name of Jesus Christ, and that you would allow Jesus to be lifted up in this meeting.

And I ask this, not for any righteousness of my own, but for thy great mercy's sake, as Daniel said in the Old Testament, and for thy righteousness, in Jesus Christ's name, Amen. Now the Bible says, Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Make his paths straight.

Make his paths straight. Now I've sat down with many missionaries across the world, and I've sat down with many preachers across the world, and I've sat down with many Christians across the world, and I asked them, What does this mean? And a lot of them, even guys who read their Bibles a few hours a day, and witness every day, they'll tell me that it just basically means that John the Baptist was getting people ready for the fact that Jesus was coming soon. He was just preparing them for the fact that it's not later, it's not in a thousand years, it's going to happen within the next few years, the next few months, this Jesus is coming.

And I asked them, But what specifically is the picture here? What is it saying when it says, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight. How were the paths made straight? They look at me strangely, and they say, That's just some kind of picture that God wants us to read through and think something about. Now, obviously this verse is also in Mark 1, verse 2 and 3, Luke 3, verse 4, and John 1, verse 23.

But I'd just like to mention before we go on, that God Almighty, and you'll have seen this in your life, I'm sure that some of you here will have experienced before you got saved, that God prepared the way for you to get saved. Some people like Zacchaeus, I'm sure you heard about Jesus before, and we don't know how it was prepared, but it was pretty amazing. Jesus walked past, and he realized something that changed his life forever.

He heard his name, and he realized, This person knows me. It's amazing in one moment how sometimes in a heathen nation even, you'll find people who have never heard the name of Jesus, and in one moment they get saved. But in many cases, God prepares the way.

God prepares the hearts. God prepares the understanding. And we could go for stories and stories and stories, if I didn't just have half an hour to preach.

But I'd like to mention a few in my own life, and there's so many, you guys could stand up and give testimonies, but I remember the first drunkard that God ever gave me the privilege of leading to the Lord, that got radically saved, and became a soul winner. And many other people got saved through this drunkard, who got saved through Jesus Christ. And it was in a little African village, and I remember going to this place with my friend, and we just happened to be white people.

I don't know if you noticed. And so in this little village, this lady who was a drunkard, and I remember walking past her the first time, and she was shriveled up on the ground. Her eyes were dark.

She had had a dream. Now, I don't know that. I don't have dreams.

I've never, ever had a dream that I preached about. I'm not a charismat. But God saves charismats through Jesus Christ for the same reason.

Anyway, so this lady, she had a dream that two white people would come and help her, and tell her the truth. And we came there and told her of Jesus Christ very shortly, and she came in a conviction. She went to her pastor, who said to her, you're fine.

You don't have to worry. You give money to church, and even if you're a drunkard, you're going to heaven. And she went to her knees, and she says, that's what the pastor says, but what do you say, oh God? She found out she was a sinner.

She got radically saved. But God prepared her heart, and prepared her mind, and prepared the way. I remember one of the first towns that I went to many years back, about 17 years back in South Africa, with my friend, we were driving from town to town, going from schools, going to the schools, and the orphanages, and the mission stations, and the prisons, and the churches, which were almost like the prisons.

And I remember coming to this town, and there was this guy on the street, and he had tattoos all over him. And we handed a tract to him, and he walked away. We just said a few words about Jesus.

Well, we had no idea how God had prepared his heart. Because a year before that, he was in a desert in a neighboring country, and he was walking through the desert. He looked down, and he saw a little book in the sand.

And so he went down, and he picked it up. He didn't read it, and he put it in his bag. He kept it for the next year.

We came there, and just before we gave him that tract, he landed up in prison. He just got out. And after landing in prison, that was the first time he really, seriously thought about his relationship with God through Jesus Christ, if he didn't have one.

And he was wondering, where am I going when I die? And here comes this person, he'd never heard this before, told him about Jesus, gave him a tract, me and my friend, and we left him. Now, that's typically what people do. You know, you should always stamp the back of a tract, or put your number there.

I'm stupid. I didn't do that. So we drove off.

There's 60,000 people in that town. He's not going to find us again. But we just happened to have met his mother in another part of town.

And we gave her a pamphlet with our number on. She came home. He's in a state.

He wants to know Jesus. Doesn't know what to do. And he says, these two guys came, and I don't know how to get them.

I want to speak to them again. She said, do they look like this? That's them! There was the number. Now, one of the first questions that he asked was, can I get saved with a tattoo on my arm? Poor guy.

Anyway, we helped for a while. For about three hours a night, he was texting back and forth. And then, he remembered that book.

And you wonder, what is that book? Took out that book from his back. It was a book written by people that we know, step by step, 36 pages, how to get saved. And bit by bit, he read through it.

And that night, sometime in the morning, he met with God through Jesus Christ. The next day, he came and saw us. And the day after that, he was the cool dude at school, by the way.

With big muscles, sporty, you name it. He got all his friends together and said, you are going to the stadium. He had about 100 guys in front of him.

He told them what it is to know God through Jesus Christ. And I was this tour. I was traveling around.

And I don't know how many preachers you've heard preach on Gishu. It's not the biggest topic on earth. And I was going to preach another topic.

And I stood up. And for some reason, I don't get led. I have a broomstick when it comes to leading.

I'm so scared of it. But I just suddenly thought, I'm going to talk about Gishu for 10 minutes. And so I talked about Gishu for 10 minutes.

And this one guy came to me afterwards. And he said, why did you talk about Gishu? I said, I don't exactly know. I just wanted to inspire you guys to see that there's amazing stuff in scripture that you might not have seen before.

And he came there and he said, for the last week, God has just been talking to me through Gishu because Gishu means pride. And he said, I've come into such conviction about wrong things that are in my life and wrong attitudes and wrong stuff through Gishu. And I thought, you know, if God just confirms this for me.

And then here comes this weird guy. And he stands up in front. And nobody does this.

He preaches for 10 minutes on Gishu. Why? Good guy. I remember one guy.

He's in the ministry now. And he came to this one town. He really thought, maybe God is calling me to full-time ministry.

And I always love it how God uses the conservative me to speak to the charismatic minded people, like I mentioned. And this guy, he came there to a town, I think it was two years back. Actually, it was three years back.

And he sat there in a meeting that I was preaching. And I preached on calling, how to be called of God. And before he came there, he said to the Lord, he said, God, I don't know if I'm called, but if Roy preaches specifically on calling, a whole message on it, I'll know that I'm called of God.

So I came there, and I'd never in 10 years in that church ever preached on calling. So I preached on calling. The next thing, he left his job, went to Bible college, and he joined the ministry.

And he's doing very well. You might think that's just coincidence. You know, my dad was, and my dad is the furthest thing you'll ever get from a thing to a charismat that you'll ever meet.

But my dad once came to a town, and he preached on Jonah. And I sat down with people who were in that meeting, and they were very angry that he preached on Jonah. The one guy specifically said, I was so angry with your dad.

You know why? Because I felt God was calling me to full time service, and I was just angry that he preached that message. A guy in South Africa died of cancer. I'm a godly guy who God used through the years of ministry.

But this guy said to me, in this little house with mud floors, as he made coffee for me, he said, you know, your dad came and preached there, and nobody responded to the message. And I decided I'm not going back. Because I so hated him for this message.

He said, but then I thought to myself, he can't preach the same sermon twice. He can't. It's over.

It's going to be something else. It's going to be quiet time, or it's going to be how to look after your children, or something like that. So he said, I'm safe.

So he decided to go that night. My dad stood up. My dad never ever does this.

But that is not a charisma. He stood up and he said, I have no idea why I'm doing this. I have no idea why I felt led this way, but for the first time in my life, I feel that I have to preach the same sermon a second time.

You know, there were five people, nobody in the morning, but there were five people who went into full-time ministry through that. You know, God prepares the hearts and minds of people. That's not the general way.

We actually want to stick to this in context. But he does that. And I'd like to ask, how did God use John the Baptist to prepare the way of the Lord, to make his path straight? What does it mean that he made his path straight? So let's open up the Bible to Isaiah chapter 40.

And in Isaiah chapter 40, we're going to see, and I've asked people, what is the picture here? You might not know what it means, but what is the picture? What path is being made straight? And a lot of people will say, it's like my own version of all the different stories they tell me, it's like a flat area, but there's this path that's going zig-zag, and you straighten it out like a string. And that's not the picture. It's not just a crooked path.

They get straight, because God is straight. Let's read Isaiah 40 verse 3, 4 and 5 to understand the picture that God is trying to give to us here. And also at the same time, to understand, if God used John the Baptist in this way to prepare the hearts of people to see Jesus Christ, then he can use us in this way to prepare the hearts of people to see Jesus Christ.

In Isaiah 40 verse 3, 4 and 5, the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare you the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. And then it says these words, listen very carefully. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places shall be made plain.

That is a very amazing picture. And then it says these words, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. Now, one of the reasons why many preachers do not preach on this, the two verses that come after Isaiah 40 verse 3 is because it's only found once in the New Testament.

It's only found in Luke. It's not found in John. It's not found in Mark.

It's not found in Matthew. But it is talking about John the Baptist because Luke quotes all three verses. And then he explains it.

He's the one who speaks the most of John the Baptist. He explains what it means to a great degree. We understand.

Okay. So, we read this in Luke chapter 3 verse 4, as is written in the books of Isaiah, the prophet saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare you the way of the Lord, make his path straight, every valley this is Luke chapter 3 verse 5, shall be filled, every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Now, the picture that you have to understand in this little 30 minutes that I have is that this is not a flat desert with a crooked path.

If you go to Israel, there's lots of mountainous deserts. And they have valleys. And so you've got this big mountain and mountains and you've got these valleys and you've got rough patches and there's a crooked path and you cannot see past it because that's what happens when you stand in front of a mountain.

I don't know if you've ever seen anybody behind a big mountain, no matter how big they are. You haven't. And even if you're down in the valley and you see around the curves that go there in rocky valleys that are wildernesses that are deserts, you cannot see around the corner.

And even rough places can keep you, not only from getting through, but from seeing ahead of you. And so God says I'm going to bring the valleys up, I'm going to bring the mountains down, and I'm going to make the rough places smooth and then something's going to happen, you're going to see something, you're going to see the glory of the Lord. So I've got to get the mountains down, I've got to get the valleys up, it's going to be absolutely plain and now what can you see? Jesus! Do you understand the picture? It's a beautiful picture.

But now the question is how did John do that? How did John do that? Let's open up our Bibles to Philippians 1 verse 7. Philippians 1 chapter 1 verse 7 says these words Even as it is mean for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart. And as much as both my bonds, and then listen to these words in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you are all partakers of my grace. Now if you read Galatians you'll see that if even an angel preaches to you any other gospel then let him be accursed.

In the gospel we've preached unto you, you cannot change the gospel. We're all born sinners, we've done sin, we need Jesus Christ to have died, we need his righteousness, we need him to have risen again so that his life and his forgiveness and his righteousness can become part of us through faith. You cannot

change the gospel but what does it mean defense and confirmation of the gospel? Defending the gospel is not going up to our friend with the backpacks and saying listen if you've got another gospel I'm going to defend you.

You don't do that. The basic meaning of the words here is defense, to confirm the gospel is to say it as it is. This is what the gospel is.

But to defend the gospel is to remove the stumbling blocks. To remove those things that keep you from seeing Jesus. And the amazing thing is different people, although everybody out there is born a sinner and everybody out there has done sin and everybody out there needs the same gospel to be saved.

Different people have different lies that keep them back from the same Jesus. Different people have different lies that keep them back from the same Jesus. There are some very obvious examples in life and Jehovah's Witness, if you can convince them somehow that Jesus Christ is God you might have done something in his life.

But if you go to a Catholic and you say I believe in the Trinity you might say Amen. But they also believe a whole lot of other rubbish. Mary is more than the Bible says she is and the ordinances of the Catholic Church and there are a million different things they believe.

And you can tell them that Jesus is God for a long time and convince them that Jesus is God and you might not actually have got very much anywhere because there are different lies that keep different people from the same truth. Some people might believe in work salvation so you can show to them that your good works don't take away your bad works. But then you meet another person and he believes my good works do not get me to heaven.

I need Jesus. And I've got Jesus because I believe in him intellectually. You meet many people like that in Europe and in Africa.

And so you can tell him your good works don't get you to heaven and he'll say Amen. But you're not helping him because you're not dealing with the lie that keeps him from seeing Jesus. And then another person you might come to him and I've heard this I've come into a house once quite a few times actually walking down the street and I'll see a big horrible naked body on the wall and there's pornography huge massive images all around the house and I ask this person as I'm trying not to look at the walls, are you a Christian? He says yeah I'm born again.

I'm born again. This is the day that I accepted Jesus into my life and I love Jesus. And my friend once was with me, he read his bible a lot every day, he prayed a lot, he witnessed a lot and he came in there and he said listen I want to tell you something good works will not look at you to heaven.

The guy said Amen. He said you've got to accept Jesus into your life. The guy said Amen.

And then we left. He said that was such a wonderful witnessing opportunity, he didn't let me speak by the way my friend. I said brother everything you said was the truth but everything you said was not the truth that he needed.

He didn't need to learn about true repentance, he needed to learn about true faith, he needed to learn about one John with a fruit that comes out of a person that is saved. And he needed to see that that's not in his life and he needed those mountains to be taken away so that he could see Christ. And so many

people they accept Jesus like this and there's nothing that happens, no true fruit but they have experiences and miracles happen and feelings and oh it's so wonderful the presence of God.

I've had people who get drunk and sleep around and they come to me and they say I know I'm a Christian, many people have done this to me and they say I know I'm a Christian because I have his peace and I have this feeling of God's presence that goes with me everywhere. How could he be so loving to me and so present if I'm not saved? I said because the Bible says there's other fruit and you don't have it. And I can show it to you.

I remember one guy in England I showed him some stuff from one John he said but if that's in the Bible then I'm not saved. Yeah? So how did he prepare the way of the Lord? How did he bring those mountains down? Why is there mountains and there's valleys and different things because different people have valleys and different people have mountains and different people have rough places different things that keep them back from seeing Jesus Christ. But let's have a look quickly.

Matthew 3 verse 2 it says and saying repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. This is general this is to everybody. Before we get to specifics.

Jesus said the same words. Paul said similar words in Acts. It did not change after the cross.

Don't let anybody ever tell you that. You know what a lot of people do? They say repentance in John the baptist time was from sin but repentance in Jesus time might have been from sin but after the cross repentance just mean turning from not believing Jesus to believing Jesus. And they saw against reformation and they saw against work salvation there's a movement in America which some very good people unfortunately got involved in has led to sin in their life greatly.

It's called the anti lordship salvation movement. And they believe that good works will not get you to heaven. Amen brother! But they also believe that repentance is nothing more than intellectual faith.

You know I'd like to. They say if you give any any condition of salvation then it's work salvation. Let's open up our Bibles to James 4 verse 6. I like this verse.

I can go through the Old Testament now what the anti lordship salvation do unlike the unlike the easy believism of Joel Osteen and Joyce Meyer and all these different people is they actually have theology. You'll meet lots of people that go to mega churches and they'll sit down and they believe that they go to heaven in spite of lying, stealing, committing adultery because God loves them but they've never read their Bible. But then you'll actually get this like 30%, 20% of preachers at least in this anti lordship movement and they're against Ray Comfort and against Paul Washer and against anybody who sounds like that and and and they have systematic theology.

They can go right to the Bible and show you every verse of repentance and show that it does not mean, just like the Seventh-day Adventists do with hell and the Jehovah's Witnesses do with hell they can show you right to the Bible that you don't have to repent of your sin. Systematic. And I've wept over some people I love who've fallen for this rubbish.

James 4 verse 6 and 1 Peter 5 verse 5 it says, and God resisteth the proud, but he giveth grace to the humble. Is it less of a gift if there's a condition of humility? Is it less of a gift if there's a condition of humility? You know, if you're proud in your sin and you come and you say, I don't want to go to hell, so Jesus please come into my life but I'm proud, I believe my good works are getting me to heaven. That's

not going to work.

But if you also, there's two ways of being proud. You can be proud and say my good works merit salvation. But you can also be proud and say, Jesus I'm following you.

While Jesus is walking that way I said a prayer Jesus please come into my life. And then you walk the other way. I do lordship salvation.

I'm following you. How stupid. How idiotic.

And yet how many millions of people do that? Because it's not works salvation. Listen, the bible says clearly. It says clearly.

We all, like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way and the lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. When Jesus in Matthew chapter 7 says depart from me ye workers of iniquity.

He said in spite of the fact that you prophesied in my name, that you have done great works in my name, that you've cast out devils in my name. You say in the name of Jesus you follow me. You've got a big ministry.

Whatever. You're still iniquitous. You know what iniquitous means? It means going your own way.

You're walking this way and you say I follow Jesus. Well he's going that way. You have to realize that you're born a sinner.

You have to realize that you've done sin. You have to realize that makes you guilty. And only Jesus Christ, what he did on the cross as a free gift, can save you.

But you've got to realize that you can't carry on with that life. You can't carry on with that life. It was Richard R. Roberts who said it's lunacy to think that you can accept Jesus as Savior or rejecting him as Lord.

It's lunacy. Now when we go astray, that sheep, all of us are like that. We're that sheep going astray.

That shows itself in different ways. In different people. If you're a soldier, it'll be a bit different to being a Pharisee.

It'll be a bit different to being an adulterer. All of us in our hearts have done stuff that we accuse others of doing in their lives. Some people express it through witchcraft.

Now I've never been in witchcraft. I've never called on devils. Some people rape other people.

Some people are on drugs. Some people lie continuously. Some people are disobedient to their parents and some people are proud of their religion.

But this iniquity expresses itself in different ways. And that's why John the Baptist, when he came to different people, and Paul does the same in Acts, he dealt with different people according to the expression of their iniquity. Their sin.

You can't carry on as a sheep doing what you used to do. You've got to stop. It's not going to save you.

It's not reformation on the outside. You can clean the outside and on the inside you've still got a heart problem. You can clean the outside of a pig and the pig still wants to go to the mud.

You need Jesus as a free gift by faith. But you're not going to get Jesus if you want to walk the other way and carry on enjoying sin. And so what is in your life that's keeping you back? What has to be uncovered? Luke 10, 3 verse 10-11, we read a general statement, he says, when people are saying, what shall we do then? And he said, he that hath two coats let him impart to him that hath none.

And he that hath meat let him do likewise. It's amazing. Love.

If you're walking down the road, you've got a church, you've got lovely clothes on. I love the story of the goats and the sheep, and I know with dispensationism it might be the Jews and not the Gentiles and I don't know whatever, but I just see it this way. This is the heart of God.

You gave clothes to a Christian. You gave a place to stay. You gave food, you gave water, whatever, to the thirsty.

You were giving it to Jesus. And that was God's proof that they were saved. It wasn't the means of salvation, it was the fruit of salvation.

But you didn't. And you're on your way to hell. That's what Jesus said.

Exact no more than that which is appointed to you. He said. To the soldiers, he said something different.

They asked him, what shall we do? And he said, do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely. I think Christians need to hear about that. And be content with your wages.

The unions need to hear about that. It's amazing how people call themselves Christians but they support unions. Luke 3 verse 19, but Herod the Tetrarch been reproved by him for his brother Philip's life.

He has a king. What is his sin? Oh, there's lots of sins. Many evil things he did, the Bible says.

But Paul honed in on the fact that he was marrying and taking his brother's wife. When my dad got saved, it was one moment through Jesus. It was one moment through what Jesus did on the cross when he died for our sins.

And when he rose again three days later. It was in one moment by faith that Jesus saved him. But before he got saved, my dad was with bad friends.

My dad had done bad stuff. My dad was in the world. His father was a drunkard.

My dad very much was on the street. And when he came to this church and he'd seen his brother's life change, he saw what Jesus did to his older brother and saved him in a moment. He said, I want that.

He came to that church and he came to the front and he said, I want to get saved. And the person who sat down with him, not the preacher, but a minister, said to him, there's a verse in the Bible that says you've got to count the cost. It's not going to save you by stopping the wrong stuff.

But if you're not willing to and you just want to take it to heaven, you're not going to get saved. So if this is what's part of your life, you have to realize when you come to Jesus, it means you're going to be giving up that life. You're not going to be perfect.

You can never know every little thing that God has to change in your life. But the major obvious stuff that's part of your life, you better realize that Christianity is not just saying a prayer and getting a ticket to heaven. I can carry on walking the other way.

So there's different sins in different people's lives. But here we get something very interesting. Matthew 3, verse 7, 8, 9, and 10.

We read here of the Sadducees and Pharisees. Now these are not soldiers with their mountains and their sins and their lies. These are not publicans.

These are not the general populace of the Jews. These are Sadducees and Pharisees. And we read here three things.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, good preacher, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits, meat for repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abram to our father. For I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abram. And now also the axe is laid to the root of the trees.

Therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. He said three things. He didn't say these same three things to the publicans.

He did not say these same three things to the soldiers. He did not say the same three things to the general populace. I wonder why.

Because different lies and different sins kept them back from the same Jesus. Something that much of Christianity seems to not understand. Let's look at this quickly.

The first thing, why didn't he just baptize them? I mean, how great. I mean, Brother Don, I love him, but every year he says, who wants to be baptized? You know, there's guys who come to me in tears, weeping. I want you to pray for me.

I've been for ten years ago, God set me free from drink. But now I've been ten years as a Christian enslaved to pornography and to drugs. And I want to be set free from drugs.

I'm like, well, you know that you're not a Christian. What about the pornography? No, no, I don't want to deal with that. My drugs are hurting my family.

And he's weeping. Now, when people come to you weeping, most people say, I cannot believe it. Everybody else is hard against the gospel.

Sit down, pray this prayer after me. Now you're a Christian. Now come with me, and we'll get you baptized.

There's one boy at school, and I sat down with him, and there's one, we preached hellfire brimstone to them for a few days, and they'd never heard it before. And sin, and the Ten Commandments, and everything. He said, I'm going to be the next leader of the school, you know, like the prefix, I don't know if they have that in America, and they have this head boy or whatever.

And he's got these big muscles, he's a rugby player, he's good looking, and he looks at me and he says, I really, I want to become a Christian. I said, well, let me ask you a question. Are you willing to give up going to the parties? He said, well, I don't think so.

I said, I'm thanking you for your honesty, because I'm not just going to pray with you because you're crying and you're weeping. Because you're not ready. Your life, your iniquity, your going away as a sheep, you don't want to give up, you just want to go to heaven.

But you're honest enough to say it, so I'll pray for you to come out of conviction. But I'm not going to pray for you to get saved, and put you on a false foundation for the rest of your life. It was John Bunyan in the Holy War who said, and Brother Stewart, who Brother Don loves in one of his books, brought this out very sweetly.

He said, how many of you read the Holy War? Oh, wonderful, half of you. He said, basically there was Adam, the man's soul is this unsaved town with all its inhabitants, and Beelzebub is Satan, is in charge of this town, and the evangelist comes with his armies to take it on, to bring it to the point of surrender so that it can be saved through the crucified one. And then there comes a little emissary out, and it comes to the evangelist and says, listen, we're willing for you to come inside.

You can be the king, Jesus can be in charge, but just one thing, we have to carry on with all the things we used to do. And the one evangelist said of what John Bunyan said, no good evangelist will ever allow someone to accept Jesus Christ when they don't want to surrender. When they want to have the same old rules, and do the same old things.

And that's not work salvation, that's just common sense. So he has three things. What were the apostles doing, the Pharisees doing when they came to Jesus? You have to understand that the Pharisees are doing what you find in much of the traditional churches across the world that you have to deal with, a little less in America, but you do have it here too in a different form, and we'll get to that.

The Pharisees and the Sadducees, they would be ticking boxes. So, a lot of Pharisees they will go on this pilgrimage to this place. And not only will they go on these pilgrimages and say, I'm a good person, they'll tick another box, they'll sit at the feet of Gamaliel, or some special speaker, and they'll be his disciple, and they'll tick another box.

And after a while they go to this specific synagogue to say that they've been to those three synagogues, and that they've had that influence in these people's lives, or they touched this book, or they got this thing, or they had these rules which they kept, and so they were ticking boxes through their life to get better. And eventually, oh yes, John the Baptist, that's nice. Another box to tick.

Let's go. And so they didn't understand repentance, they didn't understand that they needed to turn from their pride and their self-righteousness to God, to Jesus Christ, or anything like that. All they understood was, we've got another box to tick.

Everybody's doing it, let's go. Okay. New generation of vipers.

Huh? Isn't that a great honor for us to be baptized by you? You know how many people do that? Before we get to the Baptist churches, if you go to the church with catechism and Sunday school in the high churches in South Africa, and I've seen this in so many different churches, they'll tick their boxes. First, they'll be born in a Christian home. Box one ticked.

Secondly, they'll go to Sunday school for about five years. Box two ticked. Now they get a little better in high school, they learn a whole lot of catechism stuff.

Ooh, box three ticked. And eventually they have to be confirmed in the church, and when they're confirmed in the evangelical high churches, they believe in being born again, the pastor will sit them down, I've seen this many times. And they'll look at them, and they'll say, are you born again? Have you ever accepted Jesus into your life? And they'll say, no.

Well, before you can get confirmed, you've got to do that. Okay. So they tick the next box, and they say a prayer, Jesus, please come into my life.

Great. Now, they stand up in church, I got saved. You have to say that to get confirmed.

And they've got the fifth box. You cannot add Jesus to everything that came before. You cannot do that.

You cannot say, you cannot add good wine to old wine skins. You cannot do that. And so he goes on, he says, Matthew 3, verse 9, we have Abram to our Father, don't say this.

Don't say I've got Christian parents, therefore I'm a good person. You know, there's not one person that ever got to heaven, specifically because of his parents. Some got there in spite of their parents, and some were influenced by their parents to accept Jesus Christ and truly know him.

I can tell you, I can remember when I was born. Actually, I can't. But I remember shortly after that, I can remember very specifically that I had Keith Daniel as a father, and I was a little sinner.

I remember reading the Bible as a young person, and it was a dry book. I remember not loving God more than my father and mother. I remember telling other people about Jesus, doing a million good works, but it did not save me.

You know, some people, this is where it gets a little bit complicated, is they've got Christian parents, and they've said a prayer. And that's a hard combination to crack. Charles Spurgeon's great-grandchild did that.

He said a prayer when he was a little boy. He just wanted to get to heaven. He didn't understand that he was a sheep that had gone astray like my mother did in her simplicity, that she was living her life for herself, and she wanted to know Jesus and have a relationship with him.

So he said a little prayer and said, Jesus, I want you to come into my life. And he thought, well, that's it. Many years later, he read Hell's Best Kept Secret by Ray Comfort.

And he saw there for the first time that he never understood that he was a sinner, that he was on his way to hell. He just assumed, this is Christianity. When I read the Bible, it's a dry book.

And when I go to church, it's boring. Okay, great. Well, you know, except for the singing, that's nice, and the friends, and the kicking a soccer ball, that's always fun.

But I don't love other Christians because they love Jesus. It's a social club. And some social clubs are very formal and conservative, and some social clubs are less.

But I said a prayer when I was a kid, and then he came to conviction for the first time. He truly got saved. Oh, man.

You see, here's what it comes down to. He tells the generation of vipers, because that's what they need to know, you're not these good guys who are adding to your boxes. You're not this guy who's coming here with all the things you've done, and now you're ticking another box.

You're a viper, number one. Number two, there's something else you need to hear. Another mountain that needs to be brought down, a valley that needs to be brought down.

You need to realize that just because your Abram is your father, that doesn't make you a child of God. God can make children of Abram from stones. It's pretty powerful.

But I'd like to tell you something important that's missing in your life, sir. You don't have fruit. Matthew 3, verse 10, And now also the axe is laid to the root of the tree, speaking to the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

Therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Now one John, and I like, there's lots of places in the New Testament, actually says this is a child of God. A child of God will have this basically.

But one John says these words in one John 5, verse 13. After about 11 areas of tests, fruit, that should be in a Christian's life. It says the words, and I believe God.

Some people say you can fake it. Well that's great. I'll still preach it because God preached it.

One John 5, verse 13. These things have I written unto you. That believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life.

11 different areas. And if you got these, then you're saved. And if you don't, you're not.

Jesus said, Whosoever saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. What does it mean to keep his commandments? I'll tell you what. Before I was saved, I think it's 36 or 38, it was not part of my life.

I didn't have a new heart. I wasn't washed. My sins were still there.

I had this wall between me and God called my sin. I was born a sinner. I'd done sin.

And God was on this side. I went to church, and I ticked my boxes, and I went to Sunday school, and I did so many different things. But I didn't know God.

And there was no fruit. But there came a day, about 17 years back, 18 years back, in a little room in Cape Town, where I met with God through Jesus Christ. And when I did meet with God through Jesus Christ, he gave me a new nature.

I wasn't perfect, trust me, I made mistakes, I failed, but I was alive for the first time. I loved God more than my father and mother for the first time. And you know what was so beautiful? With that new nature, he became important.

It wasn't just I was pleasing my parents anymore. It wasn't just I didn't want to go to hell anymore. It wasn't just I'm part of a group of church anymore, or it's nice to kick a soccer ball anymore.

It's I loved Jesus. They that love him are known of him. And because I had something in my heart that was never there before, to love a person, what he said was important to me.

I would keep, cherish, protect the commands of Christ. It's not that I perfectly kept them, but they were important to me. Not just going to church and being part of a social club.

If you don't love the brethren, the Bible says that you're not saved in John. You know, before I was saved, I used to love people in a kind of funny way at camps, because we used to kick a soccer ball, we used to throw water balloons, we had crackers, all those big firecrackers. That was awesome.

Man, you don't want to know the things I did. It was awesome. I always hated the guys here.

I was that Pharisee. I didn't like the guys that smoke and take drugs and all that kind of stuff. But boy, everything else you could do as a boy to break windows like that.

My poor parents had to pay occasionally. But I remember when I got saved, beforehand I loved to go to a camp because of the social atmosphere from my friends, but after I got saved for the first time, I started to meet people in church who I realized, it seems like these people, the Bible's not a dry book to them. It seems like these people, they've had an experience in their life and they've been growing in which they love Jesus and they don't want to change Him.

And yes, they're not perfect and they get irritated with me, understandably. But I love them because they love my Jesus. I didn't have that before I was saved.

And then it talks of angst. It talks of not loving the world. You can love the world by going to a pub and getting drunk and being on the floor and sleeping around and stuff, but you can love the world by loving the world, anything in the world, more than you love God.

And that'll show in your decisions, by the way. And you've never been to a pub and never got drunk and you can love the world. Then, of course, in 1 John, and I can go through all 11 of these tests, but the last one's just unction.

You have this anointing in you, and they that will love the Spirit are the children of God. Romans says, I think this comes out clearly in 2 Corinthians chapter 3. Charles Spurgeon said, if the Bible is dry to you, you will be dry one day in hell. D.L. Mooney said that there was a day the Bible was the driest book in the world to me, and the next day it was totally different, it was a lie.

He said, but I know the difference. I was born of God, but first I had to surrender. And John MacArthur, who I disagree with and all that stuff, but he has a few things that make sense.

John MacArthur said it's not that the Bible suddenly, that you understand everything and you don't make any mistakes and that he begat, he begat, he begat, he begat is exciting. He said, but it's as if something has changed in your heart because God is in you and it starts to become food to your soul, and it becomes real to you. He doesn't change the meaning of scripture, but he takes what it means and it becomes part of your life.

The Bible has changed. And we read this in 2 Corinthians chapter 3 because the Jews would have a veil on their heart before they know God, and they can't see Jesus, but when it shall turn to the Lord, when you get saved, guess what the Bible says, the veil is taken off. We all behold it as a glass image of the Lord, a change into the same image from glory unto glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord, but when did that start? When you turn to Jesus, when you got saved, the veil was taken off.

As you read the scriptures. Did that happen to you? You know my one friend, my one extended family, how many of you have grieved over family? I mean wept through the nights. It's funny and it's sad.

Mostly sad. But it's glorious when they get saved. I'll tell you what, my one extended family, I would drive with them in the car, play mini golf.

I'd try to do good stuff with them. I'm not going to give you the whole story because there's a lot of funny stuff of how he tried to get me to sin. But this was a very good sinner, even though he would go to parties and stuff, and he would be helpful to other people and giving and so on.

And he'd go to church, and he'd go to camps, and he had a day as a little something that he prayed and said, Jesus, please come into my life. But it was just not to go to hell. And so he would literally come to me and he'd say to me at the camp, I read the Bible this morning.

I never get anything out of the Bible. He thought it was the most normal thing on earth to say to anybody. He never had any love for Christians because they loved Jesus.

He'd never had that in his own heart. But he thought that was Christianity and that he'd said a prayer and that was it. And he liked to go to camps.

He liked to give stuff to people. He was a good giver. So I sat in the car and he said it's not wrong to go to parties as long as you don't get drunk and sleep around.

It's not wrong to swear because that actually means some other word. They've got another meaning for the word they're saying. It's not wrong to wear almost nothing at the beach.

I remember him asking me once, can we watch a movie together? So he said, we've got 15,000 illegal movies on this one thing. I said, okay, I'll watch with you. I'm Keith Daniels' son and I said that.

But I got some rules. No swearing. He said, well that brings it down to about 100.

I said, no woman that looked bad. He said, that brings it down to 10. And I went on down the list eventually there was only three left.

He took this one little thing and he showed me a horse that didn't even speak. Poor guy. So once I was driving in the car and I was with him and I said to him, what is a Christian? That's a good question to ask a sinner by the way who thinks he's saved.

He was clever. He looked at me and said, you tell me. And that's something I love hearing that.

I said to him, I told him his life. I said, you know, there's a lot of people and they come to God for the wrong reason either out of to be like their friends, which they want to fill the empty space in their heart that's missing something like the false gospel says or because they don't want to go to hell only not because they realize that they're like that sheep that's gone astray. And they need to come back to the shepherd

and bishop of their souls and surrender to him and be changed through Jesus.

And I said, then there's no fruit. And I went through the list. I mentioned everything in his life.

I said, you know, the Bible's a dry book, etc, etc, etc. He looked at me. He kept silence the whole time.

At the end of that conversation he said, it's going to be a good game of mini golf. He really did a good job of acting there. Because I honestly thought this is just one of those seeds on the dry ground.

It was the next day one of my other family members phoned me. Roy! Yes? I am so angry with you. You must never, ever speak to, and he named the person ever again, about the Lord.

You made him so afraid. I'm like, serious? This is awesome. It was a short time after that.

He was in one of my dad's meetings. He came to a camp again. He wept at the front as he met with God through Jesus Christ.

But he didn't only have to hear that you have to say a prayer to get saved. He had to hear the mountains that were keeping him back from realizing that his sin was covered. That he needed to be uncovered.

He needed to meet God through Jesus Christ. And that's what I'd like to quickly look at as we get towards the end here. Proverbs 28 verse 13.

Oops. I went over my time. Proverbs 28 verse 13.

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso forsaketh, confesseth, and forsaketh them shall have mercy. Now you can cover your sins. Some people think this verse is just saying you cover your sins by not talking about them.

By doing them in the dark. Now that is covering your sins. Because you don't tell your pastor.

You don't tell your friends. You actually would tell you it's wrong. But you can cover your sins by putting good works on top of it.

By putting a whole lot of stuff on top of it. Even experiences. You'll come to people and they say, I'm a sinner.

I deserve hell, but I know I'm going to heaven because I spoke in tongues. Something like that. Or an amazing piece.

And they've covered their sins. But there's no true fruit according to the Bible. And you'll see the first person to cover their sins was Adam.

And we read this in Job 31 verse 33. He said, If I have covered my transgressions as Adam by hiding my iniquity in my bosom. Now there were a few things that came out of sin.

When Adam sinned in one moment he was cut off from God. In one moment he became dead spiritually when he sinned. In one moment there was a light that was turned off in his heart and he didn't any longer know God.

In one moment he became selfish. It was a living death of, it wasn't just death it was a selfish death that cared for itself. And every one of us is born with that pride.

And not only that, it's like a dead body on a beach. Now if you're at a soccer field out there, you can kick a ball physically if you're unsaved and you can run up and down and you can tell jokes, but spiritually you're dead. You cannot see God.

Now like what Gabriel said, the only way you're ever going to see God is when God starts to awaken you through his Holy Spirit. He came to convict a sin of righteousness and judgment through his word. So one of the consequences of Adam's sin was he became selfish and dead.

But not only that he hid himself. He went to the trees and hid himself. That's very clever.

And he took fig leaves and he hid himself. That would have been very interesting to see. And he started to blame others.

He blamed a woman and he blamed God. He said, the woman that thou has given me. And Eve blamed the snake.

Blamed Satan. Let me tell you something that's very important. Love is good.

There's a world full of hate out there. But love can send people to hell. Love can send people to hell.

Never sympathize with the sinner more than you sympathize with God. If they've been molested, if they've had their stuff stolen from them, if their parents beat them up, pity them for that. But don't let it excuse what they're doing themselves.

You're playing around with Adam and your love will send them to hell. How can you cover stuff? Well you can cover your stuff with good works, saying I believe in God. Good works won't save me.

You said a prayer. You've got no repentance. You've got experiences after that or you've got works after that but there's no fruit.

And all these things these works, these experiences that you've had, answers to prayer, you name it, they cover more and more the sin and who you are. And so you don't think you need Jesus. And you're not going to prosper.

Matthew 3 verse 12 says, His fan is in his hand, this is John the Baptist speaking, he shall thoroughly purge his floor, he shall gather his wheat into the garner, but he shall burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. My best friend from junior school, while you sit in these chairs, is in hell right now. Right now he's longing to sit in one of these stools.

Right now he's longing to hear a message like this, preparing the way of the Lord. You know what, I wasn't saved back then but I knew a lot about the Bible. I never talked to him about Jesus.

One of the things I always think is, I cannot speak to him again. It will never be another chance that I get to speak to that guy before he committed suicide and went to hell for eternity. But I can speak to you.

There's a reason John the Baptist was wearing old clothes. There's a reason that he wasn't trying to make a lot of money and he was actually out there preaching to people because he wanted people to know he's

Jesus that was coming. And yet this is the beauty of it.

It was not about John. In Luke chapter 3 verse 15 and 16 and Mark chapter 1 verse 7 and John chapter 1 verse 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 you'll see that they would ask him and wonder who he was. Whether he was the Christ whether he was a prophet.

And he said out there are the Elias, etc, etc. Are you the prophet? And he said no. No.

I'm not the Christ. It's not about me. There's someone else coming who's mightier than I. You see, the reason I want to bring these mountains down as God prophesied.

The reason I want to bring these valleys up is not so you can have an open field to see me more. I want you to see someone else. I want you to know someone else.

I want you to have a relationship with someone else. I want you to know Jesus. Paul had this problem in the Corinthian church.

Some say I'm a propolis, some say I'm a Paul. You've got a problem. It's not about me.

It's not about me setting up a ministry. You know how many times churches have split and then young people would go into the world and they had nice clothes dressed, they sang hymns. I was thinking down there when we were singing hymns, how many people that looked just like the people sitting there when there was a church split in different places that was really bad, they would go into the world.

Not saying anybody there would do that. I would never have known it though. And I sat down with these people and of them in many different countries of the world, they'll say to me my pastor, my dad, other Christians sinned.

That's why I'm doing this. And I have one question for them because I sympathize with God before I sympathize. Man, I say I'm sorry for what you've been through but I want to ask you something.

When you so-called started following Jesus, did you follow him or did you follow your pastor or the person next to you? And we all need each other, I get that, but the foundation, the actual foundation and was it him? Do you follow your pastor first, your dad first and then Jesus? And only if your dad is still following Jesus then you're a good Christian. Or did you follow Jesus? Did you just take another box and add it to your dad and your pastor and your church? Or did you say I'm following Jesus? I'm following this one. No matter what the world does, no matter what the church does, I'm following Jesus.

And so when that plane was made, when the mountains were down, when the valleys were raised, when the rough places were taken away, we read in Isaiah 40 verse 5, we read in Luke chapter 3 verse 6, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see together for the mouth of the Lord is spoken, all flesh shall see the salvation of God. And so in John 1 verse 29 I'd like us to open up an ending to John chapter 1. The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him and saith, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. You know I cried this morning reading again a little further because in John 1 verse 35 36 and 37 it says, and the next day after John stood and two of his disciples, yes two disciples of John and looking upon Jesus as he walked he said, Behold the Lamb of God, not behold John and then the Lamb of God, look that guy.

You know what's so beautiful? They left John. So sad when discipleship you know people can be with you your entire life and you're a disciple until they're dead and that's great. It's right.

It's good to disciple people but the more they get reliant on you and less on Jesus the more it's not discipleship. Now of course people can go to other people if you don't disciple them and get disciplined by bad guys but there's a balance there but ultimately you want them to leave you and follow Jesus. That's what discipleship is all about.

It's not about you. John 1 verse 29 I've read that but this is so beautiful. When they followed Jesus guess who they were? One of them was Simon Peter's brother, Andrew.

Isn't that amazing? One of the 12 apostles used to be a follower of John. Did you know that? Wow, you guys are good. You guys are brilliant.

But I cried this morning because I thought that's absolutely amazing and wonderful. It's just too good to be true. Actually it is true.

It just is. The Bible is just true. That's how it works.

Spurgeon Spurgeon came on a conviction, wanted to get saved. For 10 years he started to cover his sin with things that kept him from seeing Jesus. For 10 years he tried to keep the law and one day there was a preacher as God had prepared his heart Obviously you know the story.

He was in a storm. He came into a church. He stood there and the lay preacher Wesleyan lay preacher preached that he was to look upon me or the ends of the earth and be saved.

And he says anybody can look. You can be a little child to look. You can be intellectual to look.

You can be stupid and look. Anybody can look. All you have to do is look and get saved.

And he'd been keeping the law and that had to be taken away that mountain so that he could see Jesus. My one friend in South Africa he was an atheist and not only an atheist with his horrible parents but he was in the New Age movement and he was on drugs. And then one day he read in the Psalms that Jesus would die and he saw all these different things about Jesus death and what Jesus was saying.

He realized thousands of years before Jesus came it talked of Jesus and he said this book must be true. And so something was awakened in his heart but then he started to cover his sin because he started to keep the Old Testament fasting days and he used to keep the Old Testament feast. And he did a whole lot of things like that and eventually he came to a little Bible study and in this Bible study he was sitting there and one of my other friends was opposite him and holding this Bible study and he said you can keep the Old Testament law if you really want to that's interesting but you have to come to the point where you stand still and see the salvation of God and just let him do it.

And at that moment he got saved. At that moment that law and all these things these mountains were taken away and he could see Jesus the one who did it all. And I end off with Hebrews 4 verse 13.

Neither is there any creature that is manifest in his sight but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. That is how you have to come to God. You know when I got saved and different people get saved with amazing feelings and some get saved without amazing feelings and some get saved with the perfect words and some people in the Bible come to Jesus with no words and they

weep at his feet and they get saved.

You get saved in different ways but always through Jesus and always coming as a sinner. One thing I can tell you is I through my life I've been covering my sin in these mountains it appeared because I'd prayed to accept Jesus a little child. Since then prayers have been answered at times.

I'd handed out tracts I'd through the nights I'd organize prayer meetings we'd listen to Otto Koenig and the Pinnacle story through the night and prayed. That's a very good combination. I witnessed I preached but I was not saved.

There came a day after three days of seeking God and the Holy Spirit did something very beautiful He took away the mountains He took and raised the valleys. I stood before God as a sinner. I didn't have that day and those boxes I'd tick when I prayed and said Jesus Christ come into my life.

I didn't have the nights of prayer I didn't have anything that I ever did I didn't have any hope in myself there was no way to turn. I'd swallowed my pride for the first time. God allowed that.

And with nothing to cling to nothing but my sin the only place I could turn to was Jesus and I could see Him. What I mean by seeing Him is there was no strange experience but there was just this. It was so simple.

He was there and I got saved. Let's pray. Father I just pray for every person sitting here.

There are so many who are going to hear on that day according to Matthew chapter 7. Lord, Lord have we not in thy name done these things. And they're going to be told they still work as an iniquity. You're still going your own way.

There was power in your life. There was things that happened but it was covering who you really were. There was these massive layers and coverings and underneath it you couldn't see a heart that did not love God.

You could not see the fruit that was not in your life. You could not see the fact that you did not know Jesus. And you heard it on the judgment day.

To part from me I never knew you. Father thou knowest the men that I prayed with across this world who said that was me. And God I just want to ask that there's people sitting here who need those mountains to be brought low.

Who need the valleys to be raised and the rough places removed so they can see Jesus God that you'll do that. And not only that dear Father that you'll help us to realize that when we witness to people that all of them need the same gospel but different people have different lies which keep them from the same truth. And different people have different sins that are the expression of their iniquity that show that they're the sheep that's going astray.

And they have to be willing at least to give it up but realize that doesn't save me. I need Jesus to change my heart and forgive my sins. And I pray this all that you'll work in the hearts of people that need it.

Christians and unsaved alike in Jesus Christ's name my Lord and my Savior. Amen.

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