

God's Love and His Vengeance

by Steve Clark

God's love for us is demonstrated through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who died on the cross to pay the debt we owe for our sins.

Duration: 1:20:59

Scripture: Isaiah 61:1-2, Matthew 6:33, Luke 4:18, John 3:16, Romans 5:8, Hebrews 10:30

Topics: "Gods Love", "Divine Judgment"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of choosing life and not rejecting God's love. He warns that those who reject God's love will experience His vengeance and suffer the wrath of God. The preacher urges the audience to be ready to fall into the hands of the living God and highlights the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who died for sinners. He emphasizes the need to turn away from evil and come to the light of Jesus, keeping His commandments and living a life that is pleasing to God.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Well, good evening, everyone.

It's good to be here tonight. My text tonight is on the board. I think it's probably pretty familiar to everyone.

Why don't we stand and we can say it together and then we'll pray. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. Let's pray.

Father in heaven, we come to you this evening. We look to you, dear God, for help tonight. Father, as we preach your word, as I endeavor to share the things that you've shared with me, Father, I pray that you would speak to hearts here tonight, that you would work in the hearts of those who are not right with you.

Lord, that you would work in the hearts of those who are excusing sin in their life. Lord, I pray that you would work in the hearts of each one of us, Lord, that you would speak to us tonight. We just look to you, Father.

Lord, I trust you and praise you. I thank you for your word. I thank you for each one here.

Lord, I don't believe it's an accident that we're here tonight, that you've ordained it. And we just ask your blessing. We ask for your grace and for your help.

We thank you, Lord, for your love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

All right, well, you can be seated. Well, we're going to talk about this verse that's behind me here. It starts off and says, For God.

And this God we're talking about, he's an all-knowing God. He's a God that is all-powerful. He's the one that created the heavens and the earth, all of the stars, all of the sea, all of the galaxies.

He's infinite. He didn't have a beginning and he has no end. This God that we're talking about tonight, he's all-knowing.

He's loving and merciful and gracious. This God we're talking about is also holy. And because of his holiness, he's a God of judgment.

He brings judgment to the world. And there will be a day of final judgment to the world. And because of his holiness, his love is not always satisfied or it won't be satisfied in the end of times.

His holiness will be satisfied, but his love won't be satisfied. It will only be satisfied in those believers who have put their faith and trust in him. In those believers, we have God's love satisfied and also God's holiness satisfied.

But it's not because of us, it's because of Jesus Christ. And it's because of our faith in him and our living for the Lord Jesus. So this is the God we're talking about.

He's also a triune God, which I'm not really sure. I can't give any good examples. We've heard a few, I'm sure all of us have.

But I just believe that it's very clear in the Bible that God tells us that there's three distinct personalities that are all totally in unity with one another. And that we know them as the Father and the Son, which is the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. So this God that I'm talking about tonight is a triune God.

He's a very awesome God and he's a wonderful and marvelous God. We heard about the way that he answers prayer this morning. We heard about the fear of God today.

God is a gracious God. And he says here, it says, For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. Think about this with me.

God, who is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, they agreed together sometime in ages past, they agreed together, to send one of the Trinity to this earth, the Son, the Lord Jesus. And His mission was to come and to give His life, to die for sinners like you and I. Because it was the only way that we could possibly be saved. There was no other way that we could be saved except through His gift to us.

Because the Bible says that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins. And if I tried to give my life for you, it wouldn't do you any good, because my blood is contaminated with sin. And if you also tried to give your life for me, it wouldn't do any good.

But Jesus Christ was sinless. He lived a life here without sin. And His blood was pure.

And it was the only thing that could save us from our sin was His sacrifice to us. So in the ages past, God the Father and Son and the Holy Spirit, they agreed together to send Jesus Christ to redeem mankind, to bring them to a place because of our sin, because of the fall of man, and to bring us to a place of reconciliation and being in right standing with God. The Bible says, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

And it also says, for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. So when we're sinning, we're earning wages. And those wages that are paid to us, if we continue going our own way, if we continue living our own life and not turning our life over to the Lord Jesus Christ, those wages that we earn are eternal death, eternal punishment, eternal damnation, without any hope ever of being freed from that.

This is the time that we have to make the choice whether we're going to choose to serve the Lord Jesus Christ and accept that gift that was given, or this life that we live, or we will face that eternal punishment. And it almost seems unfair in a way that, you know, for our lies and for our sin, or for our lies and for our whatever sin it may be, that we would face eternal punishment. But the more I thought about it, it's not just those lies and those things.

The main thing it is, is rejecting the gift that was given to us in the Lord Jesus Christ. If someone did something very gracious to you, and what you did to him instead of blessing him or helping him, if what you did to him was slap him in the face and not appreciate the gift that he gave you or the thing that he did for you, I mean, that's a pretty wicked thing to do. And that's what we have done when Jesus Christ came to this earth and when we just go our own way and live our own life and live for ourselves and live in our sin and love the pleasures of sin, it's like we're slapping the Lord Jesus Christ in the face and saying, I don't like your gift, I don't want your gift.

And that's what the world is doing to the Lord Jesus Christ. And so, I believe that's the main thing, that's the main reason why we would have to suffer an eternal damnation in hell for all eternity, is because of what Jesus did in rejecting that gift that was given to us. Now, Jesus, it says that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son.

And when he came the first time, it was joy to the world, the Lord is come. And it was away in a manger, no crib for a bed. And it was hark the herald angels sing, glory to the newborn King.

That was his first coming. His first coming, he was coming as this precious gift to this earth. That was Jesus' first coming.

And when he came the first time, the God of all creation, the one who made the earth and all the things that we talked about, he came down, came down to this earth as a baby, born of a virgin. And he worked in a carpenter shop, he was raised in a home that was less than perfect. He started his ministry at the age of 30 years old, and he chose 12 disciples who were just like you and I, they were sinners.

And he worked with them, and he taught them, and he had patience with them, and showed them his great love. He was rejected by his brothers, he was hated by some people, he was called a devil. There was a time when he went to a town, a country of the Gadareans, and he delivered a demonic man from his demons, who was a terror to the whole region around, this demonic man, he delivered him.

And the people said, get out of here, we don't want you here. And so he got in his boat, got in a boat or ship or whatever, and left. He was hated by some people.

He was a very good man, he was very good to people. He only did good to people, but then people became jealous of him, some became jealous. People tried to kill him.

And his followers, some of them were following him because he would feed them sometimes, they were looking for food. Sometimes his followers followed him because of the miracles that he did, and because of the healings that he did. Some of the followers followed him because they thought he was going to set up some earthly kingdom, and that maybe they could be the greatest in that kingdom.

His ministering years were very taxing, and he didn't get a lot of sleep at night. The Bible says he had no place for his head, and didn't have a home to stay in. At least a regular one.

He was lied about, he was accused of evil things that he never did. And he was finally arrested and betrayed. Betrayed by a friend.

And Jesus said, Friend, betrayest thou me with a kiss? Jesus wasn't a man to put something on, he wasn't somebody who just said nice things to people because he wanted them to think something nice of him, or something like a lot of us would do. When he called him friend, he meant it. This was his friend.

Even though he was betraying him. Betrayed him for 30 pieces of silver. He was spit upon.

He was stripped. He was beaten. He had a mock trial and he was condemned to die.

And the death that he was condemned to die was the most shameful and the most painful death that could possibly be given. And at that time anyway, he was sold or condemned by the, or it was his own people that demanded that he be crucified. His own Jewish nation, the ones that he came for, at least came for it the first to give them a chance to come back to God and be right with God.

His most outspoken disciple cursed and even said, I never knew the man, I don't know the man. The criminals next to him as he was hung on that shameful hunk of wood. The criminals next to him mocked him and the soldiers parted his garments and gambled for them.

And as Jesus was hanging there and agonizing pain, not for his own sins, he only came to do good. He only was here to, was blessing people and helping people. But more than just the physical pain, and I have talked about some of the other emotional pains, I'm sure that went along with being rejected and forsaken by friends and family and things.

But not only just the physical pain, the Bible says that Jesus was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Now, we could go all night here and just talk about the sins of mankind. But all of those sins were laid upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

And I don't quite understand it, but I believe what the Bible says, that they were all laid upon the Lord Jesus Christ. If you think about the cannibals that have ever lived on this earth, all of their sins, being

cannibals, were laid upon the Lord Jesus. All of the war crimes that were ever committed in the world, Hitler and Nero and who knows all the war crimes, all the injustice to mankind, they were all laid on the Lord Jesus Christ as He was hanging there on the cross.

He bore their sins. All of the sexual sins that were ever committed in this world. And there's a number of different aspects of that.

All the lies, all the pornography, all of the hatred, all of the anger, all of that laid on the Lord Jesus Christ as He's hanging there on the cross. Not for His own sins, but for yours and mine. And for the whole world.

All of my sins and all of your sins, all of our lies. Take it out of the realm of the Hitlers and the Neros, but all of your sins and all of my sins. And all of your lies and all of your rebellion and disobedience and anger and unbelief.

All of those things laid upon the Lord Jesus Christ. And He was hanging there, agonizing on that shameful cross. Jesus, the sinless Son of God, coming down and down and down, becoming man and then dying on a shameful cross.

The God of the universe. He didn't have to do it. The Bible says He could have called 10,000 angels.

10,000 legions of angels, if there were that many, He could have called. But He chose to die on the cross for your sins and for mine. Because He loved us.

And it was not that we were lovely. I mean, I've just talked about it. I've talked about the sin.

It's not that we were lovely, that He came and died. But it was because He loved us. Well, besides the physical pain and all the sins being laid upon Him, there was something even more devastating to the Son of God than that.

And that was being forsaken by the other two parts of the Trinity. These that have been together for all eternity. And again, I don't understand it, but Jesus cried out and He said on the cross, Father, why hast thou forsaken me? And at that time He was, because of our sins, He was forsaken by the other two parts of the Trinity.

Well, I can't do justice to describing the suffering and the shame. I can't describe the magnitude of it all, the shame of it, hanging on that cross for your sins and my sins, for our salvation. But Jesus' first coming, He came to this earth and He came to suffer and die.

He chose to die and He did it all willingly for you and I. For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of God. The joy that was set before Him, it certainly wasn't the cross, it certainly wasn't the shame, it certainly wasn't the pain or the being separated from the Father and the Holy Spirit. But the joy that was set before Him is the believers, those who put their trust in Him, those that received the gift of life.

That's the joy that was set before Him. And He was willing to endure the cross for that, for you and I, because He loves us. He went to the cross because He loves all the saints in this room.

And He went to the cross for all those who have not made Him Lord and Saviour of your life. And He went to the cross for all those who are listening to this message or who will listen to it. Jesus Christ loves us for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.

Well, if the Virgin Mary tried to die for your sins, it also wouldn't work. Buddha, if He tried to die for your sins, it wouldn't work. Muhammad, the other religious leaders, the disciple named Peter, Saint Peter some call him, if He tried to die for your sins, it wouldn't be any good.

Only Jesus Christ, only His blood. And I don't know everyone in this room, but I know one thing, that we're all sinners. And the Bible says that all of sin comes short of the glory of God.

He paid a debt that He did not owe, and I owed a debt that I could never pay. That's why the way to the Father is so narrow, like it talks about in Matthew chapter 7. The way to the Father is so narrow, it's only through the blood of Jesus Christ. I've talked to many people, I'm sure you have too, that they think they're going to get to heaven because they've done more good things than bad things.

It's not going to work. I've talked to people that think they're going to heaven because they're not so bad. They're not as bad as some other people.

It's not going to work. Even going to church or paying, giving money in the offering, it's not going to work. It's only through the blood of Jesus Christ.

It's only through that sinless life that was given, shedding His life for our sins. I talked to some people even last Wednesday, they were saying, well, I believe this, I believe that we'll all come back in a different form someday, just reincarnation or something. You know, people can believe all kinds of things, but it doesn't matter what people believe.

It's what the word of God says. Even in this world that we live in right now, there's so many people that just think they can go to church on Sunday, read their Bible or even just say a prayer, Lord Jesus, come into my life, I give my life to you, I accept your gift. And they say a prayer like that, but then they go on and they just live their life for the world.

That's not the Christianity that the Bible talks about. It talks about, in this verse it says, for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth. That's the condition there, it's whosoever believeth.

It's not, like I said, by our works or any of these things, but it's whosoever believeth. Our part to do is our faith. Do you believe that Jesus Christ paid the price for your sins? Do you believe that you deserve to die and go to that eternal hell because of your sins? Or maybe you don't see yourself as such a bad sinner.

Well, you know, Jesus thought that you were a bad enough sinner. He thought your sins were bad enough to die on the cross and to suffer all that pain and shame and agony and torture. He thought your sins were bad enough.

Maybe you don't, but He does. The Father thought they were bad enough. The Holy Spirit thought that they were bad enough to send the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth.

And here we say, oh, we're not such a bad person. I haven't done that many bad things. I've been raised in a Christian home.

I'm not such a bad person. Well, Jesus Christ thought that you were a bad person. Otherwise, you wouldn't have come.

Well, it doesn't matter who you are. It doesn't matter what color skin you have or how much education you have or how much money you have, whether you're poor or rich. That doesn't matter.

It doesn't matter how many good deeds you've done or how many bad deeds you've done. It doesn't matter if you're male or female. It doesn't matter what religion you are, what church you go to.

It doesn't matter how much money you give. What matters is do you believe? Do you believe these things? Do you believe Jesus Christ paid the price for your sins? And do you believe it enough to give your life to him? Because faith, just believing in your head doesn't do it. I can believe that President Lincoln lived on this earth, you know, how many ever 100 years ago or however long it was.

I can believe that he lived on this earth and I can read a lot of things about him. I can know the way he was born in a house. I can know where he lived.

I can even go and see some of his houses maybe that he lived in. And I can go to the museum and see what kind of hat he wore and what kind of pipe he smoked or whatever it might be. I can see these things about, I can believe these things about him.

But that kind of belief is just a head knowledge. I don't know the man. If I was his son, I would know him.

If I was his wife, I would know who he was. I would know all about him. And it's the same way we can believe a few things about God.

We can have even an understanding of the Bible. But unless we believe to the place that we know him and we follow him, it's not true faith. Faith has results.

It has actions that follow. That's what true faith does. And I'll have a beautiful example of this later.

We're going to look at this. So the faith, the kind of faith that saves us is the kind of faith that isn't just a head knowledge, but it will give us a different direction, a different course in our life. If it doesn't change our life, it's not really true faith.

If it's not making a change, an outward change in our life, it's not really true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, as a baby or as a baby in the Lord, as a Christian, you know, we want to give all kinds of grace and things to people. But there should be a change and there should be some progress there.

And we shouldn't stay in a baby state. So actions follow what we really believe. If I say I believe God's word and believe in him, I will obey him and pursue a personal relationship with him.

That's the bottom line. Whosoever believes in him should not perish. Well, the word perish, it's not just talking about death because we're all going to die.

So it's not whosoever believes in him will not die. We're all going to die unless the Lord comes back and we're part of those that get raptured. But perish is talking about something more than that.

It's talking about dying and being judged of our sins, being punished by this holy God that I talked about, that his holiness has to be satisfied in the end times. I mean, right now he puts up with a lot of sin. And his holiness, I don't really see that it's even satisfied at this time.

But there is going to be a time in the final judgment where his holiness will be completely satisfied. And also his love will be completely satisfied in the believer, like I said. So this word perish is talking about dying and going to hell and suffering for all eternity for my own sin.

Paying the price for my sin, suffering for all eternity. And going to hell and suffering for all eternity, receiving the wages due to me for my sin. Jesus' first coming was angels singing, excuse me, and shepherds going to see the newborn baby.

But a second or another one of his comings anyway, it's going to be different than that. Let me, let's, you can turn to it. Second Thessalonians, chapter two, and it says in verse seven, it says, And to you who are troubled, rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.

There they are. The angels are coming in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. So this coming that he, when he comes again, this coming is going to be in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So if you're here today and you're not obeying the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and this coming takes place, you're going to be ending up in this, this eternal, it says, this, the vengeance will be poured out and it will be punishment with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord. This is the way he's coming back. One of my favorite passages of prophecy is actually two.

It's in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Let's turn to Isaiah 61, Isaiah 61, and I'll read the first couple of verses here. It says, the spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek.

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourn. This was a prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was a prophecy of his coming.

But let's turn over to Luke chapter four, Luke chapter four, verses 18 through 21. It says the spirit of the Lord, this is Jesus Christ. He comes into the synagogue, the man in charge, the priest or whoever it was, the man in charge.

He hands the book to the Lord Jesus, which was the book of Isaiah. And it's he turns to it or Jesus turns to it. I'm not really sure here, but he opens up to the place right here where we're reading in 61.

And I don't know if the the chapters were in at that time. I don't know. But it doesn't matter.

Verse 18, it says the spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book right there.

He closed the book. Well, he closed the book right in the middle of a sentence because the next words that we read here are the words that it says. And the day of vengeance of our God, he closed the book before he read that, because his first coming was a coming of love.

And it was a coming of mercy. And it was a coming of grace. And it was a coming of salvation for all of us sinners.

That was his first coming. And and he was here. It was the beginning of his ministry.

And he was here and he was preaching or he was he was in the synagogue and he was reading and he read these lines and he closed the book before he said. And the vengeance of our God, because that is part of his coming. But it's not the same coming that was talked about here in in his first coming.

That part he talked about was that part he left out was the day of vengeance of our God. And that coming isn't going to be joy to the world. The Lord has come.

It'll be joy to the Christian if it's the same time as the rapture and all that. I'm not real good at all figuring all these things out. I don't know when when everything's going to take place.

Maybe you have it all figured out better than I do. I don't know. But this coming, at least that I'm reading about now, is is not going to be joy to the world, to the world.

Anyway, it's not going to be joy. It's going to be rocks and mountains fall on us, hide us from the presence of this angry God, because God is that he can be an angry God. He is a loving God.

But because of his holiness, he has to be a God of judgment. And he's going to pour out his wrath upon us, upon this world. And and if you don't believe it, all you have to do is read your Bible.

It's in the Old Testament. It's in the New Testament. So there will be angels, but it won't be the angels singing.

Hark the herald angels sing. So when he's coming back, he's coming as a judge. He's coming back to take vengeance on the unbelievers.

He's coming in power with fiery eyes, in flaming fire, not as a helpless baby, but as the all powerful God of the universe that I talked about. This all powerful God that that is more brilliant than any computer or whatever. I mean, I know computer isn't brilliant in in itself, but, you know, we we take a lot of stock in computers.

They can do so many things. He is so far beyond that. This is the God.

He knows everything about you. He knows all of your hidden thoughts, all of your all of the things that you hide from everybody else. He knows all of those things.

He knows you young people. Maybe you look good on the outside, but maybe you're dead man's bones on the inside. He knows all of you.

He knows all of us. And that's who we're going to come to. It's not in the day of judgment.

That's who who he's coming back in vengeance upon. And it won't be this helpless little baby. If you're still living in your sins, when Jesus comes in flaming fire, your time of grace and mercy will be over.

Are you ready for his coming? Are you ready? Maybe. Maybe you die before he comes. Probably most of us will.

I don't know. Maybe he'll come soon. I don't know.

But maybe we die before before he comes. But it doesn't matter. We're not going to find that baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger when we when we come, when we get to heaven.

If there's sin in your life, if there's sin in my life, if we haven't sold out to the Lord Jesus Christ, if we're making excuses for our sin, if we're covering them up and saying it's OK, if we're living for the world and living for the flesh and all of these things. I'm sorry, it's going to be vengeance, vengeance of our God. And you know what? We're going to all stand alone.

You're not going to have your godly parents standing next to you and even saying a good word for you. No, won't be there. The Bible says in Ezekiel, it says about the day of judgment.

I'll just I'll read it. I have it typed out here, but it says, if I send a pestilence into the land and pour out my fury upon it in blood to cut off from it man and beast, this is judgment. God is pouring out his judgment upon the earth.

He says, though Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, were in this. World, as I live, sayeth the Lord, now what he's saying there, he says, I promise you, as I live, I promise you, he says, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter. They shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.

So son or daughter, you might have a godly parent or two, but you're not going to have a godly parent. It's not going to do you any good on the day of judgment if you haven't yielded your life to the Lord Jesus Christ, because even if your father was Noah or Daniel or Job, and I could talk about each one of those and I don't have time. But if but think about these men, these were godly men, Noah, Daniel and Job, they were godly men.

You know, God, he doesn't have grandchildren. He only has sons and daughters. You can't get to heaven on the coattails of your parents.

He only has sons and daughters, no grandchildren. If you turn back to our text, John 3, verse 36, the last verse of that chapter, it says, He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. And he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

This is talking about the same thing, the vengeance, the wrath of God will abide on those who don't believe the Lord Jesus Christ, believe all the things that we've been talking about here. Do you believe that it talks about here in verse 17 of our text here, of our chapter that we're looking at. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

He that believeth on him is not condemned. Praise God. If you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you're not condemned.

And it's not just the head knowledge, remember, but it's if you believe and your life proves it by the way you live. If you believe, and I'm not saying that you have to do all these works to be saved. It's not that.

It's true faith has works that follow it. It's not putting the works first and then and then we're saved. But it's true faith has, if we really believe, true faith or true, yes, true faith that works will follow that.

So it says, he that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already. Why? Because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. Because he has not

received the gift that God gave to this world.

Because he wouldn't put his life into into his hands and say, Lord, I've made a mess of my life. I'm I'm a wicked sinner and I deserve to die. And Lord, I give you my life.

I sell out to you. Take it. And this is the condemnation.

And this is the condemnation, verse 19, that light is coming to the world and men love darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. That's the way we are. If we're not in Christ, we love the darkness.

We love our sin. We take pleasure in it. And it is pleasurable, some of it.

But you better forsake it because where it's where it's leading is to destruction and it's leading to the vengeance and the wrath of God. We don't know what that's like. We can read about it where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.

And we can we can think about the man in what is it? Luke chapter 16, the rich man and Lazarus and the rich man. And and that's a story I believe was a true story. And I believe that man is suffering in hell even today, still.

Two thousand years later after Jesus, after he told this story and he's still suffering. And you know what? Young people, this might be hard for you to understand, but two thousand years, he's only just begun his suffering. He's only just begun and there's no hope of ever being free of it at that time.

He said, oh, just give a little water to me to cool this flame. We don't know the wrath that's going to come. We don't know what God's fury is like.

I don't think we any of us can even grasp it. But I tell you, it's nothing that we want to experience. So we're reading here.

This is a condemnation that light is coming to the world and men love darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light. Well, Jesus is the light.

And that's what it is. If we do evil or we hate Jesus. Jesus said, if you love me, keep my commandment.

And then he says, twenty one, but he that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God. Do you love darkness? Do you love your sin? Do you love your own way? Do you love your own philosophy? Well, the wrath of God, as it talks about in verse thirty six there, the wrath of God abideth on on those who love those things unless you repent of them. And if you repent, you will perish.

So perish suffering in hell for all eternity with no hope of ever getting out. Is that the way you're going? God is holy and he has and he has to judge us of our sins. But praise God has already talked about.

He made a way he made a way. He provided a way through the Lord Jesus Christ. And you don't have to experience that wrath by believing.

That's all you have to do is believe. And if you truly believe, your life will show it. That's the gospel, the good news.

Well, I want us to look at, for a little while here, a story in the Old Testament, an example of both God's love and of His vengeance. And I know we all know the story, so it makes it really nice that I don't have to go through and describe it all. But it's the story of Noah.

Or sorry, the story of Jonah. Sorry. So you can turn to the book of Jonah.

As we know, chapter 1, Jonah is told to go to Nineveh, which was the capital city of... It was actually four cities combined. It was the capital and of the Assyrian nation. And they were a very wicked people.

And Jonah was told to go there and preach to them or give them a message from God. But instead, he found a ship. We all know the story.

He got on the ship. And the storm in chapter 1 is mostly talking about the storm. The storm rages.

The boat's tossed to and fro. The sailors don't know what to do. They throw the cargo over.

They cry out to their gods. And they find Jonah sleeping. They wake him up.

And somehow he explains to them that the reason why you're having this bad storm is because I'm in rebellion against God. And if you throw me overboard, you'll be safe. You'll be saved.

And they didn't want to do it. They tried to row harder and harder. But all their rowing was in vain.

It was all futile. So they finally throw him over. And immediately, the storm stopped.

The waves quieted down. Don't you think that made a pretty good impression upon those sailors there? I think it probably made a pretty good impression. In fact, it says here, verse 16, chapter 1, it says, And then the men, which are the sailors, feared the Lord exceedingly and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord and made vows.

So, Brother Kent here, it says that these men, these sailors, feared the Lord exceedingly. And they made vows and made a sacrifice. They did what they could possibly do.

That's what they knew to do. And that's what they did because they believed in this God, this God of Jonah. And chapter 2, the main part of that chapter is Jonah's prayer.

And it's a prayer of repentance. It's a prayer of dedication and getting right with God. And God provided, He spoke to this fish.

Okay, I guess I forgot to say that he was swallowed by a fish. We all know the story, right? So, and you know, even those sailors throwing him overboard, I mean, it's likely that they could have seen this whale, this fish. Because, you know, if it was a whale, I think it was a whale myself.

I know some people think it was, you know, maybe a fish because it says fish and a whale's a mammal. But I think it was a whale. But if it was a whale, you know, sailors know what whales look like.

And they have to come up out of the water. And they spew a stream of water up into the air and things. And so they know, they know these things.

And maybe they saw this. Maybe they didn't. I don't know.

But inside the belly of that whale, he was in there for three days and three nights, I assume. And he prays and repents. And then the Lord prepared or the Lord spoke to the fish, as it says in verse 10 there, and he vomited Jonah up onto the dry land.

And he said, well, now, looking in my Bible maps, Nineveh is nowhere close to the ocean, to the sea anywhere. It's like the closest was 350 miles. You know, if you can take your little your little chart there.

And that's what I did. And I took it and I figured it out about as close as I could from my Bible maps in it. And it's about 350 miles to the closest sea.

And just with a little conjecture on my part, but knowing human nature, that story would have gone far and wide by those sailors. Because, you know, people like to tell news. And if it's something this miraculous that the storm immediately stops when this man tells them that if you throw me over, it's going to stop because I'm in rebellion, because God told me to go to Nineveh and preach the gospel there.

Or preach, it wasn't the gospel. It was to preach damnation there, that in 40 days, that Nineveh would be completely destroyed. That the sailors would have known that and that news would have gone far and wide.

And to walk or however Noah or Jonah got there, 350 miles, however he got there, it's very likely that the news even reached Nineveh before he did. In my mind, it's very likely. We don't even know where the fish vomited them out on the ground.

It may have been 500 miles, I don't know. But it's very likely that news got there before Jonah. And Jonah comes into the city and he says, what he said here was, let's just read it here in chapter 3, verse 4. It says, And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried and said, Yet 40 days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

Well, it says here in verse 5 that the people of Nineveh believed God and proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest of them, and even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything, let them not feed nor drink water, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth and cry mightily unto God, yea, let them turn every one from his evil way and from the violence that is in their hands.

Who can tell if God will turn and repent and turn away from his fierce anger that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them, and he did it not. So, here is the good example that I was talking about, about faith that has works that follow. This is the example that I was thinking about, because look at what Nineveh did at that time.

They proclaimed a fast, the king threw off his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and ashes, he repented, he told nobody to drink or eat, he said, turn away from your violence, he said, pray and cry out to God. Now, that's a pretty good thing of repentance there that we see there. And that's the kind of saving faith that it takes for a person.

We don't just say, oh God, forgive me and come into my life and, you know, and then just live in our sins. But the kind of faith that saves us is the faith that works follow and change lives. These people's lives were

changed and God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way.

And God also will see your works when you turn from your evil way, because, and not only God, but your family will see your works, that you'll turn from your evil way. And your friends, wherever you have your friends, at church or at school, they'll see your works that you've turned from your evil way. On your job, wherever you are, they'll see your works.

And that's the kind of faith that works, because true faith works follow. Well, chapter four says, But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. And he prayed unto the Lord and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying when I was yet in my country? Therefore, I fled before unto Tarshish, for I knew that thou art a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

Therefore, now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live. Then said the Lord to Jonah, doest thou well to be angry? Well, I don't know. I mean, I have some ideas why Jonah wanted Nineveh to be destroyed, but I'm not going to give you my thoughts at this time.

I have a few different things, but it doesn't really matter. The fact is, because of time, the fact is that Jonah was angry with God for sparing Nineveh. I mean, it's very clear here.

He was angry with God for sparing Nineveh, for not destroying them. And that was even the reason why he disobeyed in the first place and got a ship to go to Tarshish. That was the reason, because he knew that God was gracious and that maybe God would spare their city and forgive them and all of that.

And so that's why he ran away and fled from the Lord. And now what I see here is Jonah has a strategy, and the strategy that he's using here is manipulation. And that's how I see it.

Maybe you disagree. I don't know. But I know like it happens sometimes.

I heard not too long ago of a husband and wife situation where the wife was going to leave the husband because of the abuse there in the home and all of that. And the husband said to the wife, if you leave, I'm going to kill myself. Manipulation.

Trying to manipulate somebody by, you know, saying something like this. And this is the same kind of thing I see that Jonah is trying to do to God, is manipulating. He says, if you don't destroy this city, you know, I would rather die.

I would just as soon die if you're not going to destroy the city. For some reason, he wanted that city to be destroyed. So he goes out of the city, and I assume it's towards the end of the 40 days.

And so let's say he goes out of the city on the 38th day. And it says that he builds a little shelter there. And he waits and sees what happens.

And then at nighttime, there was a gourd that grew up, which is a plant of some sorts, had nice leaves and covered the place. It was very hot there and it protected him from the heat. So this gourd grew up and covered him.

And then he was waiting there. This would be then the 39th day as this gourd is there. And I believe the gourd gave hope to Jonah because he probably felt like, oh, I'm a well-favored prophet.

God provided. I mean, it was a miracle that God provided this thing for him. And he knew it was a miracle.

And so he sees this gourd and he says, oh, God provided this. I'm a well-favored prophet. Maybe he is going to deliver or to destroy the Ninevites.

And so then he goes to bed that night, maybe with a lot of hope. And then the 40th day comes and God prepared a worm. And this worm destroyed the gourd.

It says in the morning and early in the morning when the sun came up. And God also prepared a scorching wind and a scorching heat to beat upon Jonah. And his hopes, I think, at that time were dashed.

And the thought of dying came back to him because it didn't look like God was going to destroy Nineveh. And so and then it gets to the last two verses and it it says, then said the Lord, thou has had pity on the gourd for the which thou has not labored. Neither made us to grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night.

And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left and also much cattle? Well, the gourd is God's object lesson to Jonah. It's God's object lesson of love. The gourd gave Jonah hope that his will, Jonah's will, would be done.

The gourd provided him shelter and relief. The gourd meant a lot to Jonah. And the gourd was also, I mean, it was in a sense like Jonah's friend and he felt sorry for it.

He felt sorry that the gourd grew up and overnight it was gone and made him angry. Even those wicked sinners of close to maybe a million people, I assume by what it says here about the right hand and the left, these were small children that didn't know the right hand from their left. And the gourd gave Jonah hope that his will, Jonah's will, would be done.

And you do the mathematics on it. It could be close to a million people in the city and lots of cattle. They were wicked sinners.

One place that I read about it, about Nineveh is that they would take captives and they would actually skin their captives alive to torture them. I could, you know, say other things that I read, but I'm not going to go into all of that. Gruesome things that these Ninevites are said to have done.

And a lot of it they get from their hieroglyphics, their pictures and things that they have, that they've uncovered and seen. So Nineveh was a wicked city. And there was a lot of people there.

They were feared by all of the world. But you know what? God so loved those wicked people that He gave them a prophet that whosoever would believe would not perish. And they did believe.

And so God spared them. This was God's act of love poured out upon these wicked people. They were, I mean, we can think that they were a lot wickeder than we are.

But it doesn't matter. We're, our sins are as much as theirs. So God so loved them that He sent this prophet.

Jesus said in Luke chapter 12, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign. And there shall no sign be given it but the sign of the prophet Jonas. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the

whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Consider this. Jonah was a type of Christ. It's very clear here.

Jonah was a type of Christ. Not in every aspect by no shadow of my imagination. He was by every aspect.

But he was a type of Christ. And Jonah was a prophet to Israel. And Israel was a wicked nation.

And they had not even one good king, one righteous king in all of their reign. The nation of Israel after the time of David and Solomon when the kingdoms divided. Israel was a wicked nation all along.

All of their kings, read about them. They're all wicked. All of them.

Judah had godly. Some of them were godly kings. But Israel had none.

They were, and they rejected their prophets. They rejected Jonah. And God told Jonah to go to the Gentiles.

And Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of a whale. His death and resurrection. And he goes to the Gentiles.

And they believe and they repent. And God spares them and saves them. Well, Jesus goes to the Jews.

And for the most part, the Jews rejected him. And they even had him crucified. And they said, let his blood be upon us.

And he dies. He's crucified. And he rises from the dead on the third day.

And after that, the message of the gospel goes forth to the Gentiles. And the church ages started. And the Gentiles believe in him.

In masses, they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. And they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. For God so loved the Gentiles, you and I, that he sent his only begotten son.

Nineveh didn't stay a righteous city and Assyria a righteous nation. They went back to their old ways and became even more corrupt than before. And I also see this as a type of the church age.

The dark ages. Constantine's time of making church and state. And the worship of Mary, indulgences, penance.

The Catholics and Protestants killing each other. And the Catholics and Protestants killing the Anabaptists. And also in our modern day things, where Christians do and excuse many things.

Professing to be a Christian, but Christian, but living for self and the world. Asking Jesus into your heart, but no repentance. And I see this as a type of the church age.

The Catholics and Protestants, women pastors, homosexual pastors. Pastors who aren't even saved. Worldly entertainment, TV and worldly music.

And all of these things. The idolatry of the sports thing that's so big in our land today. And even in all the world.

All these sports idols that people idolize and worship and spend so much time prostrate before. And they call themselves Christians. Even the Super Bowls played in churches on Super Bowl Sunday.

Wife swapping. Breaking marriage vows. Christians going to war.

All these things and many others in the name of Christianity. It's not the Christianity of the New Testament. It's not.

It's apostasy. It's turning away from the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ. The church is... The name church means called out ones.

It's called out from the world and called to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he's a new creature. Old things are passed away.

Behold, all things have become new. And all things are of God. That's what the Bible says there.

Most people skip that little part. They connect it with the next part, which is... I like to connect it with the first part. All things are of God.

If we're in Christ, if we're a new creature. Are all things of God for you, my friend? Well, let's see what happens to Nineveh. For God so loved Nineveh that he sent a prophet.

But if you turn over to two chapters, the book of Nahum. The book of Nahum is comprised of two main things. To pronounce divine vengeance upon the bloody city Nineveh.

And to comfort Judah with promises of a future deliverance. Nahum chapter 1 verse 2, it says, The book of Nineveh, or the burden of Nineveh, the book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite. God is jealous and the Lord revenges.

The Lord revenges and is furious. The Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries. And he reserveth wrath for his enemies.

This is the Gentile nation that repented at one time. Jonah came about 200 years later. Nahum came.

So it was during that time there that Assyria became wicked again. Assyria became even worse than they were in the first. And then 50 years after that, approximately about 250 years after the time of Jonah, that Nineveh was destroyed.

It says, verse 3, The Lord is slow to anger and great in power. And he will not at all acquit the wicked. The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm.

It says he won't acquit the wicked. He says he's not going to set free or pronounce not guilty to the wicked. He's not going to do that.

God is a just God. He's not going to do that. And it talks about the whirlwind, the storm, the clouds revoking the sea, and the rivers drying up, this judgment that is going to happen to Nineveh.

The mountains are quaking and the earth melting with the presence of the Lord. It says in verse 6, Who can stand before his indignation? And who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? His fury is poured out like fire and the rocks are thrown down by him. Who can stand? You can't stand, I can't stand, Nineveh can't stand.

No one can stand before the wrath and the vengeance of God. Verse 7 says, The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble. And he knoweth them that trust in him.

Praise God, he knoweth them that trust in him. Do you trust in him? Do you trust in him to the place where you have given your life to him? He knows it if you do. But if you don't, he also knows it.

He's not a God that can be mocked. But with an overrunning flood, he will make an utter end of the place thereof. And darkness shall pursue his enemies.

Well, I don't have time to read all this. Chapter 2, verse 13, Behold, I am against thee, saith the Lord of hosts. And I will burn her chariots in the smoke.

This is Nineveh, the once repented nation. But when they turned from their repentance, he poured out his vengeance. And the sword shall devour thy young lions.

And I will cut off thy prey from the earth. And the voice of the messenger shall no more be heard. Woe unto the bloody city! Woe unto the bloody city! Verse 4, Because of the multitude of thy whoredoms, of the well-favored harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.

That sounds like the United States of America to me, brothers and sisters. Because I am against thee. You know, the nation that sent more missionaries than any other nation probably, I don't know that for a fact, but this nation has sent many missionaries.

But look at what the internet. This nation is sending out the internet and all of this perverse, all of this pornography, all of this garbage and selling nations through her whoredoms and witchcrafts and all of these kind of things. I tell you, this sounds like America.

Behold, I am against thee, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will discover thy skirts upon the face and I will show thy nakedness in the kingdoms thy shame. Verse 6, chapter 3, And I will cast abominable filth upon thee and make thee vile and will set thee as a gazing-stock and it shall come to pass that all that look upon thee shall flee from thee and say, Nineveh is laid waste. Who will bemoan her? Whence shall I seek comforts for her? Well, that's the plight of Nineveh.

That's what happened to Nineveh. God promised to destroy it utterly. And you know, it was destroyed utterly.

Even right now, all they can find are these mounds all over the place. They don't... It was completely destroyed. All the people were destroyed from there.

That was the vengeance of God upon this wicked Nineveh. Well, that's what's going to happen to the apostate church. They will be judged with the world.

That's what's going to happen to the Christian who leaves the old paths and goes the way of the world. That's what's going to happen to you if you continue in your sin. The day of vengeance of our God.

All of your sins that are secret. All of your pet sins that you excuse. They're not so bad.

My sins aren't so bad. They're not hurting anybody. You can make excuse now, but if you do, it will be the vengeance of God being poured out upon you.

John says, in the book of 1 John, it says, if you continue in your sins, you're of the devil. That's Steve Clark paraphrased, but that's what it says. If you continue in your sins, you're of the devil.

Jesus came to save his people from their sins. Just have a couple more verses to read here in closing. Hebrews chapter 10.

A couple of verses here. Verse 26. For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.

But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sore punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who have trodden underfoot the son of God and have counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and have done despite under the spirit of his grace.

That's why I say it's not just because of your lies and of your anger and of your fornication or whatever sins you do. It's not just because of those. The main thing is because of rejecting the gift, the blood of Jesus Christ.

For we know verse 30, for we know him that has said vengeance belongeth unto me. I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge his people.

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Are you ready to fall into the hands of the living God? If you're not right with God, I would be shaking and fearful. Whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

One more short passage, Romans chapter 5. We heard it this morning from our family verses and songs. Part of it anyway. Verse 8, But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, much more than being now justified by his blood, not justified by your works or not justified because you're not so bad of a person, but justified by his blood.

We shall be saved from wrath through him, through Jesus Christ. Praise God! For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. You can be saved by his life.

You don't have to experience the wrath of God. You don't have to taste of that wrath. Praise God! Well, I just plead with you to consider these words.

Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Turn from your sins. Life and death are before you right now.

Choose life. If you're sitting in this room tonight or you're listening to this message, choose life. Please, choose life.

Why will you die? Why will you perish? Why will you suffer the wrath of God? Choose life. If you reject God's love, you will experience God's vengeance. If you reject his love, for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, you will receive his vengeance.

So, consider these words and we'll close with that. God bless you.

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