

Church People on Broadway

by Steve Gallagher

Steve Gallagher's sermon challenges listeners to recognize the dual nature of Jesus and the importance of choosing the narrow path of true faith amidst spiritual deception.

Duration: 49:19

Scripture: Matthew 7:13

Topics: "Broadway"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that true Christianity is characterized by the love of God flowing out of one's life and evidence of God's presence within. The sermon is a conclusion to the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus gives four short parables. The preacher describes two roads, the broad way and the narrow way, representing all of humanity. He also mentions a place for hypocrites and warns of a great collapse, referencing Matthew 24. The preacher shares a personal experience of hopelessness and invites listeners to come forward and seek the Lord if they need to get their lives back on track or if they are unsure of their conversion.

Transcript

The following sermon was presented by Steve Gallagher at Bethel Assembly of God in Littlestown, Pennsylvania. Steve will be teaching today through Matthew chapter 7, verses 13-27, and you may want to follow along in your own Bible as he will not be reading the scripture reference during this message. Feel free to make and distribute complimentary copies of this message to your friends.

Other resources are available by visiting our website at PureLifeMinistries.org or by calling 1-888-PURE-LIFE. ...to preach about Jesus because I love Him. He's my whole life.

And He's a wonderful Savior. He's a wonderful, a beautiful, beautiful, beautiful person. And I love to tell people about Him.

And that's what I had intended on doing this morning, but the Lord started dealing with me earlier this week and I didn't want to hear it. And I started praying, God, if you want me to share that message, then you're going to have to tell me. And last night, I mean, I wasn't thinking anything and the pastor just started telling me, you need to preach this word that's burning in you.

I just, how could I argue with it, you know? But we've created a Jesus that's very sweet and He is. He's so sweet and He's so humble. He's so full of love.

But there's another side to this Jesus that we have pushed aside and acted like isn't there. Because this is the one who has the eyes that burn like fire. And He is the Lion of Judah.

Whether we want to accept that or not, it doesn't change the reality of who He is. I'll never forget a story I heard a number of years ago. This young girl was working in the Cincinnati Zoo.

She was, I think, a college kid or something and I think she went and worked part-time there. And she was there for some amount of time and they gave her the job of feeding the big cats. And you get comfortable.

And you get to where you're getting used to being around whatever it is. And one day, she did it every day. Same thing every day.

And one day, she threw a chunk of meat in to the lion cage. And like that, in an instant, a lion seized her by the hand or arm and ripped her arm out of its socket, right out of her shoulder. Jesus is a very, very sweet person who has tremendous love.

But the thing with love is, if it's rejected, it brings forth the same level of wrath. And I never want to forget who this God is that I'm dealing with. And I never want to get so comfortable with Him that I'm feeling cocky in His presence.

And feeling like I can just have things the way I want them to be. He is the Lord. And I want to, I alluded to this message yesterday with the men.

About a month ago, I was asked to speak at a biblical counselor's conference in Denver. And they had asked me to speak on the subject of the narrow way. And so I really sought the Lord over that.

And spent a long time praying over it and fasting. And the Lord gave me a message. And it was a very difficult message.

It was called Churchgoers on Broadway. And I gave that message. And I alluded to it yesterday.

In fact, I touched on a couple of things yesterday from that message. And that was the message that I felt the Lord tugging on my heart earlier this week that I should bring to this church. So if you'll open up to Matthew 7, this is an exceedingly solemn subject.

And I want to say something else before I get started also. Pastor, you said something very profound last night. And I didn't say anything about it.

But I pondered it. And it was so true. And you're the first person I've ever heard vocalize it.

What he said to me last night is he said, when you're moving in the prophetic, you can hear the arguments of people. And I have experienced that so many times down through the years. And I had never heard anyone articulate what I have experienced.

And he said that last night. Wow, that was awesome. That was such a profound revelation.

And it's true. And that happened to me this morning when those words came forth. I know when I'm hearing from the Lord because it overcomes me.

And I know the fake. I've heard plenty of the fake. But I know when I hear the right thing.

And I never want to become so cynical that I can't hear the word of the Lord. And I heard the word of the Lord this morning come forth. But I also heard this in my spirit.

Whatever mister. Why can't those people just shut up? It's just like Peter said, there will be mockers in the last days. Well anyway, the context of these two verses, let's just read them.

Matthew 7, 13 and 14. Lord, I pray that you would bless your word today. Make it pierce hearts, God.

Let it bear fruit. Enter through the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction.

And there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life. And there are few who find it.

The context of this word is that there have been 91 statements leading up to this little parable story Jesus gives here. And it reaches a pinnacle in the verse preceding it. Chapter 7 verse 12.

In everything therefore treat people the same way you want them to treat you. For this is the law and the prophets. It's the same as what Jesus had said before in a different, or I mean in a different occasion when he said, love your neighbor as yourself.

And this entire sermon on the mount describes a lifestyle of someone who is truly living in the kingdom of God. And this is, wrap it all together. All of Christianity can be boiled down to this.

That the true love of God is flowing out of your life. And that there's evidence that God is dwelling within you. That the spirit of the living God is having his way in you, in your heart and flowing out of your heart to meet the needs of others.

To love other people. To care about others. And so Jesus brings the whole sermon on the mount to this climactic statement.

And then he gives four short little story parables as a conclusion. You can write after verse 12 in red letters in your Bible. Conclusion.

Just like in my last page of this little message here. I have conclusion written in red letters. Because now we're entering into the conclusion of this sermon on the mount.

This powerful word from heaven to man. A man who had become dead in religion. Outward religion.

And had lost the reality of God in their lives. And so Jesus paints here a picture. Two roads.

With two distinct groups marching along. Heading in opposite destinations. And I get the idea that this was a sight into the unseen spiritual realm that was never far from the Savior's mind.

These two groups trudging along. Going somewhere. And can I just say dear ones that Jesus says this is a narrow road.

Narrow does not mean broad. Narrow does not mean broad. And few does not mean many.

And so Jesus says as much as seeker sensitive preachers in this country want to throw open the gates of heaven to anyone who even shows the slightest inclination. These parables preclude that lie. The best picture I've ever seen of it is the Pilgrim's Progress.

A powerful analogy or parable that John Bunyan wrote. I think it was when he was sitting in prison for a number of years for preaching the gospel that he wrote it. But he wrote this parable story.

And you see the picture of it there because it's just every now and then a straggler on this narrow confined way comes straggling and fighting and scratching his way towards the kingdom of heaven. And in the meantime he's got this mass of people going the other direction. Well dear ones we all have a day we are moving towards.

You are moving towards a destination. You have an appointment. You have an appointment.

And every day you are moving towards that appointed time. And I said to the guys yesterday our timeline is just this tiny little line there and sits out in eternity and God sees the beginning. He sees the end.

He knows what's going on in your heart. He knows the reality. He knows what you profess but he knows the reality of what's inside you also and what you're doing from Monday to Saturday.

He knows what goes on in your life. He's watching this timeline unfold. But there will come a day when you will stand before God and give an accounting for your life just like I will.

Alright so he gives us this story this the broad way the narrow way and that encompasses all of mankind who has ever lived and ever will live. Everyone is on one of those two. And then he goes into three final little stories.

And these three final little stories he narrows the vision down to church going people. Because all three of these final stories have to do with people who call themselves Christians. No I'm not talking about people down at the Catholic Church.

I'm talking about evangelical people who name the name of Christ and who know all the vernacular. They know what Chuck Swindoll is all about. They know what Charles Stanley is all about.

Chuck Smith. They've read the books. They sit in church Bible preaching Bible believing church.

They're here in this room right now. And he talks about church goers. These three little stories.

I'm not going to read the first one. It's to do with false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly. It's the same thing.

We all have this image that we portray. One of the men yesterday came up to me. I can't remember exactly what he said.

But he said we have this image and this expectation and this thing that we put out there. It's so true. We put this image out when we come to church on Sunday.

This is what people expect of me when I'm sitting in this situation. In this group of people I'm expected to look this way so we know how to talk and we know how to act like Christians. We know all the Christianese things to say.

Hallelujah we're going to have church tonight. And all of that. And you know when the rich young ruler came to Jesus it said that Jesus loved him.

And I'm sure that this young man who came to him and fell down on his feet could feel that love. And we come into this place. We feel the presence of God.

And dear ones do not be deceived. Just because you feel the presence of God and just because he's trying to work in your life does not mean that you have been converted. It doesn't mean that you've been regenerated.

That the spirit of the living God is dwelling within you and driving and compelling your life. Because you can sit in this church, this godly church, Sunday after Sunday and be unsaved and one day stand before him utterly lost. Well anyway, the first group he showed was a group of young men.

The first group he shows us are false teachers. And the Bible is full of stories of false teachers. Go into the Old Testament and you'll see them all throughout the Old Testament times.

Micaiah when he stood before King Ahab and there was a whole group of false teachers telling him what he wanted to hear. And that's what false teachers always do. They always cater to the flesh.

It's the one thing they always have in common. All false teachers have that one thing in common. No matter what the lie is that they're perpetrating, one thing they have in common is they will tell you what you want to hear.

And so they did to Ahab. And he heard what he wanted to hear and he went right into his destruction because he would not humble himself before God. And so it was in Jeremiah's time when they would tell King Zedekiah what he wanted to hear.

It's always the same with false teachers. And like I said to the men yesterday, there's this narrow gate right here. And the false preacher you hear on the radio, he'll be there and he'll be telling you, you don't have to go through this narrow gate.

That's legalism. That's works. Well I'm not preaching legalism and I'm not preaching works.

But I'll tell you this, if you've been born again, if you have God dwelling within you, something's going to come out of your life. Something's going to be different. You're not going to look like just a sanitized version of the world.

You know, just go and give yourself over to everything the world does, but just don't cuss and drink. But that's what the false teachers will tell you. I wrote this book some time back, Intoxicated with Babylon.

We only have a few copies left I guess. You'll never hear me push any of my materials except this. And even then I rarely do, but I'll tell you about this book.

In 1993, I spent 1,200 hours studying through the book of Revelation and it completely changed my life. And it burned a message, the one that pastors talked about, into my soul. It's in this book.

And I'll just leave it at that. If we run out and you want a copy, you just give Mike your name and whatever and we'll send it to you. You'll have it by the end of the week.

But I want to just read something here out of this, talking about false teachers. When most Christians think of false teachers, the descriptions that Jesus and Paul gave come to their minds. But instead of looking for sheep, they look for wolves.

Instead of looking for angels of light, they look for servants of Satan, such as obvious cult leaders. What many fail to realize is that false teachers appear as sheep and angels. When Jesus warned of false prophets coming in the last days, he wasn't primarily referring to men like Jim Jones or David Koresh.

He said many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. He was describing deception that would occur on a much grander scale than that of a few isolated cult leaders. The wolves in sheep clothing and the angels of light are not outside the church but inside it.

They're not recognized as deceivers because their behavior is not what the church expects to see in a deceiver. And then skipping down, the spirit of the world which is now using them to dismiss the unvarnished words of Jesus in favor of a softer, more appealing message has duped them. It is a watered down gospel with little or no fire in it.

It is false because it is not the gospel that was given by Jesus Christ. What is preached is not wrong per se. It is simply an incomplete gospel.

The parts that make people uncomfortable are avoided and destructive blows to sin are never rendered. You can tell if a teacher on the radio is true or false. You have to look past their personality and you have to ask questions like, does his life and his teaching reflect the narrow way? Does his life conform to the Sermon on the Mount? Do you see poverty of spirit? Do you see a man who mourns over his sin? Does he seem worldly or carnal? Or does he seem consecrated? Those are some questions you can ask.

Know them by their fruits. Verse 21 brings us to the next parable. The third parable offers a glimpse into a terrible scene on judgment day where a group of people are frantically claiming to have a relationship with Christ.

They remind him of all the things they have done, but there is one thing missing, a submissive relationship. I just want to mention a couple of things here about this. First, again, the word many is used.

He doesn't say there's a few. There's just this little group over here. They didn't quite make it.

They weren't right or something. They had obvious sin in their lives and they were messed up. These poor people, they deceived themselves.

No, he says many. Many means many. Few means few.

I don't know what to make of this, but I can tell you this, that when Jesus talked about the kingdom of God and he was referring to this concept of people who hear the word of God and receive it. In other words, there's a response to it. Out of that group, whatever that group is, only one fourth of them make it.

Now, I'm not saying one out of four. Don't take what I'm saying to say. I'm just making mention of it.

These people believed themselves to be Christians. They were astonished. Absolutely astonished at what they were hearing from Jesus.

They were just incredulous. You couldn't tell them otherwise. That's the one thing the Lord has shown me.

There are people, and I don't doubt that there's people in here this morning right now, who will not believe that there's any possibility that I'm talking about them. And they will go to their graves refusing to even entertain the possibility. Paul said to examine yourselves.

In 1 John, there's I think four different places where he gives evidence if you have truly been reconciled and regenerated. There's evidence in there. And you know a sincere person will get on their face before God and sit down with maybe that book and say, Oh God, this is of such urgency.

God, please show it to me. Make it real to me. Help me to know.

God, because if I'm not right, I've got to know it now. Judge me now, God. But it's an instance of a person who won't do that.

Because they don't want to see what they might see. Which means that they would have to give up the world. Give up their life in this world.

They don't want to see that and they're unwilling to do that so they would rather deceive themselves and end up in hell. All these people that we're talking about, the many, they deceive themselves. They kept telling themselves, it's not me, it's someone else.

I'm not mad at you, you know, just so you understand that. I am mad at the devil. I'm mad at the terrible deception that he has been able to bring upon the church.

I'm going to read another thing. This is in the chapter called The Church of Laodicea. And these words are true, dear ones.

As I have prayed and wept over Christ's message to the Laodiceans and its obvious application to the last day's Laodicean Church of America, several things stood out to me. The first was the obvious discrepancy between Jesus' assessment of their condition and their own view of it. The Laodiceans viewed their pathetic condition in a completely positive light, oblivious of their true state.

We can almost hear the bounding happiness in their voices as they boasted, we are rich and wealthy and have need of nothing. The unspoken inference was God is blessing. This upbeat mindset must have been constantly reinforced through the success they were enjoying individually and as a fellowship.

They were not interested in negative preaching. In the midst of their peace and prosperity, the last thing they wanted to hear was a message of gloom and doom. Had Timothy, Irenaeus, or Polycarp, all saintly men of that era preached repentance in Laodicea, they would have been quickly judged as being too legalistic or harsh.

How comparable is the 21st century church with this thriving congregation? We too have created a gospel for our own culture, tailor-made to fit smugly within the confines of the American dream. The old-fashioned gospel we should preach has been altered just enough to agree with our busy schedules and myriad amusements. By emphasizing certain biblical teachings and, more importantly, neglecting others, we have managed to create a whole new gospel that fits our American lifestyle.

Tragically, our rendition of Christianity makes no demands, expects no sacrifice, and yields no eternal rewards. The Lion of Judah has been anesthetized, declawed, and tamed. We have reduced the Almighty to a harmless icon we passively honor in our busy lives.

The vision of a holy God, a consuming fire, a judge who will one day render unto every man his just reward has virtually vanished out of the American church. Lastly, we've seen here a picture of two men who build a house, but Jesus looks beneath the surface. They look the same.

The houses are identical. They're in the same neighborhood. We can tell that because the storm comes and hits both of them.

They're in this church now. Those who do the words of Jesus, everyone here is hearing the words of Jesus. This is a Bible-preaching church with a godly pastor.

You are hearing the words of Jesus in this church. Everyone hears them here. But there's two groups in here.

There are those who hear and actually live them out, and there are those who just make a pretense of it. There are those who have learned how to just do the things that look like Christianity. I'm convinced that really the deeper issue here is faith.

It's not so much doing. Can I say it this way, dear ones, that there is a tremendous, heavy blanket of unbelief in America and in the American church. We say we believe the word of God, but we really don't believe it very much.

We really don't. I've preached in other countries quite a bit, and there is such a difference. Unfortunately, the American thing has been transplanted around the world.

But there's still, just because of the lack of prosperity, people can still be taught the truth. But the problem is, we hear the words of Jesus, and we don't really believe them. Like, for instance, in the previous chapter, Jesus said, Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth.

John Wesley said, That is every bit as much a commandment as do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth.

But see, that doesn't fit in with our gospel. I'm sorry, Brother Gallagher, but that just doesn't fit in with my lifestyle. I'm a soccer mom, you see, or whatever.

Now, am I telling you to go sell your house and give away all your possessions? No, not necessarily. You have to just, it's not outward, dear ones, it's the heart. But we hear these words and we don't really believe them.

And so we don't really do them. And we just, we have a way of just kind of de-emphasizing and letting them fade away. So that the words of Jesus are just kind of real tiny.

And our thoughts are huge. Our desires, Paul said that the last days would be characterized by people heaping unto themselves, teachers and according to their own lusts. What is the American church if it isn't that? So the words of Jesus are just kind of, because of unbelief, they just kind of fade away and become very, very tiny.

Jesus went on to say, No one can serve two masters. But we don't believe that. And we spend our whole lives trying to do what Jesus says is impossible.

I just wrote down in my Bible the other day, both masters are totalitarian. Both demand our entire allegiance. But since we are unwilling to give up our love for the world and the things of the world, that's a foregone conclusion for many of us.

We are unwilling. I will not give up. So since that's in cement, in stone in our hearts, then we have to somehow craft Christianity to where it looks like we're really living the Christian life.

But the reality is we're not. Jesus says you cannot have it both ways. Do we believe it or not? The problem is lack of faith.

Let me just read this quote from this dear man, J.C. Ryle. By the way, I'll just mention to you that the reason why these things have been real to me, besides the study in Revelation, but part of that. For the last 20 years I haven't been listening to radio preachers and watching preachers on television and reading the books of all the famous preachers.

I've been studying the writings of the pulpit commentary and Matthew Henry and Spurgeon and Adam Clark and Albert Barnes and men who lived back before the deception became as powerful as it is today. There is a demonic deception that has overtaken the church of America. I've read the writings and I have for 20 years.

I've spent at minimum an hour a day studying and praying over the writings of those men. So when I see what's going on, I'm comparing what the teachings are from 100 or 200 years ago. And this man lived back then, J.C. Ryle, a holiness preacher, tremendous godly man.

He said, it will be utterly useless to plead that we believed in Christ unless our faith has had some sanctifying effect and been seen in our lives. Evidence, evidence, evidence will be the one thing desired when the books are opened and the dead are arraigned before the bar of God. Without some evidence that our faith in Christ was real and genuine, we shall only rise again to be condemned.

The question will not be how we talked and what we professed, but how we lived and what we did. Let no man deceive himself on this point. Now I mentioned to you that this is a very solemn subject.

I didn't want to come and preach this, you remember? I didn't want to. Half an hour ago you were clapping for me to do it. But at the end of each one of these, all four of these parables, Jesus tells the end of these people.

He talks about going to destruction. That's so important. Jesus talks about soul destruction.

That's an ongoing thing. When you're cast into hell, you will go through the agonies of death forever and ever and ever and ever. Today you can still make a decision not to go there.

But once you've crossed that line, it's over. Talking about the false prophets, they will be cut down and thrown into the fire, Jesus said. This nice little sappy Jesus we've come up with.

The hypocrites, he said, depart from me. Describing a terrible eternal separation from God and everything good. And the last one, he talks about a great collapse.

In Matthew 24, Jesus said that the evil slave who did not do what he was told to do would be cut in pieces and assigned to a place with the hypocrites. There's a place for hypocrites, church goers, who aren't really sincere and aren't really living the Christian life. In that place, Jesus said, there will be weeping and

gnashing of teeth.

And I've experienced that 25 years ago in Los Angeles. I was a cop and I had a gun to my head and I went through a 6 hour horrible ordeal where I was literally, I talk about it in my autobiography out there, I was literally laying on the floor, grasping the carpet so tightly my knuckles were white and just grinding my teeth for 6 hours. I went through this, I had a taste of this horrible, horrible thing that Jesus is talking about, weeping and gnashing of teeth.

I can't even describe to you, dear ones, the utter hopelessness. Now, the message isn't to try harder today. To try harder, to walk on the narrow way.

Jesus gave it in a different place. He said, someone came to him after hearing him preach and he said, Lord, are there just a few who are being saved? This is in Luke 13 if you want to look it up later. He said, Lord, are there just a few who are being saved? And he said to him, strive, that word is agonize, agonize me, something like that.

And it means it's used as fight or battle for, strive, he says, to enter through the narrow gate. For many, I tell you, many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. This is an invitation, dear ones, it's an invitation.

This is an invitation by a loving God. I'm not angry with you, I wanted to talk about how wonderful Jesus is today. But I'm going to conclude with this passage from a book by Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones on this third parable.

Finally therefore, we must realize that what God wants above all else is ourselves. What scripture calls our heart. He wants the inner man, the heart.

He wants our submission, our submission. He does not want merely our profession, our zeal, our fervor, our works, or anything else. He wants us.

It's possible for a man to say right things, to be very busy and active, to achieve apparently wonderful results, and yet not to give himself to the Lord. He may be doing it all for himself. And he may be resisting the Lord in the most vital place of all.

And the greatest insult we can offer to God is to say, Lord, Lord, fervently. To be busy and active and yet to withhold true allegiance and submission from him. To insist upon retaining control over our own lives.

We must submit to him and his way as he has revealed it in the Bible. And if we want, and if we, if what we do does not conform to this pattern, it is an assertion of our will. It is disobedience.

Indeed, it belongs to the type of conduct that makes Christ say to certain people, depart from me, you that work iniquity. He calls them workers of iniquity because in the last analysis, they were doing it to please themselves and not in order to please him. Let us then solemnly examine ourselves in the light of these things.

I'm not sure exactly what to say, other than that I do know I couldn't get away from the fact that Jesus told me to bring this message and that means that he's speaking to hearts right now. Forgive me for doing such a poor job of relating it, but it's not about me. It's now between you and God.

And I know that there are godly Christians in this place. You understand what I'm describing. It's already burned in your heart and you're interceding for the souls of others.

It's already a burning inside you. You know what I'm talking about. But there are others that are just kind of out of it and just, well, what was the song? Why is that man screaming about? Brother, could you give us some, I think it would be good if we all stand and if you feel the Lord urging you to, maybe you know that you're a believer.

Maybe you know, I know that I'm converted, but I've strayed off the narrow way and I've gotten out of whack in some ways and I need to get my life back on track. I want to invite you to come forward here and pray and seek the Lord or maybe as I was talking your heart was trembling and you're afraid that you have not really been converted. You get the sense that self is on the throne, that you are the one in control of your life and you're giving God just a little place.

It seems that way, but really you're just in complete control. And the words that I have spoken this morning have penetrated your heart and you want to know that you know that you're right with God and you want to make things right, then I want you to come forward. Just right now, come down here.

We don't have much time. Right now, come down. God is speaking to you this morning.

This is your opportunity to respond. Don't let pride keep you locked out. Don't let pride keep you out of the kingdom of God.

Throughout this weekend of Men of Purity, my greatest, I need a lot more. You're going to have to help me. Thank you.

Throughout this weekend, my greatest concern was the fact that men would measure themselves by themselves. It's amazing to me that we hold Men of Purity weekend, about one quarter of our men were able to make it. And I think what they said in their minds is, well, I'm not that bad.

I don't have the biggest struggle. I'm not a pervert. And I think even right now in this sanctuary, I think we're measuring ourselves by ourselves and we're saying, you know, I'm not as bad off as some folks are.

I'm not. You know, I'm going to make it. I'm OK.

But I don't understand how any of us in this moment can't respond with everything that is in us. I am so far from what I believe God wants me to be as a man of God. I can't even tell you.

I'm not in blatant sin. I can't think of anything in my mind that I have to repent over right now. But I know when I don't compare myself by you, but compare myself to him.

I want to be like him. I look into this word and I hear the voice of the Holy Spirit calling me, beckoning me to lay down everything. The Bible says we overcome because of three things, not two.

We're so willing to say we overcome by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony. Oh, yeah. The blood of Jesus.

And I believe. But what about the third part? And they love not their lives even unto the death. The truth of the matter is, we love our lives too much.

We just love our lives too much. We don't want to die. We don't want to give it up.

We don't want to resign it. We don't want to say goodbye. And the church in America is going headlong, friend, just like hawks down a hill into destruction because preachers are afraid to declare a message like this that needs to be spoken.

This is an hour for you. This isn't for to compare yourself with anybody else and say, well, what are they doing? What if I this is your moment right now to say to him, God, if I'm judged in this hour by my response right now, where do I stand? Father, in Jesus name as a congregation and as a pastor, the pastor of this house, I repent for us, Lord. And I ask that every person would join me and saying, oh, God, forgive us.

Forgive us for taming the lion of Judah, for declawing you and making you a lap kitten, one that we will determine when we will call for you and what we'll do and how we'll try to appease you rather than falling at your feet and saying you are the Lord God almighty. There is none like you. We repent today.

Oh, Lord, we break open our hearts before you. We don't compare ourselves by one another and of a better than another. But we look to Jesus and we say, oh, God, we are so short.

We fall so short of what you have called us to and to be in this hour. Lord, we don't want it to be of works. We don't want it to be of trying to earn.

But instead, through repentance and faith right now, we say, do a new work in us, Lord. We base ourselves before you in this moment. We ask for the Holy Spirit to come and reveal who we really are.

Open the eyes of our understanding, not only that we would see you, but we would see us, that we would see ourselves. We renounce all self-justification. We renounce all self-promotion.

We renounce the fact, oh, Lord, that we have cared more about what people have thought of us than what you have thought of us. And in Jesus name, we say, make this house your house. Make our heart your house.

Make our lives your temple. We surrender. We consecrate.

We offer ourselves to you right now. We ask that you, Lord God, from this pulpit to the door, would touch each and every one of us that we could never be the same. Lord, as we come to 9-11 tomorrow and again, remember the horrific fate of all of these individuals.

We realized how quickly any of our lives could be snuffed out and our timeline could come to the end, even in this hour. We pray, oh, Lord, that if we have to be judged in this moment, that you would see our heart clean and pure, washed in the blood of Jesus. You would see us, oh, Lord, as given over to one priority, and that is to you as our Lord and to the kingdom of our great God and Savior.

We ask, oh, Lord, that your spirit will take the word that we have heard and burn it into our heart. Yes, oh, God. Burn it into our spirit, man, oh, Lord.

Let us not cast it aside. Let it not be taken from us, but let us hide that word in our heart that we would not sin against you, oh, Lord. Against thee only have we sinned, and we ask for your mercy and your forgiveness.

Let us be Mary and not Martha. Let us be one who lays at your feet to hear your word, oh, Lord, and not those who have an outward profession of busyness and activity, but instead, oh, Lord, let us have a heart for the king and a heart for his kingdom. Bless this house, oh, Lord.

Let this word go to the very foundation. Let this word, oh, Lord, be that which we build upon. Let this word that you are God alone be the word that guards our heart and guides our life.

We bless you, Jesus. We bless you, Jesus. Somebody thank the Lord right now that somebody loves us enough to tell us the truth.

Somebody bless the Lord right now and say, oh, thank you, God. Thank you, God. Thank you, God.

Thank you, God. Hallelujah. Oh, the prophet said, rend your hearts and not just your garments.

In the Old Testament, it was so typical to tear the garment and to put dust on their heads as a sign of repentance. And even that was not what they were looking for. It's not what God wants from the outward but from the matters of our heart, the priorities of our life.

Just lift your hands up to him right now and say, Lord, you will be my treasure, my priority. You're my redeemer. You're my God.

You're my Savior. I bless you today. Say with me, God is my redeemer.

Say it, God is my redeemer. My redeemer liveth. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. He's not done with you. Don't you be in despair and don't you be, I said to pastor, to Brother Steve before he preached, I said, there's hope, man.

There's hope. God will have a church. God will have a people that are holy.

God will have a priesthood. Come on. God will have those who say you will be Lord of all.

God will have a people that serve him with all that is within him. And that church will be alive in the midst of the earth. The question is, will I be a part of it or not? Will I choose to say yes to him? I say yes today.

What do you say? I say I will be what you call me to be, oh Lord. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

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