

There Will Be Many Surprises On Judgment Day

by Tim Conway

This sermon emphasizes the importance of truly knowing and being known by Jesus Christ, highlighting the need for intimate relationship, submission, and obedience to the will of the Father. It warns against self-deception, mere religious activities, and the danger of not having a genuine connection with Christ. The focus is on the deep intimacy and submission required in being a true follower of Christ, rather than just outward actions or sacrifices.

Scripture: Matthew 7:21, 1 John 2:3, James 2:17, John 10:14, 1 Corinthians 8:3, 2 Timothy 2:19, Amos 3:2, Genesis 2:24, Revelation 3:20

Topics: "Intimacy with Christ", "Genuine Faith vs. Religious Activity"

Description

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Transcript

So Matthew 7, 21, not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day, and he's talking the day of judgment, many will say to me, Lord, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and cast out demons in your name and do many mighty works in your name? And then I will declare to them, I never knew you depart from me, you workers of lawlessness. So the very first thing that I want us all to focus our attention on is this, notice the word says, it shows up here twice, verse 21, not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven.

Verse 22, on that day, many will say, it says, say, people are talking to me, Lord, they're talking to him. On the last day, many will say, now imagine that, you know, I have often heard people say, well, on judgment day, I'll tell God. And I've said, no, you're not going to say anything.

But you know, Jesus himself actually is indicating there's face-to-face dialogue happening with the living Christ right on that last day. You and I will be there. And here's what I would ask all of you.

Listen, you know, this is terrible. This is serious. People who thought they were Christians are being told in the end when it's too late to do anything about it.

You don't know me and I don't know you, be gone. And I just wonder this, what will you say? What, I mean, think about that day. What would you say? I mean, if you're coming before the Lord and you actually have an opportunity to say something and you haven't heard the verdict yet, but imagine, what would you say if he says, welcome, well done? What would you say? I mean, think about it, where you are right now, believing what you believe.

If he said to you, depart, what would you say? I mean, if he told you, well done, good and faithful servant, would you say, well, you know, based on what I believed, that was my expectation. About what was going to happen. I mean, knowing everything that you know right now, believing everything that you believe, having had all the experiences that you've had, everything that you've encountered through God's word, the way he's interacted with you.

If you were there in that day and he told you to depart, what would you say? Because they're saying things. These people are being told to depart and they've got some things to say. And I'm just wondering, you think about that.

If you, as you are, were suddenly in the presence of Christ and he said, I don't know you, what would you say? I mean, I thought about that. What would I say? I mean, I believe I'm a Christian. I believe I've been born again.

These people believe they were Christians. If I got there and he said, I don't know you, what would I say? And I guess what you really want to ask yourself is this, would you say something, even though it's not the exact words that these people spoke, would it resonate with what they said? Or would you say something different? Do you know what you would say? I mean, I thought I would say something like, I don't know if I'd even be able to speak at that point, but you know, I thought about being passed away. What would be the great remorse? Hell? Undoubtedly, that would be absolutely fearful.

But you know what resonates in the heart of the child of God? I wanted to spend eternity getting to know you. I wanted to spend eternity looking and beholding your glory. And I wanted to spend eternity with no sin.

And Lord, you have every right to cast me into hell. And Lord, I'm not going to rattle off credentials because I know those things are worthless. Lord, I called out to you because I saw that I was sick.

I thought I was needy. Lord, my trust was in you. That's something about how I think I would answer.

We'll either be told to enter into the joy of our master or depart. That's a reality. Every one of us, we've got to deal with that.

I know it's not that real to us, but here it is. We are headed to this day and we're all going to hear one or the other, enter in to the joy of your master or depart from me. I don't know you where you are.

We're going to hear that. And nothing's more important. Nothing is going to be more thrilling.

Nothing is going to be more terrifying. And the whole issue is going to be determined by this one thing. This one thing is what Christ is saying right here.

He is saying this, My father has a will. He expressed it to you in statutes, in rules, in commandments, in the revelation of scripture. He spoke to the prophets in times past.

In these last days, he spoke through his son. His son told us what the will of God is in this book. It's been related to us.

What did you do with that word? That's what he says. That's what this boils down to. It boils down to what is recorded in that Bible.

What has the fact that God has spoken meant to you? How has that impacted your life? What has that done? Look at the last word in verse 23. I know if you've got a different translation, it might not be the one in mine. In mine, it's lawlessness.

You know, the KJV speaks about workers of iniquity. The word is very correctly translated lawless. Worker of iniquity is not bad, but listen, the word in the original is this.

Maybe you know law. I'll take it. Law in Greek is *nomos*.

We talk about antinomian, antinomian. You know the word here? Anomian. Anti is against in the place of.

What is the prefix *a-* by itself mean? Just means without. It's without law. You see what's happened? God gave his law.

God expressed his will. In the end, no matter what these guys had to say, what they did with their lives did not correspond to what God said in his word. This is, were we subject to the law of God or not? That will be the question.

That's obviously what, I mean, what we say are words. The reality is whatever we could say on that day is going to have to get out of the way and give place to our life because words aren't going to matter. People are talkers.

People can say all sorts of things. Brethren, listen, the chief characteristic of the Christian is, I hope this is clear to everybody, is opposite to the chief characteristic of the lost man. Lost man, here you have it.

The mind that's set on the flesh is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law. Indeed, it cannot.

Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Now here's what you need to recognize. These people are being told to depart.

Why? Because they basically were these people who could not submit to God's law, right? That's what they're being called. Ah, no man. They're being called lawless.

So here's the thing. Did they have lots of religious credentials? Yes, but at the heart level, lawless. It means they gave lip service to what God said, but they didn't do what God said.

That's the issue. Listen, we don't want to play games here. The reality is this.

You can doubt this. You can debate this. You can resist this, but Jesus doesn't relent.

He says this, not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my father, who is in heaven. This and this alone is true Christianity. This actually is the

beauty and the glory of the new covenant.

Do you know the new covenant? Basically we'll take Ezekiel's pronouncement concerning it. I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. Obedience.

God says that if you are a partaker of the new covenant, this comes out of Ezekiel chapter 36. If you are a partaker of the new covenant, God says, I will cause you to keep my commandments. He so fixes us that we end up being that kind of person that he causes.

And it's not like twisting the arm calls. He changes the appetites. He changes the desires.

He changes the likes and the dislikes. He causes us to have something happen within us. See, the great problem is that men and women endeavor to explain away the plain teaching of scripture.

That's what happens. Jesus knows this. And so what? His warnings are strong.

They're repeated. As he's finishing this whole righteous standard set forth in this sermon on the mount, he is giving us warning after warning, strong and terrible warnings. Jesus is obviously concerned that none of us be misled.

Why? Because many are going to be misled. That's what he says here. Self-deception, self-delusion.

Can you imagine being deceived about your spiritual situation? This is not a small thing to get to the end and have sat in the church, to have ran among God's people, to think you're a Christian, to have owned a Bible and actually read it at times. And then you get to the end and he never knew you. I mean, something was broken at a fundamental level here and you have lived your whole life.

And there's one thing, you know, if what you just knew it, you were worshiping these Hindu gods over here. You knew it. You were totally separated from Christ.

You had nothing to do with him. But to get so close that you actually said, Lord, Lord, to get that close where I did things in your name, not in the name of a foreign God, not in the name of some idol. I did them in your name to have gotten that close.

And in the end, what are you going to say? You can't argue the case in such a way as to change the verdict. You're done. It's all over.

And you see what we're being confronted with is the fact that many, many, many, they're assuming that they're safe. They call Jesus Lord. Jesus is Lord.

You know what? That's very theologically orthodox. And to call somebody Lord. I mean, you think about that when you read that Sarah called Abraham Lord, that speaks respect.

And it's not just that they're calling him that once, Lord, Lord, that means there's some enthusiasm. That means there's some zeal in what these people did. But the day of judgment, what we're seeing here is it's going to be a day of many surprises.

And the thing is, he spoke these words. I'm now speaking these words. And the hope is that nobody that hears my voice is going to be misled and be surprised.

You all know that I went, a lot of you know, I went to get my ears tested. I went to the hearing test. I walked in and they said, oh, sir, we canceled your appointment.

You know, is that a surprise? Yeah, that's a surprise. Ruby and I, a year ago, when we went back to the United States, we showed up at Manchester Airport early in the morning. We walk in and our flight doesn't even exist.

Is that a surprise? Yeah, that's a surprise. It was with Charles Slater one time. We walked up to the counter in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and they said, sir, you flew out yesterday.

And things like that. Are they a surprise? Yeah, that's a surprise. But brethren, imagine it's all over.

I mean, imagine the surprise when you thought you were secure to face death and had escaped the lake of fire to be told you didn't even come close. Depart. And there is such finality in those words.

So let's look more closely at verse 21. Look what's said here. Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven.

So the kingdom of heaven is a place that is to be entered. Now, here's the thing. This whole sermon was basically sandwiched by two comments about entering the kingdom, this one and back at the beginning of the sermon.

Just hold your finger right here. And you see this. I mean, you see this in verse 21.

Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven. And you keep your finger there and you go back to chapter five, verse 20. And you'll remember this verse.

I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Both verses are basically dealing with exactly the same thing. You see that basically the gist of what's said in 520 is the same as what's said in 721, which is what? It is this.

The kingdom is to be entered. We've got to enter it, but nobody is going to enter it unless they are doers of the will of God. That's 721.

520 says, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees, what in the world is he saying? You put them both together, the scribes and the Pharisees are not doing the will of the Father. That's the point. True righteousness falls in line with doing what our heavenly Father has called us to do.

Obedience is huge. It's coming out in both of these verses. There is a righteousness required.

I mean, that's the thing. They stress that reality. It ought to be plain.

Jesus says this right before and right after this sermon. Why? Because this whole sermon captures the essence of what a righteousness is that exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees. This whole sermon captures the essence of what it is to do the will of the Father.

That's why he bookends this. It expresses this reality. But here's the obvious question.

Does this somehow come in conflict with and contradict the fact that we're saved by grace through faith? I mean, think with me. Just hear this. You know these verses.

We know these verses. We proclaim these verses. Ephesians 2.8. By grace, you've been saved through faith.

This is not your own doing. It's the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. We know that passage.

How about this? I heard Obed quote this earlier. Romans 3.23. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Philippian Jailer, we know it.

Sirs, what must it do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, you and your household. We know these verses. How about John 3.16? We know it.

We can quote it. It's obviously the... But brethren, here's the fear. The world knows John 3.16. Let me assure you this.

I could make the conjecture that probably just about every single one of these people who are being told to depart knew John 3.16. And see, what they did was they basically came to their own opinion about what believing on the Son of God actually meant. They had boiled it down to simply some basic assent to certain facts about Christ and God, and they said, I believe that, therefore I'm okay. You've got this.

2 Timothy 1.9. God who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works, but because of his own purpose and grace. For Titus 3.5, he saved us not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy. Brethren, it's altogether true.

Now listen, hear me. It's altogether true. Nobody earns heaven by doing the will of the Father.

That's clear, but our Bibles equally teach nobody enters the kingdom without that obedience to the Father. You say, how does that work? How do both fit together? How can both be true? Well, here's how. Here's exactly how.

I come to him as this sermon says, poor in spirit. What does that mean? What does that look like? Lord, I don't have nothing in my hands I bring. Lord, my life is all sin.

My life, I can't do this. I've tried to do this. I can't do this.

Lord, I'm broken. I'm messed up. I'm destitute.

I'm bankrupt. I don't have anything to offer you. Lord, please help me.

And what happens? He, yes. Do you remember what happened? I came for the sick. Not those who are well.

Nobody that's well needs a doctor. And that's us. He came, not the 99 righteous people that don't need repentance.

He came for the prodigal. He came for the broken. He came for the sinner.

And when we come to him like that, that's how we are received as a gift. It's grace. It's by faith.

I mean, you got to believe to come for that. You got to see something in Christ that makes you believe that he'll give you this. If you come for the ask, come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, I'll give you rest.

I mean, you hear there's none other name given under heaven among men whereby men must be saved. And you believe that you come to him. I need to be saved.

I need to be saved. I'm in a wretched spot. And see, he receives us by grace.

But the thing is, it's just here that grace takes over. And what happens? God melts away the stubbornness. How does he do it? Oh, he's got all sorts of ways.

Who knows the ways of God? I mean, in many ways, it's a mystery how he pulls the heart strings. But I can tell you this, suddenly he causes you to be filled with such a joy, unspeakable. He fills you with, I mean, suddenly you see Christ as being precious.

Suddenly the idea that your sins have been forgiven, not in part, but the whole, it's like the stubbornness is melted just over a sense that he's forgiven me. How could he forgive me after the things that I've done? And what happens is he works in us just a sense of the beauty of holiness. I mean, suddenly our heavenly father is not some tyrant trying to, you know, thou shalt not, thou shalt not.

I mean, we actually begin to see there's a true beauty in holiness. There's something, if you read Psalm 119, you see the heart of David as a man of God, he's longing after the statutes of God and the commandments. He doesn't find them to be some horrible thing anymore.

And John tells us in 1 John that it's not grievous, it's not burdensome. So it's like we've been freed and there's a joy in it. And I mean, when God's grace lays hold of a man, it inevitably produces what you see in Psalm 1. Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, stands in the way of the sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers, but his delight is in the law of the Lord.

See, delight in the law of the Lord. Suddenly there's a delight in something. You recognize in this very sermon, blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Something, see who can manipulate thirst and hunger? God can. And He does. I mean, David says this, with my whole heart, I keep your precepts.

Psalm 119, 69. Listen, let me tell you something. Any supposed manifestation of grace that does not do that in an individual, it's nothing but cheap grace.

It's a fake. That's the issue. Do you come broken? Yes.

You don't come claiming, well, I'm here. I've kept the will of the father. Now you've got to accept me.

That's never it. We do business with Christ as those who are broken people. We come with no price in our hands.

We buy without price. But let me tell you this, God is in the business. When He goes to save in somebody, He saves them well.

And the fact is teaching or believing anything else than this reality only deceives and deludes men. And it results in people getting to the end and hearing these words. Why are they told to depart? Ah, no man, against or without, without rather, without law.

What does that mean? It just means you basically live the way you wanted to. You lived the way you wanted to, not with regards. I mean, you live like God's word, just really, it's kind of a take it or leave it thing.

We're saved by grace. You know, in the end, grace is going to cover this. It doesn't really matter if I submit or don't submit.

And brethren, when we put an A in front of things, you know, pathos, ah, pathos, apathy, pathos. You have feeling, apathy. It's without feeling.

Amoral, asexual, amillennial. We put that A in front of things. That's what that describes these people.

Just without law, other than their own law. They did their own thing. Can I, I don't have to be that honest.

I don't have to be that pure. I can kind of do, I don't have to really store up my money in heaven. Like it says, loving my neighbors, loving my enemies.

I mean, really living this kind of life. Look, listen to this. I'm going to give you now a series of texts that speak about what this grace through faith actually looks like.

Listen, Hebrews 5.9, being made perfect, Jesus became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him. Wow, we read that. You know, you read that in scripture.

It's like, wait, shouldn't that be saying those who believe in him? No, that's, you know, the Bible freely talks like this. We've got eyes to see. It talks like this all over the place.

Now, perfectly? No, not perfect. I mean, you have to hear David. David right in that Psalm 119, where he said, with my whole heart, I keep your precepts.

He also says this in Psalm 119, 176, I've gone astray like a lost sheep. Seek your servant for I do not forget your commandments. Even there, he's saying as much as I promise to keep them, as much as I've committed to keep them, as much as I still remember them, as much as they're before me.

And he's talked about pondering them, rising early on his bed, striving to do them, making covenant to do them, giving promise to do them. Still, he has to admit at times, I've gone astray. Brethren, what I want you to do right now is I want you to turn to one of the clearest portions in scripture that deals with this.

It's found in James chapter two, turn over there. James two, because here's the thing. In James two, we get the fullest, what I would call is it fullest biblical treatise on works and faith.

But here's the thing, doing the will of the Father is basically good works. And that's it. What should our life look like? Doing the will of the Father.

When you do the will of the Father, what is that? Well, it's something you do. It's a work you do. And so here's what I'm going to do.

As we read through this, every place where it says work, I'm going to substitute the will of the Father. This is the nobody's going to argue that. I'm not corrupting scripture by doing that, but I think you'll hear this in a bit of a different light.

James two, verse 17, substituting doing the will of the Father, every place you see the word works. Two 17, so faith by itself, that means faith without doing the will of the Father. If you just say you have this faith and it's all by itself, if it does not have doing the will of the Father, it's dead.

But someone will say you have faith and I have doing the will of the Father. Show me your faith apart from your doing the will of the Father. I'll show you my faith by doing the will of the Father.

You believe God is one. So you have these, you know, you were sent to these truths. Well, that's great.

The demons do that and they shudder. Verse 20, do you want to be shown you foolish person? And that is it's a fool who basically says, I've got faith and I don't care about the work aspect of this. It's a foolish person.

Faith apart from doing the will of the Father is useless. Was not Abraham our father justified by doing the will of the Father? And that's exactly what he did. What was he? It was the will of God.

God told him, take your son up there on Mount Moriah. That's exactly what these works are. They're an expression of God's will for us.

Was not Abraham our father justified by doing the will of the Father when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his doing the will of the Father and faith was completed by doing that will of the Father. And scripture was fulfilled that says Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness. And he was called the friend of God.

You see a person is justified by doing the will of the Father and not by faith alone. In the same way also was not Rahab the prostitute justified by doing the will of the Father when she received the messengers sent them out by another way. For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from doing the will of the Father is dead.

I have not butchered scripture by making that substitution right there. That is absolutely an equivalent. The good works and doing the will of the Father is absolutely synonymous.

And so you see what's being said, brethren. John, in his own dogmatic fashion, says it like this. First John 2 for whoever says, I know him, but does not keep his commandments is a liar.

Wow. It doesn't get any more dogmatic than that in scripture. If you say, you know, Christ, if you say, you know, the Father, you see, and that's what we're dealing with, right? Jesus says, I never knew you.

This is what we're dealing with. You say, I know him. He says, not if you didn't keep my commandments, not if you didn't keep my Father's commandments.

If you didn't keep my Father's commandments, I don't know you because the people I know, I save and I save them well, and I save them from their rebellion. And you're given every indication. You're not somebody that I knew and went to work on to save.

You lived without law. You lived by this supposed faith, but it lacked works. Whoever says, I know him, but does not keep his commandments is a liar.

And the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word in him, truly the love of God is perfected by this. We may know that we are in him. You see, it's a test.

It'll prove what you are. So when Jesus says, not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven, he isn't trying to negate the fact that we're saved by faith in Christ. Not at all.

He isn't downplaying faith. He isn't downplaying grace. Just the opposite.

He's actually emphasizing it. Absolutely nothing else is going to prevail before the living God, but that kind of faith that believes that God, get it? That kind of faith that believes, faith believes, faith trusts. And what does it believe? It believes God is to be obeyed.

I mean, what Jesus is doing, what he's showing is that he's showing us the nature of true faith. He's showing us what faith truly means. That's what's happening to think that saving faith can exist in an individual without this deep grappling with what the will of God is for me.

It's all a terrible delusion. You have to feel what Jesus is confronting each one of us with. Do you really belong to me? Because that's what it's going to be in the end.

Either he knows you or he doesn't know you. And I mean, brethren, we know Jesus himself. He said this, I did not come to do my will, but the will of him who sent me.

But then if there's anything that characterizes the Lord Jesus Christ, it's that he came to do the Father's will. And he tells us when he tells us to count the cost, he tells us to follow him. We walk in his footsteps.

You're never a follower of Christ unless you're doing what Christ did. And what Christ did was he came to do the will of his Father. Now let's think for a moment.

Let's think for a moment about the causes of deception here. They ought to be apparent, but because so many end up deceived, maybe it isn't so apparent as it ought to be. So let's look carefully at the three verses.

If you're in James, go back to Matthew, because I want you to see the verses. We have to look at these with our own eyeballs and see this. These three verses, Matthew 7, 21, 22, and 23.

Jesus says, this ought to be obvious to us, verse 21 says that that which characterizes everybody who enters the kingdom is that they are doing something. They are, what are they doing? Well, they're doing the will of the Father. But you know what's interesting? Verses 22 and 23, many people are very obviously ready to step forward and say, okay, since you're so interested in what I've been doing, let me tell you about what I've been doing.

I mean, you see that Jesus says, you need to be doing this. And these guys are saying, hey, we were doing a whole bunch of stuff, but what's the problem? Well, the problem is that what they were doing was not what he said that they should be doing. That's where the problem is.

These people are rattling off all their credentials. Well, I prophesied and I cast out demons and I didn't just do it. I did it in your name, Jesus.

And I did many mighty works. So why is the Lord Jesus not so impressed? Well, there can only be one answer for all they did and as impressive as it all was, and though it might've been many mighty works and all of that. You know what the problem with it is? Jesus isn't impressed with any of it.

Obviously, it doesn't fit the definition of what he said needs to characterize our lives. I'll tell you what typically men are going to say. They want to throw the credentials out there that tend to impress men.

And the truth is that you know what some of God's true people do cast out demons and they do prophesy and they do many mighty works. But the problem is that it's so often, this is where people get deceived. Their mind runs to what men glory in, what's important to men and they miss all along what's important to God.

For all they did, as impressive as it all is, these people just very plainly did not do the will of the father. And how do we know that? Anomian, they're lawless. It's precisely where the people deceive themselves.

You see, they think God is impressed with certain things often because those things just happen to be the very things that impress men and all the time ignoring what is truly important to God and what truly impresses God. And brethren, the classic example in scripture is Saul. What happens? God says, Saul, I want you to go do that.

And by the way, he speaks to us just as plainly in scripture, even though it might not be to us by name specifically, just as clearly as he spoke to Saul, he speaks to us. His will has been revealed and there's Saul. And what does Saul do? Well, Saul goes out and he was supposed to not spare anybody.

Those Amalekites were to be exterminated along with all the cattle. And what does he do? He spares Agag. He spares the cattle.

And we know how the account goes, but listen to this. Samuel says, the Lord sent you on a mission and said, see, this is critical. When the Lord speaks, Jesus said to the Jews who believed in him, you'll prove to be my disciples if you abide in my word.

You see, God spoke. God told you to go devote to destruction, the sinners, the Amalekites and fight against them until they are consumed. Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord? See, we can feel like, hey, we gathered the troops together.

We went to the Amalekite city. We killed the vast majority of them. How can it be said that I didn't obey? Because you didn't do what the Lord said.

You did it your own way. No matter how close you think that you've come, you didn't obey the voice of the Lord. Why did you pounce on the spoil and do what was evil in the sight of the Lord? Saul said to Samuel, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord.

I have gone on the mission to which the Lord sent me. I have brought Agag, the king of Amalek and I've devoted the Amalekites to destruction. But the people took the spoil, sheep and oxen, the best of things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the Lord, your God in Gilgal.

And Samuel said, has the Lord is great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord. Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, to listen than the fat of rams. For the rebellion, this rebellion is as the sin of divination or witchcraft.

The King James says, brethren, witchcraft. You say, well, you know, that's pretty bad. Yeah, you're rebellion.

And even when that rebellion, it's not that he just went and sat in a bar and ended up going home with a prostitute. It's not that. You see how close to actually doing the will of the Lord that he came.

In fact, so much so that he's insisting he did the will of the Lord, but he didn't because he did not heed what God said. There was a proximity, but that obviously is not working for the Lord. Man is so prone to confuse obedience and sacrifice.

And you just think about this sermon. Think about this sermon. Because brethren, this is where people end up deceived.

So prone. God said in this sermon, blessed are the pure in heart. Okay, that's good.

Then he says this. He said, men, if you even look at a woman, that is impurity, that is adultery. You men better cut off and amputate hands and gouge out eyes, or you will go to hell.

It's, it's very stark. If your right hand causes you to send cut it off and throw it away for it's better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell. In another place, we read this very, very plainly, very obviously the apostle Paul said for this is the will of God, your sanctification that you abstain from sexual immorality.

And so we know the will of God with regards to this. Jesus has expressed the will of God. You are to be militant.

You are to go after this thing. There's to be violence in fighting this amputation, gouging out. So what if I don't embrace God's standard of purity so highly? What if my hand's a little free with the mouse and I have to click on that soft porn? It's not that bad.

So what if I flirt with the ladies at work and see it's right here that men can get deceived instead of being honest like David was. You see, David said, I mean, he said there at the end of Psalm 119, he was strained. He recognized where he was, but instead of being honest and going to the Lord and crying out, Lord, you know, my thoughts, you know, where my eyes have been, you know, to what degree a woman's body has a pull on me, Lord, because this is poverty of spirit.

Lord, help me. Help me. Help me.

In poverty of spirit, in mourning, you confess, Lord, I've failed. I've been like that wandering sheep David talked about. I'm weak, Lord.

I need help. And I feel it. I have a hunger and thirst that's in this for righteousness.

I want it and leaning on him and feeling your weakness. You look at your life and you recognize I'm not going to go there because when I go there, I fail. I'm not going to, I'm not going to do, I'm going to gouge.

I'm going to amputate that thing out of my life because I know that that that is not good. And you go get violent and see, instead of that, just resting in the Lord and trusting in him. And that's where faith is active in all of this.

You're looking to the Lord who you know has the power to be able to help you and deliver you and save you from this. Instead of all that, you simply still your conscience by putting certain positive things in your life over against the negative. Well, I've helped sister Gainer in the past.

I helped set up at the church meeting. I've been to evangelism a time or two. And you know what you've just done? So you've, you've sued the conscience where it's, you know, I see all this reality.

Did you see what all that serving is? That's a sacrifice. That's not obedience. That's just your sacrifice that you've offered.

What you've just done is precisely what these people in Matthew 7, 22 and 23 do. Or you consider this, you know, the account where it said, if you're offering your gift at the altar and there, you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go first be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift. That's in this sermon.

You know what else is in here? Blessed are the peacemakers. Do you know what else is in here? For if you forgive others, their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you. If you do not, you see the connection.

If you forgive others, which is his will, your father will forgive you. If you don't forgive them, your father won't forgive you. Why? Because you're not doing the will of the father.

It's all connected here. And you see what happens is this. Here's the will of the father.

You are supposed to be a person that fights for peace. That's the holiness that the Lord calls me to. But what if I'm not disposed to that? What if I have a grudge? I don't like that guy.

They wronged me. I'm bitter. I'm just going to snub that person.

I'm going to ignore that person. So instead of leaving my gift at the altar and not offering it and running off and seeking to make this right, what do you do? Well, you just, you offer the sacrifice. And you know what that can be? It can be putting money in the box.

It can be money deducted out of your bank account. It can be whatever it is. It's something that you do.

It's something that you offer to God. It's just, you know, instead of going and being reconciled with that brother, you just go right ahead. You lay your gift on the altar, maybe serving in whatever capacity.

You participate in church functions or you make it to the prayer meeting sometimes. Hey, I did many mighty and wonderful works. And you see what happens? What happens is this.

You start to think about the sacrifices. You don't do what God has told you. But you see, you think that because you just ignored what he told you to do and you went and laid your sacrifice on the altar, you just kind of convinced yourself, hey, it's all good.

And you just did exactly what the Lord says you ought not to do. Exactly what he says not to do. We try to cancel the disobedience of the will of the father by putting these certain positive things to the forefront.

We try to outweigh the bad with the good. It's really no different than the scale mentality that I hope in the end, my good is going to somehow outweigh the bad. Listen, this whole sermon starts with the flavor of the Beatitudes.

God is interested that we go below the surface. What are we? Remember, give in secret, pray in secret, fast in secret. That's in this.

What are you in secret? What are you below the surface? That's what God's interested in. That's the issue. Brethren, if I speak in the tongues of men and angels, you see, you can do all these wonderful things, but I have not loved.

I'm a noisy God or a clanging cymbal. If I have all prophetic powers, understand all the mysteries and all the knowledge. See, these are the things that wow men.

The things that wow men are big ministries, growing churches, outward things, lots of people, numbers, money, apparent gifts being expressed, things that cause men to really sit up and take notice. But Paul says, you know what, all of that, you can understand all these mysteries, have all this knowledge. You can have faith so as to remove mountains.

But if you have not loved, if I have not loved, he's talking about himself, I'm nothing. If I gave away all I have and deliver up my body to be burned, but have not loved, I gain nothing. Oh, brethren, you know the Christian is said by Peter to be a partaker of the divine nature.

And you know what that means? It means of a necessity that that reality is going to be manifest in the life of the true Christian. We can't, brethren, we can't just be concerned with appearances only. The reality is what counts with God.

Now, I'm just going to end with this. Brethren, verse 23, I'm going to focus here at the end of these words. I never knew you.

Verse 23. That's interesting because you know what? Jesus says, you workers of lawlessness, he knew something about them. Sounds like he knew quite a bit about them.

He's quite familiar with their sins. He's quite familiar with their lawless deeds and the fact that they didn't conform to the will of the Father. And so, you know, the question comes up, well, if he knew so much about them, how in the world can he say, I never knew you? Well, it's got everything to do with how the word know or knew is being used here.

This obviously has a deeper meaning than just knowing certain facts about somebody. Jesus, we see this lamb in the book of Revelation and he has seven eyes. Seven eyes is a symbolic representation of perfect vision.

You are naked before God. You're naked before Christ. He sees all.

So how can he say he knows somebody and to somebody else, I don't know you or I never knew you. I mean, brethren, there's really nothing more important than the reality expressed in these terms. And so I'm just going to rattle these off.

Formerly, when you did not know God, so that's a way to talk about a lost person. They don't know God. You were enslaved to those who by nature are not God's.

But now that you have come to know God or rather to be known by God. Yeah, I love that. A Christian when he gets saved, he goes from not knowing God to knowing God, but rather being known by God.

Exodus 33, the Lord said to Moses, this very thing that you've spoken, I will do for you have found favor in my sight. And I know you by name. He knows all our names.

See, it's a special, it's a unique, it's a particular, it's a peculiar kind of intimate knowing is what we have here. John 10, 14, I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me.

1 Corinthians 8, 3. If anyone loves God, he is known by God. And remember, if anyone loves God, he's known by God. If you love me, keep my commandments.

You see, it's all goes hand in hand. 2 Timothy 2, 19. But God's firm foundation stands bearing the seal.

The Lord knows those who are his. And Amos, Amos 3. Hear this word that the Lord has spoken against you, O people of Israel, against the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt. You only have I known of all the families of the earth.

Now, of course, he knew about all the other nations. This is a special relationship with someone. And we know, we can get into the intimacy realm, that Adam knew Eve, his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain.

Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth. When Jesus says, I never knew you, depart from me. Do you really hear what he's saying to these self-deceived people? He's saying this, there was never any intimacy between us.

There was no abiding in me. We had no contact. There was no closeness.

You never came to me. You never came to abide and dwell there. You never came to draw your spiritual resources from me.

All these things you've done, all these supposed religious credentials that you've heaped out there, all these things, I had nothing to do with them. I didn't help you do those things. I didn't, I did not empower you to do that.

That was not done because you were a branch abiding in me, the vine, and all those nutrients. We weren't connected. I did not know you.

These things, these things had nothing to do with me. I wasn't at your side empowering. I was not the rock on which you stood.

What's most important of all is this. Do I know the Lord, Jesus Christ? Does he know me? Therefore a man shall leave his father. You need to get this.

A man shall leave his father and hold fast to his wife. What's that? Hold fast. There's a tightness, there's a closeness, and the two shall become one flesh.

See, while we know marriage is being consummated, what's all I got to do? This mystery is profound, and I'm saying it refers to Christ and the church. Anything we have in marriage, the reality is found in Christ and his people. Jesus is not interested in mere professions, mere church going and all our activities.

He isn't interested in people trying to manufacture some sort of religious experience simply to escape hell, and people do that all the time. They don't want to go to hell. That's a terrible place.

I know it creates fear, and so in the end, they're trying to do something, make something happen. What Jesus is saying is his desire is to know you. He wants you.

He wants your heart. He wants your love. He wants your obedience.

He wants your submission. That's what a husband wants from a wife. I mean, when that husband clings to that wife, that wife is to love him.

There's to be intimacy there. There's to be submission on her part, honor on her part. Brethren, people often say, Lord, Lord.

People say all sorts of things. They like to talk up their wonderful achievements, and you know what it comes down to? It's all themselves. It's all about themselves.

All sorts of religious people doing all sorts of things, and all the while, they're just resisting the Lord, and that, brethren, that is the great, great, great insult to Christ. Jesus is saying to these people, you did all your religious activity without knowing me. I mean, you weren't walking the woods or on your knees in that secret place, trying to see my face, trying to come close, trying to smell the aroma and the fragrance that came off me.

You weren't calling on me. You weren't resting on me. You basically did these things, and you did them yourself.

You did all this religious activity. You've come to this great day expecting me to welcome you into the glory, while all along you've been withholding from me true love and true allegiance and true submission. You've tried to be a Christian without making love to me, is basically what he's saying.

I never knew you. You've tried to be a bride of Christ without ever embracing me. It didn't happen.

You never submitted to me. You didn't honor me. You've insisted on retaining control of your own life.

You've allowed your own opinions to hold sway rather than what I've called you to do, you and I as husband and wife together, going about our father's will. Brethren, we just boil it down to this. I mean, Jesus said this, the one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge.

Do you know what the judge is going to be? The very words that you reject. He says in the last day, the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. You know what? When Jesus speaks, that is a trumpet call to submit.

That is a clarion call to bow, to worship. When Jesus speaks, it demands a response. We just have to ask ourselves, is he who he says he is? Is he that judge who's going to meet us at that day and his words are going to hold sway? Is he really the one that came from heaven 2,000 years ago? Did he really come here and work out a righteousness and behalf of his people? Did he do that? Did he refuse to come down from

the cross because on that cross, sin had to be paid for? Did that happen? Is he the only hope? Is he your only hope? Is that the hope? Did he rise? Did he soar through the heavens and take the seat there on David's throne? We have to ask ourselves these questions.

Did this really happen? If you really believe these things, brethren, there's only one inevitable deduction. You need him. You cannot survive him.

You cannot survive today without him. You cannot do anything that's going to be pleasing to God without this Christ. You've got to be in him.

You've got to draw from him. You've got to abide in him. You've got to live in him.

You've got to cling to him. There's got to be a trust. I mean, your full weight has to be on him.

There's no plan B. It's all Christ or nothing, all in. And if he is who he says he is, he is absolutely entitled to your whole life. It means that when he speaks, you and I need to listen.

We've got to listen. If you're apathetic about him and his will and his father's will, and you stay in that state, these three words are coming. Depart from me.

But brethren, the reality is this. When he says, him that comes to me, I will in no wise cast out. What he is saying is this.

If you come to me broken, you come to me damaged goods, you come to me a liar, you come to me a fornicator, you come to me a drunk, you come to me in all your self-righteousness, you come to me in your pride, you come to me in your ugliness, looking to be healed by me, wanting to know me and really who I am and the kind of Savior I am. He says, I won't cast you out. I will know you.

I will lay my arms around you. And just like it was when Ruth went to Boaz and he covered her with the corner, he'll cover you. He'll cover you with his robe of righteousness and he'll know you.

And brethren, he'll deliver you from your poverty. He'll make you his bride. He'll know you and you'll know him.

And scripture says, be faithful unto death and you will receive a crown of life. Brethren, may God grant us to be honest and face ourselves honestly. You don't want to hear those words in that day.

Brethren, we are saved by grace through faith. This is very gracious of our God. Just be clear.

But he saves us. He saves us well. He saves us into submission to the Father and he saves us to be his bride.

He saves us to know us. He saves us for intimacy. He doesn't want religion.

He wants you. He wants your heart. He wants your all.

Father, I pray that you'd own these words. Do good to these people through them, I pray in Christ's name. Amen.

You are dismissed.

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