

Sermon on the Mount: Matthew 7:21-23

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Bible Text: Matthew 7:21-23

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You know, eternity is not going to be enough time for us to express the grace of God and I am eagerly looking forward to that is that as Robert Murray McCheyne said in that famous hymn that “Then shall I fully know how much I really owe.” And, you see, now we look with the eye of faith and we see the truths of the Scriptures. But then when we see him face to face, the one who gave himself for us no doubt sin will be history, no more and no longer a divided heart, but we will see him as he is and we will love him. And I tell you what. Eternity, what a time that is going to be in the kingdom where righteousness dwelleth.

November the ninth of 2008 I believe that we can say it is the providence of God that has brought us together this day and he has allowed us, once more., to be instructed from his Word. And my prayer is this. It is that as we have come together in the name of Christ and how we have come together in the providence of God in the name of Christ to Calvary Baptist Church may we this morning be allowed to hear his Word.

And then, Lord, as you have brought us together will you enable us and help us to respond to your Word and that when we stand before you that we might hear these words, “Well done,” and that we have listened well and by the grace of God that we have responded well and that we have followed through with his Word and that we...our lives have been a reflection of the glory of his grace that has warmed and quickened our hearts and has allowed us to respond to him.

We have been on a journey through the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew chapter seven. We are almost done with this sermon and we have come to verses 21 through 23. And there will you with me this morning read these verses?

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.¹

¹ Matthew 7:21-23

Our gracious heavenly Father, we thank you that you have assembled us in the name of the Lord Jesus this morning and we readily confess that these are serious words, that these are serious teachings of the Lord Jesus. We pray that we might have ears to hear. We pray that your Spirit would so work in us and be our teacher, we pray this morning that we will find ourselves not in this group, but that we will find ourselves those who have gone through that narrow gate and who are on that narrow path that leads to life.

And so, Lord, this morning we look to you and we pray that you would enable us. Enable me as I speak and enable all of us that we might hear to the profit and to the saving of our souls. We ask it in Jesus' name and for his sake.

As we began two weeks ago to look at these four verses, these three verses, and we didn't finish and I wanted to finish it, there is no doubt we have seen in chapter seven of the Sermon on the Mount incredible teaching truths that are there very serious for us. And as we looked at it overall we looked at the immediate context. You remember "Judge not, that ye be not judged,"² "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs,"³ the necessity of prayer, that we are to ask and it shall be given.

And I want to say how strategically verse seven is located in the midst of marvellous sermon and that we would realize and recognize that as we have been confronted with the truth, as the truth has been very searching and as we find that on a every day basis there are decisions that we need to make, there are cross roads that we stand before, how necessary it is for us to ask and it shall be given, to seek an to find and to knock and it shall be opened unto us and that we find that the Lord in all of that, in these truths that he is teaching us, that he is desiring to us that we would learn not just simply filling our heads with teaching and truths and somehow or another to have a system in our head that we can say, "I understand some of the deep truths of the Scriptures." But, you see, that in all that we know how to apply it in our daily living. That is what the Word of God is for.

Then he has given us the golden rule. And there in that golden rule how often do we find ourselves that I don't know how to respond in this situation with people that are around me. The Lord tells us in chapter seven verse 12, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."⁴

And then as we further on in this passage we find that the Lord Jesus calls us to respond. And, folks, I want to tell you something. And we want to be very careful here because, you see, there is a constant tension between our understanding of the sovereignty of God, we understand that the Lord calls us to life and to righteousness and holiness. But yet at the same time there... apart from the workings of God that enables us, we will not respond to the things of God. But at the same time when we find there is a mystery here that, you see, when we look at the Word of God how saving faith comes and it is applied. It comes by the hearing and it is the hearing of God's Word and that when we find... You

² Matthew 7:1

³ Matthew 7:6

⁴ Matthew 7:12

know, years ago I used to think the reason I was a Christian is because I did something. It is I. But then I began to look in the Scriptures that it was not the I at all, that the Lord in his mercy and grace exposed me to the truths, you see, of the Word of God and where I was lost and undone as a sinner and showed me my terrible plight, that I was lost and helpless, a child of wrath even as others and that, you see, in that whole process of regeneration and giving new life and being born from above, it was all the work of God and the work of grace that warmed my heart and drew me with bands of love to himself.

As we read the Sermon on the Mount we have been confronted with the Word of God. Faith comes and it comes by hearing and the hearing of the Word of God. And the Lord Jesus, no doubt, has exposed us to real Christianity.

I know that on many a sermon I have started, do we want to know what real Christianity is? Do you know what it is? Do you want to know and do we want to know what a child of God is? Do we want to know the characteristics and the disposition of the heart of those that call themselves the followers of the Lord Jesus? All we have to do is go to the Sermon on the Mount and there he shows us how different we are. And there we find the far reaching consequences of the grace of God that changes the heart and the life of those who were at one time were not a people, but now are the people of God. We see how God changes lives.

And so he comes to the conclusion and the Lord calls us to respond. And, you see, the call of responding to the things of God, to the sermon is, in verse 13 where he says:

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life.⁵

And, folks, that's the path that we want to be on. We don't want to be on this path that has gone through that broad gate, that wide gate. We don't want to be on this path that has a broad path and a broad way that somehow or another under the umbrella of what we would call Christianity and then we would stand before the Lord and he would, "Depart from me ye that work iniquity, I never knew you."⁶

And so we find here that the Lord is saying to us we must be sure that I have gone through that narrow gate which is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

Folks, there is but one path that leads to heaven. There is but one path that leads to the kingdom of God and it is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ and his finished work. There is none other, you see, that, you see, leads to, "I am the way, the truth, and the life,"⁷ the Lord Jesus is saying that, "no [one] cometh to the Father but by me."⁸

⁵ Matthew 7:13-14

⁶ See Matthew 7:23

⁷ John 14:6

⁸ Ibid.

As we go on further in this passage it is all connected to what we have read just a little while ago, that the Lord has given to us a warning. And he says, “Listen and pay attention.” “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves,”⁹ “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”¹⁰

When the apostle Paul is saying good bye to the Ephesian elders he meets with the Ephesian elders and he says, “Do you know what? I was with you in the time that I was with you. I did not hold back of any truths, you see, that are profitable to you. But, you see, I declared unto you the whole counsel of God.”¹¹

And, you see, that is what we must do. And then he says, “And when I am leaving you and as soon as I am gone,” he said, “There is going to be coming these. There is going to be wolves that will come in sheep clothing and what are they going to do? They are going to take your eyes and get your heart away from those things which are vital and which are important.”¹²

The Lord Jesus would say to us in 2008, “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”¹³ “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”¹⁴

And so it behooves us is that we would constantly... You see, we constantly that we are serious about what we read and what we listen to. Just because somebody has sent a fish on a bumper or somewhere it says the name of Jesus or has some kind of identification with the Lord Jesus Christ they look good, they have a great personality, they have the gifts of orator, they can speak powerfully, the masses are following him just because of that. You cannot say that this one is one that is not a false prophet that is coming in sheep’s clothing. We must examine and measure out everything by the Word of God.

Now this morning, continuing in our examination of the words of the Lord Jesus, what a sobering thought and at the same time I believe that we ought to say, “Lord, will you help me to evaluate and to examine myself to see whether I am truly yours, whether I am joined in a saving way to the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Now, I don’t know about you, but these are searching words when the Lord Jesus is saying, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.”¹⁵ Would that not cause us or should that not cause us to stop and to ask, “Am I truly saved? Am I truly a child of God? Am I on the path that leads to life? Aren’t these sobering words that ought to produce in me, in my heart, a desire that I would make sure that I am born from above?”

⁹ Matthew 7:15

¹⁰ Matthew 7:20

¹¹ See Acts 20:20

¹² See Acts 20:29

¹³ Matthew 7:15

¹⁴ Matthew 7:20

¹⁵ Matthew 7:21

Recently—and I mentioned that a couple of weeks ago—where people had come to me and said, “Pastor, I have been wondering about and I have been worried about whether I am truly saved.”

And, you know, folks. I want to tell you something. That is a good thing that we ought to stop and say, “Yes, I want to know. Am I truly joined to the Lord Jesus?”

And then as you begin to evaluate and to search and to say, “According to the Word of God do I have the evidences and the fruit of that which is truly the work of grace, that work that takes place in the heart? Do I see the evidences that I have passed from death to life? Do I have the evidences that I have been born from above and I have the life of God within me?” That is good. That we ought to stop and make sure in that which we profess.

You remember three weeks ago Ken’s sermon? Boy, he said, “Hey, we ought to give the more earnest heed. We ought to stop and evaluate: Am I truly?”

And so we are to stop and to take time for that. It was Peter that said, “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure.”¹⁶ Paul said to the Corinthians, “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”¹⁷ And Paul says, “But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.”¹⁸ Then, of course, that marvellous passage that we quote often times from Psalms 139, “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts.”¹⁹

I just want to say to you, folks, when we come and we have the real thing in us there is nothing to fear, that the Lord in the Word of God and the Spirit of God will communicate to us, “Yes, I am” and “Yes, you are,” and that we can say, “I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine,” that we can say we are assured in the heart that, “I know that he brings a poor vile sinner into his house of wine.”

But, folks, if you are not, thing of the grace of God that has stopped us where we are in the path of that broad way underneath that umbrella of religion and would it be a... is it not a gracious thing and a marvellous thing to think that the Lord in his mercy would say, “Stop and evaluate and see if you are in the faith.”

And these are sobering teaches that we have seen so far, the wide gate, the broad way, the false teacher, the fruit, the path of destruction. And all of that, you see, is under the umbrella of Christianity.

¹⁶ 2 Peter 1:10

¹⁷ 2 Corinthians 13:5

¹⁸ 2 Corinthians 13:6

¹⁹ Psalm 139:23

The Lord is saying to us in this passage, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.”²⁰ Naming the name of Christ, calling him Lord and going through the motions does not mean salvation. Simply saying or professing that I am a member of the largest evangelical denomination in the world, I am a member of a Southern Baptist Church, or saying, “I have been baptized,” or, you see, or you can say, “Well, my name is on a church roll,” or simply going through the motions and singing, “Lord of my life I crown thee now,” or singing, “Lord, Lord,” on some of the other things and going through the mechanics, the Lord Jesus is real plain here when he says, “have we not prophesied in thy name?”²¹ perhaps taught a Sunday school lesson, perhaps preached a sermon, maybe even been on a mission trip or maybe have even exercised all kinds of things in the name of Christ even as the Lord says, “have we not prophesied?”²² or they say to the Lord, “have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?”²³

Perhaps you have given your money and tithes and offerings religiously or all kinds of many different activities. We find that the verses before, “Broad is the road that leads to destruction and many are on that path.”²⁴

The second thing that we find in this passage, very plain and clear, our Lord tells us—listen to these words—“But he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”²⁵

Listen. You want to know, “How do I know that I am saved?”

Well, what does the Word of God and what does the will of God mean in my life? Don’t we read in the next verse, in verse 24, listen to it? Look at the next verse, in verse 24. And it is so important. He said at the closing of this sermon. And we find that the Lord Jesus is saying, “Therefore...” Class, you all know that one of the questions that you ask when you come to a therefore? What is it that we are asking the question? What is the question we are asking therefore? The lesson is what? What is this therefore there for? Why is this therefore here? The Lord Jesus is making application. He is saying he has gone through all of this thing. He says, “The straight gate, here is the broad way, here are false prophets, by their fruit you will know them.” He says, “Not everyone that saith, Lord, Lord...” And now he comes and he makes application.

He says, “Therefore...” What is he saying? “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine...”²⁶ and what? “Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine...”²⁷ And what? “Doeth them.”²⁸

²⁰ Matthew 7:21

²¹ Matthew 7:22

²² Ibid

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ See Matthew 7:13

²⁵ Matthew 7:21

²⁶ Matthew 7:24

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

You know, on Wednesday nights we have been looking at the book of James for a long time, haven't we, Mobile? And one of the lessons in the book of James, folks, and it is all connected, you can see, how the truths of the Word of God are all connected. I know there is some controversy that someone has said, you know, Luther called the book of James his straw epistle. He didn't like it.

You see and the reason that Luther had so spoke out against what he felt like was not a solid epistle of the Word of God was because of the fact that James was saying, "Show me your faith by your works."²⁹

And, you see, Paul asked that in the book of Romans when he says, "Do we continue in sin that grace would abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?"³⁰

And so we find here on one hand that here is James saying... And James is saying in that whole book and if you want to give that book a theme I believe that you can give that book a theme of that saving faith is tested and tried and saving faith is seen by how it responds to the Word of God.

Now, folks, I don't know about you, but, you know, I am going to be 65 years old my next birthday. I came to know the Lord Jesus. I had made a public profession in 1966. We spent 10 years in this church building right here. And I mean we are talking about being challenged with the Word of God for 10 years. We have been to Bible conferences. We have gone through systematic Bible studies. We have gone through all kinds of activities since 1966, 42 years. And then I want to say, you know, "What is it that I heard and what is it that I heard and how is it that we heard have we translated that into godly living?"

James saying is this. He said, "Be not a hearer only, deceiving yourselves, but be ye a doer of that Word."³¹ And then he says, "Whosoever looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, this hearer will be blessed indeed."³²

The Lord Jesus is saying, "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine..."³³ And I want to say to you, folks, what are we doing with God's Word? What do we do with the Word of God that is being preached faithfully? And what do we do with the Sunday school lessons that have been taught faithfully? What do we do with our daily bread that we read faithfully? What do we do with all that we draw from the Word of God? Are we simply storing it up in our head that we may give a defense of the faith? Or are we truly conformed into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ? Are we hearing what he is saying and are we doing them?

²⁹ See James 2:18

³⁰ See Romans 6:1-2

³¹ See James 1:23

³² See James 1:24

³³ Matthew 7:24

What has he been saying on the Sermon on the Mount? What has he been saying?

In another place in the gospel of John the Lord Jesus is saying—listen to these words in chapter eight verse 29—and he said

He that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him [and] As he spake these words, many believed on him.³⁴

Boy, isn't it incredible? I mean, the Lord Jesus comes. He preaches. And I want to tell you something, folks. When you listen to some of the sermons that the Lord Jesus preached, you know he has the whole crowd. He has got thousands of people following him. Did you know that? The Lord Jesus would have never made it in our day as an evangelist because by the time the Lord Jesus was done with him, those that listened to him said, "This is an hard saying; who can [bear] it?"³⁵

And I mean we are talking about these thousands of people that have believed on him and the Lord Jesus made it very plain to them that you must be taught of God. You must be drawn by the Father. And when he is all done with him and that he points the finger at himself and says, "I am the way,"³⁶ "I am the bread of life,"³⁷ "I am the light of the world,"³⁸ "I am the one that has come," when he has made it very plain to them that it is only him there is any hope for salvation they said, "This is an hard saying; who can [bear] it?"³⁹ And do you know what they done? They all left him.

The modern day evangelist and evangelism school would have said, "You have literally failed. You had them eating out of your hands and what did you do with them?"

They would have given him an F⁺ for the fact of how he responded to... And then he turns to his disciples and what does he say to them? He says, "Will you leave me also?"⁴⁰

And Peter said, "To whom shall we go? You have the words of life."⁴¹

"As he spake these words, many believed on him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him..."⁴² Listen to it. Underline it. Listen to me. Young people, are you listening? It is not good enough, young people, to have gone through Falls Creek and made a profession of faith. It is not good enough to have gone through the baptismal water. You must know in the hearts of your hearts that I am his and that the Word of God

³⁴ John 8:29-30

³⁵ John 6:60

³⁶ John 14:6

³⁷ John 6:35

³⁸ John 8:12, 9:5

³⁹ See John 6:60

⁴⁰ See John 6:67

⁴¹ See John 6:68

⁴² John 8:30-31

and that the life of Christ is real in you. And it does something. “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”⁴³

We used to have a pastor here. He had this saying. You know there are lots of people that started the walk of faith, but there are some disturbing statistics that we have been bombarded with for a number of years. You all have heard of Barnard that does all of the research in Christian churches. And it is a frightening thing of some of the things that he has discovered, that there is a majority of those that are in Christian churches that deny the reality of creation and they deny the reality of the Lord Jesus as being sinless. And there are statistics that prove that I want to say to you young people, those of you that are here this morning, statistics would say that in a couple of three years you are no longer going to be sitting in the pew and warming the pew and listening to the words of Christ.

Now I didn't make that up. But those are frightening, sobering thoughts. And we must be plain with that. Our pulpits must stand and boldly begin to preach the truths of the Scriptures uncompromisingly. Here is what it is. That, you see, if we believe on the Lord Jesus the response of grace is this that the Lord gives us hearts and he says, “If you continue in my words you are going to be my disciples indeed.”⁴⁴ And so listening to the Word of God. Those that do the will of the Father...

In Mathew chapter 21 verse 28 we read:

But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not.⁴⁵

The question that the Lord Jesus is asking: “Which one of these two did the will of his Father?”⁴⁶ They answered, “The first.” And Jesus said unto them, “Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.”⁴⁷

And, you see, it all fits when you think about that crowd that the Lord Jesus was preaching to in teaching his disciples. And he opened up the message of the kingdom of God. I mean, this religious crowd, you know, they were swallowing gnats and they were swallowing what? Camels. Isn't that what they were doing? They were straining gnats, but they were swallowing camels.

And the very thing, you see, that the Lord Jesus is addressing here is this. And it is all at the heart of it. I am not sure whether we are going to get to it today or not. But it all has to do with that position and disposition of the heart, how we respond to the things of God.

⁴³ John 8:31-32

⁴⁴ See John 8:31

⁴⁵ Matthew 21:28-30

⁴⁶ See Matthew 21:31

⁴⁷ Matthew 21:31

We are not talking about simply being obedient in a cold, mechanical way, but a heart that loves God and responds to God because he first loved me.

Listen to the Lord's prayer in John chapter 17.

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.⁴⁸

Now what is eternal life? What is it? "And this is life eternal [listen], that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."⁴⁹

Now, folks, we can draw a parallel from this verse to the one when he said, "Depart from me. I never knew you."⁵⁰

Let me tell you what. To be a Christian, to be saved is to have an intimate knowledge of God. Not just a head thing in our heads, but, you see, a heart thing that springs from our heart that I know him and I know that he knows me.

Now listen to what the Lord Jesus is praying.

I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.⁵¹

And then he says, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have..."⁵² What? "They have kept thy word."⁵³

You can't get away from it. It is all in the Scripture. Over and over again he says, "Why do you call me Lord, Lord and do not the things that I say?"⁵⁴

The opposite from doing the will of the Father and doing the will of God and the responding to the words of Christ, what is the opposite of that? And I wrote down on my notes, "The opposite of doing the will of the Father is the we or the I."

Have we not? Have we not? It is the we, the I, you see, that when it comes right down to it it is responding from what I want to do.

⁴⁸ John 17:1-2

⁴⁹ John 17:3

⁵⁰ See Matthew 7:23

⁵¹ John 17:4-5

⁵² John 17:6

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Luke 6:46

As I was going over these notes I was thinking of the passage of Scripture in 2 Timothy chapter three. And there where the apostle Paul writes to Timothy and he talks about the fact that in the last days—and, folks, listen to me. If there is in any doubt in your mind, we are in the last days. "In the last days," he says, "perilous times [will] come."⁵⁵

He speaks of the fact to Timothy and I mean we are talking about 2000 years ago he says, "In the last days perilous times [will] come."⁵⁶ And, folks, in the church history you can point your finger at this and that and this and that. But I want to ask you something. Listen to the description of where we are under the umbrella of Christianity and does this not describe being on that broad road that leads to destruction? Listen to this brand of Christianity. Listen to it.

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come."⁵⁷ Now here is the description. "For men shall be lovers of their own selves."⁵⁸ Is that not the I and the we?

For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.⁵⁹

We are not talking about the world here, folks. We are not talking about the world. We are talking about the fact that, you see, in the next verse, in five he says, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."⁶⁰ He is talking about those who name the name of Christ and name the name of God who are underneath that umbrella. He says, "Here is what it is going to be like and here is the description." It is the we and I.

Let me tell you what we have done. You see, what we have done in our day is we have literally have withdrawn ourselves from being honest and preaching the truth of the Word of God, what it means to be saved.

Paul continues. He says:

For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.⁶¹

Can you imagine that? Can you imagine? Can you imagine having a form of godliness and not the power? Can you imagine ever learning and not ever really coming to the

⁵⁵ 2 Timothy 3:1

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ 2 Timothy 3:2

⁵⁹ 2 Timothy 3:2-4

⁶⁰ 2 Timothy 3:5

⁶¹ 2 Timothy 3:6-7

truth? Can you imagine going through the religious mechanics and all of that educational system and not ever be affected by it and naming the name of Christ and doing all kinds of mighty things? And then we stand before the Lord Jesus and he says, “I don’t know you.”⁶²

Let me tell you what. We had better hear these words while we are alive and while we have breath and that we can run and flee into the presence of Christ and that we can sing with the song writer, “Hallelujah, what a Savior.”

You see, here is the religion.

Well, let me quote another passage, Titus chapter one verse 14. And we find there are those that:

...giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth. Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.⁶³

And then verse 16 he says, “They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”⁶⁴

What is this religion of the we and the I? What is this religion? And I think there is this brand of religion in our day particularly. And I believe that the religion of the we and I—and here is what I wrote down: “When I, when I, when convenient, when fitting, when with what and how it fits me... What do you mean the lordship of Christ?”

You see, the religion and that which we have in our day is a sense of bringing the Lord Jesus alongside. We like to have the idea that Jesus is my copilot. It is a wonderful thing that I have made a profession of faith and I have an insurance policy. I have a connection with the Church that is a fire escape, you see, when it comes. And, you see, somehow or another the pulpits have been quiet with that. We have not stood and said, “This is false teaching. This comes from false prophets.”

The truth is the Lord Jesus is saying, “But he that doeth the will of my Father...”⁶⁵

You may be here and you say, “Preacher, I thought that salvation was by grace and not of works. I don’t understand.”

What do you think?

⁶² See Matthew 7:23

⁶³ Titus 1:14-15

⁶⁴ Titus 1:16

⁶⁵ See Matthew 7:21

Folks, if we don't understand let me tell you what? We do not understand the grace of God. What does it mean to be saved? What do we mean by that to be saved?

You know, I sat down in my office as I was driving over here this morning. I was thinking, "You know, I need to make this very plain and I need to put it down in just a few words and how can I make it plain and communicate these things when I think about that we make plain the message of the gospel and that we make plain and you see that when we invite people to be saved do we explain it and declare it rightly so?"

Do you understand? And I believe that the reason we are is where we are in our day and we are underneath the umbrella of Christianity where there is such a sad, sad thing that there are some statistics that say that over 50%, they believe that over 50% of the people that warm the pews every week do not know the Lord Jesus even though they have been going to church all of their lives.

Now, folks, there is something that is wrong. Would you agree with me? I mean would you agree something is nothing is not right.

And so I set down this morning just briefly, let me just read to you real quickly these notes.

What is the message of the gospel? And I began with A, B, C, D, E and F and I started off with the fact that we are in a sinful world and that we are sinners and we are lost and undone and we are separated from God.

Number three. We are dead spiritually and we have absolutely no goods and wherewithal to respond to God. As a matter of God there are none that seek after God, no not one.⁶⁶

The fourth thing is—and that is the truth of the Scriptures—that if we are in a state of unbelief, the wrath of God abides on us.⁶⁷ Now, folks, I didn't write that. John chapter three verse 36 very plainly and clearly that those who are in a state of unbelief, it says the wrath of God abides on them.⁶⁸

The fifth thing is that I wrote down was this is that judgment is waiting and judgment is past and the eternal wrath of God, and you see, and the wrath which is the just response of a righteous, holy God, as we were singing this morning, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts,"⁶⁹ folks, our sin separates us from God. We are hopelessly lost and undone.

Secondly, there is a Savior and there is the love of God for the world, but, folks, there is not a sentimental love of God that somehow or another where he takes and he turns from our sins. He takes our sins. God comes and becomes man and he lives in your likeness and mine. He comes as a man and he lives his life from the time he is in the cradle, from

⁶⁶ See Romans 3:10,12

⁶⁷ See John 3:36

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Isaiah 6:3

the time he is there born in Bethlehem until he hangs there on Calvary's cross. What is the Lord Jesus doing? He is living on your behalf and on mine. He is the just and the righteous, the substitute that takes all the things that you and I trample under our feet, that we despise by nature. The Lord Jesus lives and he responds with a heart of obedience to the heavenly Father and there on Calvary's cross, the sword of justice comes out of the heavenly Father and he pierces his Son for our sins.

We are not to take sin lightly. And so we find that the holiness of God and the justice of God and the condemnation of God, the Lord Jesus he is there, the substitute, the satisfaction, the resurrection, the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ and we preach the gospel message to a lost and dying world.

But that is not all there is. What is it that God wants from us? Does God want from us the stuff that we look for in the grocery stores, the stuff that has no fat content, the 2%, the less this? Do we want and I believe that we have a society and we are shaping a whole society to the gospel light that whatever you think it feels like and it is convenient to you? What is it that God wants from us? God wants from us our affections and our love and our responding to him in love?

And, folks, we do not have it by nature. God wants us to love him with all of our hearts, with all of our souls, with all of our strength, with all of our minds. He wants us to love him, you see, with all that we are. And that is not a part time thing.

You know what we ought to do with our children? We need to teach our children they are to love God. And I want to tell you something. You don't have to teach our children to sin. They have a sinful nature and they will do whatever just because it comes natural. And do you want me to tell you what we need to do? Is we need to take the Word of God plainly and lay it before our children and then we need to say to our children, "Here is what God wants us to do."

And then when our children respond and they are not the little innocent children they are, that you see, I came forth from my mother's womb, speaking lies,⁷⁰ "In sin did my mother conceive me."⁷¹ Our children are not innocent. Our children are sinners and when we... when as parents we ought to take our children and expose their heart readily and right early to them and that we show them that what God wants for me you do not have. You have got to be saved. And as parents that we do all that we can to confront them with the holiness of God and the wickedness and the evil of sin that separates us from God that we ought to confront them right early and at an early age on they will come to the conviction and the power of sin and that they will come to their mommas and daddies and say, "What do I need to do to be saved? I want to be saved."

Remember, what the Lord Jesus was addressing in the Sermon on the Mount? Was he not addressing the old external code and mechanical hypocrisy? Did he not put his finger

⁷⁰ See Psalm 58:3

⁷¹ Psalm 51:5

on the problem, that which is missing the heart and the love for God and the response of love of gratitude? Is that not what is missing what the Lord Jesus is addressing?

The message is this, my friend. We are here this morning and the message is the good news and that I realize and I recognize that I am lost and undone, that I am a child of wrath even as others, that I and me, myself and I stood in the way of my life in my life. That is what ruled my life, the world, the flesh and the devil. And I have come face to face with the reality that the Lord is saying not everybody that says, "Lord, Lord," or somehow I have gone through the baptismal water... If there is not a heart and a love for God, my friends, you are lost. You are lost. And that you come to the place and that you realize and recognize that I am wrong. I have not loved God. I have loved myself. I love myself. I do with my time what I want to do. I do what I want to do when I want to do it and leave me alone with God. And then on Sunday we bring the Lord Jesus along and we sit down and we sing, "Oh, how I love Jesus."

Folks, we are better off not singing it.

You say, "Preacher, why are you preaching that?"

Because it is the words of Christ and "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock."⁷²

And so we come to the place and I realize that I am lost and undone and I don't have. And then we hear the words of the gospel of the Lord Jesus. What is the words of the gospel? John the Baptist preached it. He said, "Repent for the kingdom of God is at hand."⁷³ The Lord Jesus preached it. He said, "Repent and turn from your sins."

I mean don't we find and we see if by the grace of God and the work of the Spirit of God that we come to the place to see that I am wrong, I have sinned and I must turn?

What is this thing that we call salvation? It is that which we come, by the grace of God and the work of the Word of God dying to self and taking up your cross.

Folks, the Lord Jesus is not going to settle. There is no other Savior. The Lord Jesus wants our allegiance and our hearts. He wants us. He wants 100% of it.

We don't turn the Lord Jesus on like we turn on the remote control on our television. Then when we are done we turn it off and now go... That is not what he wants from us. He wants from us our hearts.

You say, "How in the world is that possible?"

It is the work of the Spirit of God. We call it regeneration. We call it conversion. We call it, you see, a change, a new life, a new direction. We call it a radical change, you see,

⁷² Matthew 7:24

⁷³ Mark 1:15

that that which was once not the case at all before dead in trespasses and sins with no heart of God, the Spirit of God he quickens us and he gives us a new heart and a new life.

Oh, Hallelujah. What a Savior. And that is all I can say. Hallelujah. What a Savior. I mean, Hallelujah, what a Savior.

That goes beyond just do you love him? How do you love him? Do you only love him part time? Do you take the crown off of his head or you put it off of his head and put it on yours? And whenever it is convenient to you, you put it back on his head? Isn't that what has been portrayed in our day?

Listen to me, folks, That which is portrayed in our day and preached and proclaimed from thousands of pulpits is this, that God wants you happy. God wants you to be prosperous. God wants you to be healthy. God wants you to have all of this stuff whenever it is fitting to you. You know, sow your seed of this and that and you will have it. What about the God of holiness that said, "I am holy, be ye therefore also holy."⁷⁴

A new heart, a new creature, a new direction and new Lord new God and new allegiance. Love for... Oh, my friend. Is that not what the Lord Jesus has in mind when we compare it to what we hear in our day what God wants from us?

That was my notes that I wrote after I got home, after I got here to the church this morning.

We are still not done. But do we understand the grace of God?

And let me close with these verses. It is by grace are we saved and it is through faith. It is not of yourselves. It is the gift of God.⁷⁵

Bob, do we believe that?

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.⁷⁶

Now, you know, usually we leave verse 10 out. Do you know what salvation is? Salvation is the work of grace whereby he changes your nature, he gives you a new heart. He takes the bondage of sin. The chains that we have had all of our lives. He takes them off. The prison house is opened up. You see, we have a new nature and all of this is done by the grace of God for we are his what? "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus."⁷⁷ To do what?

⁷⁴ See Leviticus 11:44-45; 1 Peter 1:16

⁷⁵ See Ephesians 2:8

⁷⁶ Ephesians 2:8-9

⁷⁷ Ephesians 2:10

If any man hears these sayings of mine and those that do the will of the Father...⁷⁸ He is saying, “We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”⁷⁹

Now, folks, when the grace of God hath quickened you and given you new life, life from above, when you have been born from above, I have got news for you. There is going to be a heart that beats toward God and it is not going to be a question of whether you love him. Wherever you are in your chronology and your spiritual growth, if you are new born baby in the Lord Jesus or if you are 40 years in the faith I have got news for you. The heart beats the same. It is the heart that desires to love God, and to respond to his Word.

And if you don't respond to his Word there is only one thing that you need to do. It is this. You need to say, “Lord, I'm wrong. I have been wrong. I have been preaching... I have gone through the motions. I am going to turn and repent. And I am going to embrace the Lord Jesus as our Lord and Savior. I want to be saved.”

And then when we stand before the Lord with his all seeing eye, what are we going to hear? I mean what do we want to hear? What do we want to hear? We want to hear, “Well done, enter into rest.”

Oh, may the Lord give us the grace and the eyes and the ears to hear what he has in this passage for us. Do we truly understand what it means to be saved?

You say, “I am saved. I am going to heaven.” And if it has no impact and change in your life I have got news for you. Listen to me. You are not saved.

The grace of God who has taught us. For the grace of God has appeared unto us teaching all men, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts and teaching them how to live in this present world⁸⁰ is what Paul says to Titus. If that grace of God has not changed and affected your life, I am sorry to say to you, if it hasn't had a change in your life you are not saved.

But is that all of it? No, it is not. Faith comes and it comes by hearing, hearing the Word of God.⁸¹ And no doubt this morning we have been challenged by the Word of God. If the Holy Spirit has convicted you, he has worked in your heart and your life, if you have got any questions about anything that we said, today or in the last weeks, will you stand up and will you come and will you ask and we will do all we can to open up God's Word to you.

My desire is and Calvary Baptist Church's desire is that all that come through these doors will know the Lord Jesus in a saving way. Nothing less than that will get it.

⁷⁸ See Matthew 7:24

⁷⁹ Ephesians 2:10

⁸⁰ See Titus 2:11-12

⁸¹ See Romans 10:17

Let's pray.

Our Father in heaven, we come this morning. We pray that your Spirit will search us and try us, convict us and convince us of sin, of righteous and of judgment. We pray that you will do a work in us. Lord, will you expose if there is any exposing that needs to be done, if you are on the wrong path, if you listen to the wrong message, if we don't have really an understanding of what your grace does and why we are saved and why we name the name of Christ. Oh, Lord, will you come and work in us? Teach us and show us and turn us and enable us to look to the Lord. And help us to confess our sins.

And then, Lord, that we might experience and known your faithful and being just to cleans us from all unrighteousness. Oh, Lord, we thank you for the gospel, the good news that saves sinners. And, Lord, we confess that there is much that we do not know, but we do know this is that you love the world and you sent your son. We know this is that he is the Savior of sinners. And, Lord, we have the qualifications.

Oh, Lord, work in our midst. Bless this invitation. We give all of the praise to you in Jesus' name. Amen.

Will you stand?