

02.15.26

Luke

Chapter 10 - An Unexpected Evaluation

Comparisons with Alarming Repercussions (vs. 12-16)

Luke 10:12-16: “I say to you, it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city. Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had been performed in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will be brought down to Hades! The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.”

If we take seriously what Jesus is saying in this particular passage, it's almost overwhelming to comprehend. He is

using comparatives within the passage. That is to say, He's comparing one group of cities to another group of cities; as well as in many respects, He's using superlatives. That is to say, He's ultimately pointing to that which is most or more. In this comparison, there is great conviction. When I consider sharing with you about receiving this message. The question that oftentimes arises is, "What is it he wants me to receive?" And sometimes I just feel that I need to clarify what it is I want you to receive. Because people come to church and perhaps you're thinking that, "Well, he wants me to receive the facilities that they offer." And I hope you find the seats comfortable, but that's not necessarily what I want you to receive. And maybe you say, "Well, maybe he wants me to receive his charismatic personality." And no, that wouldn't be it either. Perhaps our ability to entertain you? Is that what you receive? Or the ability to give you the things that you feel like you need or expect from a church? I've had people come in and just ask, "So, what are your facilities as far as childcare? Or what is your music program like?" And I usually say something like, "I think you're looking for another church." And I might point them to another

area. But the point of the matter is, we're asking you to receive Jesus Christ. John 1:12 says, "But as many as received Him." And so, as you come through those doors, we want you to have a relationship with Christ. That's our main concern. And our responsibility is to rightly divide the word of truth so that you might see this. I think of going through the Scriptures, and as I've oftentimes gone through the Bible, I realized that this whole thing is a journey of humanity. As God starts off with Adam and Eve and the creation and obviously showering them with everything good. And the initial thought is that, "Wow, if they have everything good, then what do they need to receive?" And God begins to reveal. Because though you could have every opportunity possible and though you could have everything good possible, it still doesn't make your heart right. And you need a heart change. And that was immediately revealed with Adam when his wife sort of drew him in to eating. And the first thing that he says when he's confronted by God is, "The woman that You gave me did this." And you realized that there was no thought or care for anybody else but Adam.

The passage goes on and you begin to see this individual that God calls out in the midst of all the horrific hostile things of the world. He calls this man out by the name of Noah. And you see the progression in which God goes, “Noah, you're the only one I see righteous, but do you have anybody else you want to put in the boat?” And Scripture tells us that there was a family now in the boat. And you realize for the first time that God was having mankind begin to think about not only saving his own skin but saving someone else. I mean, you could hear the echoing of Cain, “Am I my brother's keeper?” sort of displaying the fact that we just think of ourselves. So, God then progresses them.

And as we go on, the family begins to expand. And as the family begins, in fact, if you look with me in Exodus 1. And believe it or not, this all has something to do with what I'm going to be talking about today.

But Exodus 1, if you look with me, it says at the beginning in verse 1,

(Exodus 1:1) “Now these are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob; they came each one with his household:

(Exodus 1:2) Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah;

(Exodus 1:3) Issachar, Zebulun and Benjamin;

(Exodus 1:4) Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher.

(Exodus 1:5) All the persons who came from the loins of Jacob were seventy in number, but Joseph was already in Egypt.”

If you go on in Numbers 11, you'll see that same number. Of course, we realize that what Moses does is he chooses 70 elders, which are representative of the people of Israel. Deuteronomy will say, “You know, you began 70 in number, now you're more than the sands of the sea. Wow, have you expanded.” But as clearly Moses was needing help in dealing with the issues of the people, God says, “I want you to choose elders,” and he chose 70. You'll see them again in Numbers 11:24,

“So Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD. Also, he gathered seventy men of the elders of the people, and stationed them around the tent.

(Numbers 11:25) Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him; and He took of the Spirit who was upon him and placed Him upon the seventy elders. And when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do it again.”

What God is doing throughout is He's revealing stages of humanity. Clearly, we're realizing that we need a Savior, that we need to be concerned for those around us, and then ultimately of the world is something that God has called upon us to do. And that our actions have consequences. And so, He takes of his family, this family that then expands into a massive nation, and He says, “I'm going to give you this list of laws so you might know what to do.” And of course, at the very top of the list is to love God more than anything, because in so doing, you have a sense of right and wrong. But as it goes on, “But you shouldn't be stealing, you shouldn't be coveting, you shouldn't be...” and He begins to list those things that

would pertain to those around us. You realize that the Law was necessary. And as Paul writes in Galatians, “the Law is a tutor to lead us to Christ.” That is to say, the Law is that which bolsters our conscience. God has given a Law in our hearts, a sense of right and wrong, but you begin to read the Law that He has, and you go, “That's right, that's right, that's right.” Especially when somebody steals from you, “You shouldn't steal.” Or when somebody does something against you. So, you realize that these are all right truths.

As you come into the Book of Romans, Paul will say, “The purpose of the Law was to show that you were sinners.” And he literally says in Romans 3, “It was written that it would close every mouth.” So, what the Law does is, it not only bolsters and encourages our sense of conscience, right and wrong, but it also speaks to us and helps us realize that there's none righteous, no, not one.

Unfortunately, this is probably one of the hardest concepts that we have to swallow. Because everybody feels that they're better than somebody else. Thus you have the comparatives. And, you know, as Paul will say to

the Corinthians, if you compare yourselves with yourselves, you're without understanding. Because that's not the standard. And so, it is Jesus that begins to reveal what the standard is. It is important to understand that the Law was not a waste. The Law would help us not only have a sense of right and wrong, but it would also help us, above all else, to recognize the Messiah when He comes. Because if, in fact, you're steeped in sin, and as was quoted in Proverbs, there is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof his death, if you're steeped in sin, sin has a way of obscuring truth. And in this sin, you're unable to discern what truth is. So that when Jesus comes on the earth, if you're steeped in sin, you're going, "I don't see it. I'm looking for a guy with a big robe and looking for these horses and I'm looking for this great kingdom that's ushering in, in which they're going to take care of the Romans." That He's unidentifiable. So, John the Baptist is sent preparing the way, and he's reminding them of what is true, what is right. It prepares the way. But the preparation was not to get the people to be perfect. It was to get them to think right. Thus the word

“repentance”. Repentance means change your way of thinking. *“Metanoia”*.

“Meta” – to change

“noia” - your mind

Change your way of thinking.

So, as the passage goes on, what God is doing is He's laying the foundation for us to receive salvation.

Unfortunately, people think of church, or they think of the Bible as something that, “Well, I'm going to change myself by virtue of studying and reading all these things,” and the fact of the matter is you can't. And that's the fundamental point of Scripture. “There's none righteous, no, not one.” Nevertheless, we wrestle with it. So, it is this passage or passages like this, in particular this passage in which Jesus just literally blows everything apart with not only His comparative, but what I would believe to be the superlative in which He's fundamentally saying, “You want to know what the worst sin is, above all else? The sin of sins that's keeping everybody back from heaven?” “Yeah, I'd like to know what that is.” And that's what we're talking about.

So, if you come to the passage in Luke 10, we have Jesus sending out, how many people, if you look at the beginning in Luke 10:1? 70. So, where is He sending them out? To the children of Israel. What's the picture? The picture is that God is sending out His judges, in particular, elders, to minister to His people that they might put on display what God is really wanting; that they might be filled with the Spirit, proclaiming. They only do it one time, just like in the Old Testament. Also, that they might put on display how people react to this message.

And if you look at the passage, It's a very simple message. I mean, He doesn't go into great detail about great exegesis or hermeneutics within the text. What He does is He says, "You go to the house and you give your peace to the house." Now, what we know is that the declaration of peace is fundamentally the declaration of the Prince of Peace, which is described, of course, as you go back to Luke 4, in which He's coming to not only heal, but He's coming to set the prisoners free and to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord. In other words, the peace of God. Like Romans 5:1 says, "Therefore being justified by

faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

So, we're proclaiming a message of peace. The question is, will you receive it? And I'm often taken back, and we've already looked at the passage, so I won't go into great detail of it. But as you look in Luke 10:1-11, you're almost taken back by the, I'm not saying that they're cavalier, but it's like they give the message and they go, “Are you going to take it?” And someone might say, “No,” He goes, “Okay, move on.” Because it's all about receiving Christ or not. And the greatest of messages that you could ever fathom is that God loves you so much that He would die for you. I mean, that's an unfathomable thought, that the God who created all things would love you that much, that He would give His life for you, that He would be tortured and reviled and still love you! That's inconceivable! It goes beyond the concept of right and wrong of Law, and it goes into the realm of the righteousness of God, which is far greater than we could ever imagine, the love of God. It's no wonder that 1 John

says that God is love. In other words, He literally is the personification of what love is.

So, as we come to this passage, you see the men going out.

As it starts off in Luke 10,

(Luke 10:1) “Now after this the Lord appointed...”

And we talked about this last week once again, but “appointed” is the word “put on display.” And so, what He's putting on display is not only a sense of the message, but how will you respond to the message?

Now, as we come to verse 12, what we're now dealing with is the ramification of that response. In other words, if you accept the message, you've accepted the peace of God. How magnificent that is. And His statement within the text is, “You need to realize that the kingdom of God has come into your presence. The kingdom of God has come near to you. And, you know, there's a wonderful realization that God would actually come and visit us. Think about that. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld the glory of God. The glory is of

the only begotten, full of grace and truth. So, we beheld His glory. He came among us. Well, it then comes into verse 12, “But I say to you, if you reject it,” and this is where the comparative comes in the passage.

If you look with me in verse 12, as Jesus declares, “I say to you, if you reject this message...”

(Luke 10:12) “... it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city.”

Wow, that's going extreme. I mean, when you think about Sodom, it's the epitome of immorality. It's the epitome of desecration. It's the epitome of twisted, wicked thinking. There's no doubt about it. Sodom, Gomorrah.

“I say to you, it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city.”

And then He begins to bring in some of the local cities that some of the men have actually gone into in the realm of Israel and proclaimed this message.

He states this in verse 13,

(Luke 10:13) “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! ...”

“Chorazin” actually kind of comes from a phrase that refers to burning. I think one of the reasons why they call it that is because the town itself, most of the stones around it were kind of black, and later on it actually had a great earthquake in it, and many died. What's interesting is all these three cities that He mentions that they go out into are all within the six-mile radius of each other.

Bethsaida, of course, is the house of fish, where some of the fishermen actually had lived, and we read that in John, as well as some of the other Gospels. But His woe is to these places that are basically within a six-mile radius that some of His disciples have gone out to proclaim the word. And He says, “Woe to you!” And we're talking about these cities. Now, He's already given a kind of comparison, Sodom. He seems to be saying that Chorazin and Bethsaida is going to be worse off than Sodom.

He goes on to say,

“... For if the miracles had been performed in Tyre and Sidon...”

“*Tyros*” and “*Sidōn*” is probably the Hebrew translation.

“... which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.”

Now, He's not talking about in the text that they would be saved, but it's sort of like with Jonah. He goes to the city and Nineveh repents, and they were sorrowful. His point is obvious that they were more receptive. That is to say, Tyre and Sidon. Sidon should actually ring a bell in your mind if you go back to Luke 4.

In Luke 4, if you remember, Jesus is in His own synagogue in Nazareth. Remember, He kind of grew up in Nazareth. So, He stands up and the Book of Isaiah is handed to Him. He proclaims the wonderful message that really identifies Him in verse 18 and 19, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. He's anointed me to give this wonderful message of not only healing, but the favorable year of the Lord.” And then, of course, some of the people are starting to grumble, “Isn't this Joseph's son?” And He goes, “Let me tell you something.”

So, we'll pick up in verse 24,

(Luke 4:24) “And He said, “Truly I say to you, no prophet is welcome in his hometown.”

(Luke 4:25) But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land;

(Luke 4:26) and yet Elijah was sent to none of them...”

In other words, Elijah was a prophet to Israel, and you would think that during the time of famine that he'd be ministering to his own people.

“And yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon...”

There you go. So, the question is, why would this sinful, sinful nation receive the grace of God when Israel was not receiving the grace of God? That doesn't make any sense. In fact, one of the echoing statements in Romans is, “So, what good is it to be a Jew?” The Jews are going, “What good is it to be a Jew if you all come under grace? I mean, what's the value of us?” And He goes, “Well, there's a lot of value,” and He starts going into it. The point is that all of us have a tendency to think that we're just a little bit better than somebody else. That's just the way it reads. And the problem is, we use the wrong measuring.

So, as you come into this, Jesus begins to list these cities that He's in, and He goes on, He literally goes to the extreme as He says, "Woe," which "woe" is basically a denunciation and an exclamation of grief for these particular cities.

(Luke 10:13) "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had been performed in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

(Luke 10:14) But it will be more tolerable..."

That's kind of the superlative within the text. More tolerable. For who?

"But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you."

Okay, so what's the comparison? Let me just show you something.

If you look with me in Ezekiel 26, and I won't take a long time with this. But just for you to see who He's talking about, this whole thing of Tyre and Sidon, Ezekiel 26 really deals with them. And of course, in Chapter 26, Ezekiel is

saying, “The day is going to come when you're going to be wiped out, Tyre and Sidon.”

And you can see the description of them if you look in verse 12,

(Ezekiel 26:12) “Also they will make a spoil of your riches and a prey of your merchandise...”

(Ezekiel 26:13) “So I will silence the sound of your songs, and the sound of your harps will be heard no more.

(Ezekiel 26:14) I will make you a bare rock...”

By the way, “Tyre” or “Tyros” actually means “rock”.

“... You will be built no more...”

Of course, it was right on the waterway. It had all sorts of trade and trafficking, and shipping.

And if you look in verse 17,

“... ‘How you have perished, O inhabited one,

From the seas, O renowned city,

Which was mighty on the sea,

She and her inhabitants,

Who imposed her terror

On all her inhabitants!”

And so, it begins to actually describe them.

The description goes on, and you begin to see in Chapter 27, at the end of verse 3, that there was a perception that they were perfect in beauty.

(Ezekiel 27:4) “... Your builders have perfected your beauty.”

In other words, the whole thing is about the pride of the city. And the pride of the city goes to such an extent that it ultimately goes in Chapter 28 to the king of the city of Tyre in Sidon. And the king actually then transforms into the background of Satan himself, and so the description of Satan is actually found and paralleled to the king of Tyre.

It says in Ezekiel 28:14,

“You were the anointed cherub who covers,
And I placed you there...”

(Ezekiel 28:15) “You were blameless in your ways...”

But verse 16 reads this way,

(Ezekiel 28:16) “By the abundance of your trade
You were internally filled with violence,

And you sinned;

Therefore I have cast you as profane..."

Eze 28:17) "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty... I cast you to the ground..."

Tyre and Sidon is a picture of that arrogance, that pride, that treachery, that oppression upon people. So, what you have is, He mentions Sodom, and He mentions Tyre and Sidon, and those cities will actually encompass the gamut of the worst sins that you could possibly conceive in your head. That's what He's doing. Now, what He does is He compares it with these three towns, some of them fishing villages, Bethsaida, which means "house of fish," that are surrounded within a six-mile radius. He says that it will be worse for them than for Sodom and Tyre and Sidon. You go, "That's not even a fair comparison. These people aren't even anywhere close to what the sins were in Sodom and the sins were in Tyre and Sidon." And He says, "Oh no, much worse."

So, if you drop on down, He'll now even add the city of Capernaum. Now, the reason why He adds the city of Capernaum is that's where He lived. Jesus was brought up

in Nazareth. But as an adult, He lived in Capernaum. We know that according to Matthew 4, you don't need to turn there, but verse 13.

But first, if you drop on down to verse 15,

Luk 10:15) “And you, Capernaum...”

That's His hometown that He's living in right now.

“... will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will be brought down to Hades!”

The worst conceivable thought. “You are going to be brought down lower than all of them.” It just doesn't seem fair.

Then He adds to this,

(Luke 10:16) “The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me...”

Remember, this whole passage is about whether or not you receive. The question is, what is he receiving? It's the message. How culpable are you? And what is the degree of standard for rejecting this message? “If you reject those that I send, you reject Me, and if you reject Me, you reject My Father. You reject God.” He is literally declaring

the worst of all sins, the rejection of God, of His grace, of His love for you. This is why Hebrews 2 will say, “How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?” Do you have any idea how powerful this gospel is? How important it is? It is the love of God being shown to you no matter where you are. I want to emphasize this. In this text, Christ is not minimizing sin. He is exalting the message. And this is what this whole passage is about. **The worst thing that you could ever do is reject this message of God's love that was clearly given to you.**

Let me show you a passage in Luke 12, which fundamentally I want you to see a principle.

In Luke 12:44, it reads this way within the passage as Jesus gives this parable,

“Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions.”

It’s talking about the one who is faithful and the one that does what he needs to do.

He says this in verse 45,

(Luke 12:45) “But if that slave says in his heart, ‘My master will be a long time in coming,’ and begins to beat the slaves, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk;

(Luke 12:46) the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers.

(Luke 12:47) And that slave who knew his master’s will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes.”

Now, we're going to do a comparison here.

(Luke 12:48) “But the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required...”

What He's actually doing within the text is giving you a fundamental principle. And let me just say this, it's not only seen here, but it's seen really throughout Scripture. The fundamental principle is that when much is given,

much is required. What's the most that you can be given? Well, as you go through Scripture, you realize that, for instance, at the beginning, Cain kills his brother. He has a conscience, but was there a Law? No, there wasn't a Law. God does not bring him under Law because there is no law. Now, you read it in the Old Testament, you go, "Well, Cain got away with murder." Well, he really didn't, but the point is that Law was not subjected to him or he was not subject to the Law. As time goes on, the Law comes into play. Now, Israel has the Law. Now, they're held to a higher standard. And God begins to deal with them according to that standard. But the Law is not the highest standard. Grace is the highest standard. The love of God being shown to you and His mercy and His forgiveness, that's the highest standards. And to reject the highest of standards has with it greater ramifications and problems in the rejection. You realize that with Egypt, obviously, because they saw so many signs, they were held more accountable. Israel, because they rejected the Law, were held more accountable. In fact, James 3:1 says, teachers will incur stricter judgment. It's one of the reasons why you don't want to necessarily go for teaching just because

it's available. But if God calls you, go ahead and do it, but just to let you know ahead of time. And as Jesus begins to talk to the Pharisees in Matthew 23, He continues to say, "Woe, woe, woe to you Pharisees." Why? "Because you know what the truth is." It is that fundamental point that's brought out in Romans 2. How is it that you can go around telling everybody else that they're wrong when you yourself are doing the very things that you say they shouldn't be doing? The fact that you're telling them that they shouldn't be doing something means that you know that you shouldn't be doing it. Therefore, God's going to hold you more accountable because you know the things. To much is given, much is required. And the question is in all of this, what makes this sin so great? And the answer is really clear. Because what Christ was doing was He was not only sending out His men who were not only represented, but He gave them the power and the Spirit of God to represent. So, the Spirit of God was coming, the kingdom of God was coming to them in the flesh, incarnate. And so, what He's saying is, "I came to visit you. Now, there's a lot that weren't visited, but you, I came personally. And of course, Capernaum, I lived

among you personally.” The visitation is an interesting key because it shows God reaching out to you. And anytime God reaches out to you, to reject that, to turn your back on that. It's hard to imagine, but God actually uses His body, the body of Christ, to reach out to you, to have someone knock on your door, to have somebody call you up. That's the body of Christ reaching out. And this passage says, “And if they reject you, they've rejected Me.” Now, what we're talking about are those that are proclaiming the message of Christ. What we're talking about are those that are pointing to the kingdom of God, this kingdom of peace that only comes from the God of peace, Jesus Christ Himself, the Prince of Peace. But there's a responsibility.

I've heard all kinds of theories about the unpardonable sin. I'm sure you all have. And suicide is one of them. And of course, there's nothing in Scripture that says anything about that. But what is the unpardonable sin? Well, actually, Luke 12 tells us, and if you back up into Luke 12; let me just kind of put this in context as we come to the passage.

(Luke 12:1) “Under these circumstances, after so many thousands of people had gathered together that they were stepping on one another...”

That would have been some scene, wouldn't it? Just waiting to see Jesus.

“... He began saying to His disciples first of all, “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.”

Now, what He's talking about is something leavened that spreads really fast. And so, it infiltrates everything. What is it that spreads really fast and infiltrates everything?

Hypocrisy. Well, what is hypocrisy? Well, hypocrisy is lying about what you really feel. It literally comes from the Greek word, which means a mask. You put on a mask, and you're putting on a show or saying things that you don't really believe or putting on airs that you don't really believe. Maybe perhaps it's flattery, maybe perhaps it's boasting, whatever. But it's not being real. Which, let me just say this, goes against the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

Because as John so aptly puts it in both John 14 and 15, “I'm going to send you My Spirit. He is the Spirit of truth.” He's the Spirit of truth. Which not only means that with

His Spirit are we going to be telling the truth, it means that we're going to be transparent in our lives and we're actually living what we say we believe. We're not hypocrites. It's the Spirit of God.

So, it goes on and says this in verse 2,

(Luke 12:2) “But there is nothing covered up that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.

((Luke 12:3) Accordingly, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light...”

Let me just say this, just because you put on a face with somebody else and then you turn back and you go, “I think he's an idiot,” doesn't mean that God didn't hear that. Or just because you thought it or whatever.

“... whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in the inner rooms will be proclaimed upon the housetops.

(Luke 12:4) I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do.

(Luke 12:5) But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!

(Luke 12:6) Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God.

(Luke 12:7) Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear..."

I don't know if you're hearing the repetition there.

"... you are more valuable than many sparrows.

(Luke 12:8) And I say to you, everyone who confesses Me before men, the Son of Man will confess him also before the angels of God."

Now, let me tell you what that passage doesn't say. It doesn't say, "But I say to you, everybody that has fulfilled the whole Law and done everything perfect and lived this wonderful life." You see, what Jesus is saying there in Luke 10 is extremely offensive to good doers. And I'm not saying that He's minimizing good and the doing of good. But what He's exalting is the message. And the message that we have is that you're all sinners and you all need

salvation through Jesus Christ. And you can't reject that. If you reject it, no matter how good you appear to be, "Oh, I lived in Bethsaida. I lived in Capernaum. I lived right next to Jesus." He goes, "Doesn't matter." "Man, I even took some things to Jesus, maybe some extra fish, and gave him some food." It doesn't matter. Did you receive Him? That's what matters.

The passage goes on and says,

"And I say to you, everyone who confesses Me before men, the Son of Man will confess him also before the angels of God;

(Luke 12:9) but he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

(Luke 12:10) And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him..."

Now, what is He talking about? Well, He's talking about clearly the fact that Jesus came in the flesh. And there are things that even Peter goes, "You can't go to the cross." So, he was talking in the sense of, "You can't do that." And Christ says, "Well, that'll be forgiven because I

understand that you have a hard time comprehending that this flesh can do anything miraculous. I understand that." God understands that. Because physically, we look at things empirically, by the things we see, hearing, touching, that's how we figure things out. So, that's the way we are, until it comes to the gospel. And the things that makes the gospel different and unique and makes you more culpable than anything else is the Spirit. And it's the Spirit that begins to move in your heart. And when the Spirit moves in your heart, this is what happens, He says to you... Now once again, who is the Spirit? The Spirit of Truth. The Spirit of God's Son. So, what is He saying to you? "You know this is true." You know when you hear the message? I know people that have heard the message 1,000 times. One time, the Spirit hits their heart and they come. You know, you say to them, "Why didn't you come all those times before?" "I don't know." They don't know. But today they had to come. Who was that? That wasn't just the proclamation of the message. That was the Spirit moving on their hearts. And today, if you hear His voice, you can't harden your heart, because if you do, there is no forgiveness of that sin. This is the point in the passage.

“And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but he who blasphemes against...”

Reviles. More specifically, whoever shows disrespect to the Spirit's moving, it can't be forgiven. It's a total denial of what God's Spirit is saying. And you know it's true. You know it's true. Look, all the convincing of the external forces; once again, we can show a lot of proof, and as He says, “If the miracles were done in these places,” but He takes it beyond the miracles and He puts it into, “But if they reject you.” And what He's stating is, not only the presence of God reaching out, but you've also rejected the Spirit of God reaching out. And in that, there is no redemption.

There's an interesting passage in 2 Thessalonians, if you turn there with me. Whereas, if you're ever confused, I've heard our president recently say that, you know, he doesn't know if he's going to heaven. He thinks he's a pretty good guy and I'm going, “I wish you wouldn't say that because it has nothing to do with being a good guy.”

And quite frankly, according to who's standards? I mean, I'm not sure everybody fully agrees with him.

But if you look with me in 2 Thessalonians, it reads this way in Chapter 1,

(2 Thessalonians 1:6) “For after all...”

He's talking about the fact that many of the believers had suffered for doing what was right.

“... it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you,

(2 Thessalonians 1:7) and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire,

(2 Thessalonians 1:8) dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey...”

The Ten Commandments.

That's not there. They didn't obey what? The good news. The Gospel. What's the good news? That God so loves you. They would not receive that. Well, you mean to tell me that people in Sodom, if in fact they would accept the

good news would be saved? Yes. And that people that were kind of good and perceived themselves as good but would reject the goodness of God would not be? Right.

It goes on and says in verse 9, not only is it a horrific thing to reject the Gospel, but verse 9 reads,

(2 Thessalonians 1:9) “These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.”

Who are these who have rejected His love? You're fundamentally saying to God, “I don't want to be with You.” Look, we're all sinners. And obviously, there are some sins that are more horrific. No doubt about that. And under the Law, they bear greater penalties. However, the greatest of all sins is none of those, but is rejecting the love of God.

So, it reads this way in 2 Thessalonians, and if you look with me, we realize that Satan's going to come into the world, he's going to deceive all the people.

And it says this 2 Thessalonians 2:10,

“And with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish...”

Why will they perish? Watch the phrase here.

It's a very important phrase,

“... because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.”

Why does anybody perish? Well, no one has to. But if they're going to perish, the reason will be because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.

(2 Thessalonians 2:11) “For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false,

(2 Thessalonians 2:12) in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth...”

What is he talking about? He's talking about the Spirit of truth that declared in your heart, “You know this to be true.”

Look, it's our responsibility, it's our obligation to proclaim the wonderful message of the Gospel. Why do we put the Gospel center stage? There's only one answer to that.

Because it is the only thing that's important. Because quite frankly, until you receive the good news, your life isn't going to change. We know that according to the Law, it couldn't make anybody better. In fact, if you follow Israel with the Law, they just kept getting worse. And that's why He had to take them into captivity. Now, these are people that had the Law. So, as Paul will write in Romans 8, "The Law, weak as it was, could not save." What was it that saved? That wonderful message. Can you hear it? "There is now therefore no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus." Isn't that a wonderful message? But woe to the person who rejects it. It'll be more tolerable for Sodom than for them.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today, and we give You thanks for giving us a comparison that really puts things in line. It gives us clarity about how important it is to receive Your grace. You tell us that You came unto Your own, but Your own did not receive You. But as many as would receive You, to them You gave the right, You gave the

power to become children of God, even if they would believe on the name of Savior. Father, we come before You in the simplicity of this moment, and we confess you as Lord of our lives, as the One that we embrace. We declare You to be good, not we ourselves, and we declare You to be the Savior, not us. It is in this declaration that we confess You as Lord and want to follow You. We want to submit to You in every area of our lives. This is not the end. It's the beginning of righteousness within us. And we've become a new creation. We've actually been born again. And unless we've been born again, we realize we're still dead in our trespasses and sin. It doesn't matter how dead we are. It doesn't matter if we stink or if we're still fresh. We're still dead, and we need to be resurrected.

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, I'm asking you, what is the primary focus of your faith? Is it the goodness of God? If you're proclaiming anything else, you're sidetracking not only the issue, but yourself and others.