

# (Through the Bible) Isaiah 53-55

by Chuck Smith

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*The sermon explores the prophecy of Isaiah 53 and its fulfillment in Jesus Christ, emphasizing the importance of understanding the context and the purpose of Jesus' death.*

**Duration:** 1:02:47

**Scripture:** Isaiah 52:12-13, Isaiah 53:1 - 54:3, Isaiah 54:17, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Biblical Meditation", "Spiritual Transformation"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of letting the word of God soak into our lives. They encourage listeners to daily immerse themselves in God's word, as it has the power to transform and bring forth beauty in their lives. The speaker also highlights the harmony that comes from being in alignment with God and nature. They urge non-Christians to give their lives to the Lord before going on vacation, as the word of God will bless and enrich their experiences. The sermon concludes with a reminder that the purpose of God's word is to work on earth and bring forth its fruit and results in our lives.

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## Transcript

When men made chapter and verse divisions, they did make mistakes. The Word of God is divinely inspired. It's inerrant.

But men, for the sake of helping us to find scriptures and to memorize passages, divided the Bible into chapter and verses. And it's a very convenient way to reference. However, many times they made the divisions in the wrong place.

And in our reading, we are prone to read to an end of a chapter and then quit until the next reading. And sometimes the thought carries right through. So that in the dividing of the chapters, they should have ended chapter 52 with verse 12 and they should have started chapter 53 with verse 13.

Because the last three verses here definitely fit in with Isaiah 53. And so that we might see the relationship with 53, we will begin our study of chapter 53 with verse 13 of 52. As God now speaks about His servant, His only begotten Son, who was in the form of God and thought it not something to be grasped, to be equal with God.

And yet He humbled Himself and took on the likeness of man or the form of man and came in likeness of man. And being humbled, He came as a servant. And so Jesus said, I came not to do my own will, but the

will of the one who sent me.

And in the garden, He said, not my will, thy will be done. As He submitted as a servant unto the Father. Now Isaiah begins to prophesy here concerning God's servant that was to come.

Behold, my servant shall deal prudently. He shall be exalted and extolled. The Hebrew word extolled is the word lifted up.

It is the very same word that Jesus used in the New Testament when talking to His disciples said, and I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. Now Jesus, when He was referring to being lifted up, was referring to the death that He was to die upon the cross as He would be lifted up upon a cross. And I, if I be lifted up, and the idea is being lifted up on a cross, I will draw all men unto me.

Now that scripture has been carelessly interpreted by many people as just lifting up Jesus. If you'll just lift up Jesus, He'll draw all men to Him, you see. So in your ministry, just lift up Jesus.

And they even have choruses, let's lift Him higher, let's lift Him higher, that all the world may see. Well, whoever wrote that chorus doesn't have any real understanding of scripture because they've taken it out of its context. In the context, the gospel writers said, this said He signifying the manner of death that He was going to die.

That is signifying the cross, lifted up on a cross. And so here the cross is predicted, prophesied in Isaiah. He shall be exalted and lifted up and be very high.

As many were astonished at Thee, His visage, or face, was so marred, more than any man, and His form more than the sons of man. In the Hebrew, this reads more literally, His face was so marred that He could not be recognized as a man or as a human being. Now we are told in the gospel that they covered His face and they began to buffet Him.

That is, with His face covered, they began to hit Him. Now as a general rule, our bodies have an automatic reflex kind of a action. When we see a blow coming, we give with the blow, so it cushions the blow.

You don't get the full brunt of it. If you don't cushion the blow, it is a surprise blow that you don't see coming. That's where you get hurt.

You guys that watch the Monday Night Football, you know that. When a quarterback gets blindsided, he's in trouble. If he can see the guy coming, you know, you just sort of, you reflex action to it and you sort of go with it.

And you may get bounced all over, but you're reacting and coordinating with it. And thus, it's a lot easier to take. But if you don't see that big tackle barreling in on you, and he hits you without your having any ability to defend yourself by the feigning that a person does, that's when you get the broken bones and that's when you get laid out of the game.

Those blindsides are the really things that will put you out. Now with Jesus, as they covered his face and began to buffet him, no way to feign or to give with the blow. And thus, his face must have been horribly disfigured.

Here Isaiah declares that it was so shocking. As many as looked upon you were shocked when they saw how marred your face was. So marred that you could not be recognized as a man, as a human being.

But so shall he sprinkle many nations. The kings shall shut their mouths at him, for that which had not been told them, they shall see. And that which they had not heard, shall they consider.

But who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. Now he has no form nor comeliness. And when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

Interesting prophecies concerning Jesus Christ. He has no beautiful form or comeliness. There is no beauty there that we should desire.

In other words, we will not be attracted to him by the physical beauty. Now, so often we have in our minds sort of a mental picture of what a person may look like. And we sort of automatically do this.

Even though we haven't seen a person. I get this all the time where I go into areas where people have been listening on the radio. And I'll go into an area to speak and all they've heard is my voice.

And it's interesting to watch their shocked expressions when they see me. Because they have envisioned usually something far different than what I look like. But somehow we always create sort of a mental image.

It's an ambiguous kind of an image, but yet there is sort of a mental image of what the person must look like who has a voice like that. And it so often is very shocking when you see the person that you've been listening to. I was shocked when I first met Dr. McGee.

And I didn't think he looked like that at all. You know, with that southern voice I expect to see some tall Texan type of a guy, you know. And it was just a surprise to me.

And I suppose he was just as surprised to see me and to see what I look like. So, we have in our minds sort of a mental image of what Jesus is going to look like. And we sort of imagine just being enthralled with the physical beauty of Christ.

But as many as looked upon him were astonished because really there is no form or comeliness that is really attractive. When we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire. And it isn't for the beautiful form that we will be attracted.

And I think that this is... I think that this is rather great that it will not be the beautiful form that we're attracted to. Because, face it, the majority of the people are ugly. Very few beautiful people, really beautiful people.

Most of us are in the category of we can get by. But it isn't our looks that really attract people. Now, if he were one of those beautiful persons then it would be more difficult for us to identify with him.

But the fact that it isn't the beauty of his form that is attractive or draws us to him means that each of us can identify with him because it is that spiritual beauty and the love that just draws us so much that we care not what the form may look like. Now, when John was in heaven and he saw the scroll in the right hand of him who sits upon the throne and he heard the angel proclaim with a loud voice Who is worthy to take the scroll and loose the seals? And as he observed that no one was found worthy in heaven or earth to take the scroll or to loose the seals he began to weep. And one of the elders said unto John, Don't weep, John.

Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to take the seal and to loose to take the scroll and to loose the seals. And John said, And I turned and I saw him as a lamb that had been slaughtered. No beauty that we should desire him.

John's first glimpse of Christ in heaven he saw him as a lamb that had been slaughtered. Not as some tremendously physical, robust, handsome creature that we all sort of envision Jesus to be. But perhaps the Lord still bears the marks of his suffering for you.

He did bear those marks after the resurrection. For you remember Thomas said, Except I can put my fingers into his hand and thrust my hand into his side, I won't believe. And so the next time Jesus showed himself to the disciples, Thomas being present, he said, Okay, Thomas, go ahead.

Put your finger in my hand. Put your hand in my side. The marks were still there.

It said, And they shall look on him whom they have pierced. And they shall say unto him, What are the meaning of these wounds in your hands? Yet future still bearing them, the marks of his love for you. So as many as saw him were astonished.

He has no form nor comeliness that is really an attractive, desirable or attracting feature. When we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. For he is despised and rejected of men.

A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Now you probably have in your mind mental pictures of what Paul must have looked like. I read the epistles of Paul and I think of him as a giant.

Surely he is a spiritual giant. I read in one of the Apogrypha books or one of the early writings a description of Paul the Apostle. And it describes him as a skinny little runt about five feet tall with a horribly large hooked nose and eyes that were red, swollen and constantly running.

And I was upset because that's not how I picture Paul at all. I'm in love with Paul. My, what this man has given to us of his great depth of understanding and background.

And I so love the writings of Paul that I've been drawn to him. He is one of those that I'm looking forward to just really spending some time with in the future. And yet without seeing the physical person it is possible to be in love with an individual and yet not be physically attracted.

And yet it is interesting that so often today we only associate love with physical attraction and not with the person themselves. And that's rather tragic. And that's why so many marriages are miserable.

Because the person's married a face. But there's nothing behind the face. There's no depth of character.

There's just, you know, there's just a face and that's it. One of the most miserable dates I ever had in my life was with a girl with a pretty face. Oh, I was excited.

Man, I lied, this is going to be great. My sister worked with her sister and, you know, as they talked, well, my brother goes, oh, well, my sister goes, oh, well, my sister thinks your brother's cute or something, you know, and so. Man, that's all I needed, you know.

So you call up and you make a date. Most miserable night. She had a beautiful face, but man, she was a dud.

I mean, just a dull evening. No conversation, nothing, just. And people make mistakes many times in relationships because we relate on the physical rather than upon the true nature of a person.

Now, he is despised and rejected of men. He is a man of sorrows. He's acquainted with grief.

And we hid, as it were, our faces from him, perhaps in shock and in horror. Have you ever looked at something that was so shocking you couldn't look? You turned your face. You couldn't stand to look at it.

It was so horrible. It may be that that will be your first response when you see the marks of the suffering that he bore for you. You look and you can't even... He doesn't even look like a human being.

Ooh, you know, you just sort of cringe at it. He is despised. He is rejected.

And we didn't esteem him. But surely, in that suffering, in that death, he bore our griefs and he carried our sorrows. Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions. Now, this is why it is so ridiculous to try to hold the Jews responsible for the death of Jesus Christ and to blame them and to persecute them, as has been the history of the church, persecute them for the death of Jesus Christ. That's sheer unscriptural idiocy.

They are no more responsible for the death of Jesus Christ than you or I. We are all equally responsible for his death, for he was wounded for our transgressions. It was my sin that put him on the cross. It was my sin that brought him that suffering and that beating and that shame and that reproach.

I'm guilty. And we shouldn't seek to blame someone else for our own guilt and to persecute someone else for that for which we are ourselves responsible. Surely, he hath borne our griefs, carried our sorrows.

He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.

So, we are the ones responsible for the suffering and the death of Jesus Christ because he suffered and died for me, that he might bring me the forgiveness of my sins, that he might bring me into fellowship with God. You see, God created man in the beginning for fellowship. That was the purpose of God when he created man, that God might be able to fellowship with man.

But when man turned his back upon God and sinned, fellowship with God was broken. And fellowship with God who is holy and righteous cannot be restored until something is done about my sin. And that is why Jesus came, that he might take the guilt of my sin, that he might bear my iniquities, my transgressions, my guilt, die in my place in order that through his death I can now come to God and have fellowship with God.

All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way. But the Lord hath laid on Jesus Christ the iniquities of us all.

You remember Jesus cried on the cross, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Crying out the 22nd Psalm and in the verse 4, the answer is given, For thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of thy people. God forsook his Son when your sin was placed upon him. For that's the effect of sin, it's being forsaken of God, being separated from God.

And when your sin was placed upon Jesus Christ, he was separated from the Father and thus the cry, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? But he was forsaken of God in order that you won't have to be

forsaken by God. For God laid on him the iniquities of us all. He was oppressed.

He was afflicted. Yet he opened not his mouth. You remember before Pilate, Pilate marveled that he didn't answer.

He said, answers thou not me? Don't you know that I have power to free thee or power to put thee to death? Jesus said, you don't have any power except that which my Father gives you. But don't worry. Those that turn me over to you have the greater sin than you do.

That really troubled Pilate. He didn't know what he had on his hands. He did his best to free him.

But he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shears his dung. So he opened not his mouth.

All of the accusations. Hear not all these things they accuse thee of? What do you say for yourself? Jesus didn't answer. He was taken from prison and from judgment.

And who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off. You see, without any children, who's going to declare his generation? He was cut off out of the land of the living. Now that's an interesting phrase, cut off out of the land of the living.

You remember that Daniel prophesies from the time the commandment goes forth to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of the Messiah. The prince will be seven sevens and sixty two sevens, three score and two sevens. And the wall shall be built again in troublous times.

And after the three score and two sevens shall the Messiah be cut off. But not for himself, but for the people. Phrase cut off.

He'll be crucified out of the land of the living. And God cries out, for the transgression of my people, he was stricken. Now he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death.

You remember Joseph of Arimathea, a very rich man, came and begged Pilate for the body of Jesus that he might bury it. And here it is. He's with the rich in his death.

Because he had done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him. He hath put him to grief when he shall make his soul an offering for sin.

So Christ became the sin offering for us according to the will of God. Because God loved us. He shall see his seed and prolong his days and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

He shall see the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. That is, he travailed in order that you might be born again. And in seeing your redemption, in seeing you in fellowship with God, he's satisfied.

He looks upon it and says, well, it was worth it all. Because of the redemption that he is able to offer to us, that fellowship that he can bring to us with the Father. And so he shall see the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied.

And by his knowledge, that is by the knowledge of Jesus Christ, my righteous servant shall justify many. So how many of us tonight have been justified before God through the knowledge of Jesus Christ? So God declares by his knowledge, so my righteous servant justify many for he shall bear their iniquities.

Now, all of this written 700 years before Christ was born.

That is why when Peter stood up on the day of Pentecost and talked to the people who were involved in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, he said unto them, Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was proved to be of God by the signs and the wonders which he did while he was still living with you, whom you, according to the predetermined counsel and foreknowledge of God, with your wicked hands have crucified and slain. But when he talks about the crucifixion, he speaks about the predetermined counsel and the foreknowledge of God. God knew it.

God had planned it in order that he might demonstrate to you how much he loves you. Here in his love, not that we love God, but that God loved us and sent his son to be a propitiation for our sins. Paul said, for a righteous man, some might dare to die.

For a good man, for adventure, some would even give their lives. But here in his God's love manifested in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly. He bore your iniquities.

He bore your sins. Therefore, the Father says, will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and his sons and heirs, joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

He divides the spoil with the strong, because he has poured out his soul unto death. He was numbered with the transgressors, two thieves, one on either side. He was numbered with the transgressors, and he bore the sin of many, and he made intercession for the transgressors.

You remember, even as they were nailing him, he said, Father, forgive them. They know not what they do. Interceding for the transgressors.

All of these things prophesied in advance, all of them fulfilled through the death of Jesus Christ. Surely, it sets him alone in history as the only man who could ever qualify to be the Messiah, the suffering servant. If Jesus is not the Messiah, there is no Messiah.

No other man can qualify. But Jesus has qualified in all 300 points of prophecy that spoke about his life, his ministry, his death. And here in Isaiah, outstanding example of clear-cut prophecy.

And if it doesn't refer to Jesus Christ, it can't refer to any other person in history. He stands alone as the only one who has fulfilled these things. And to reject him after the basis of this kind of evidence is to sin against your own conscience and to sin against the truth, which becomes even a greater evil.

Israel is to be restored as Jehovah's wife. Chapter 54, Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear. Break forth into singing and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child.

For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent. Let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitation.

Spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes. As God speaks of how He's just going to enlarge the nation and the people of Israel as He receives them again and places His blessings upon them once more. For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed, neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame, for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth and shall not remember the reproach of thy widowhood anymore. As we go to the prophecy of Hosea, we will find a very classic picture of how God took Israel as His own wife. How that she forsook Him, serving other gods.

And how that God finally will redeem her back again to Himself and marry her once more and have that right relationship that He has always desired with her. And so here the same idea, you'll not remember the reproach of your youth or your widowhood anymore. For thy Maker, God, is your husband.

The Lord of hosts is His name, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth, shall He be called. For the Lord hath called thee as a woman that is forsaken and grieved in spirit and a wife of youth, when you were refused, saith thy God. For a small moment I have forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee.

The glorious grace of God, the glorious mercy of God, the glorious patience of God as He deals with His people, the nation Israel. And as for a moment in a thousand years as a day with the Lord, for a moment I have forsaken you, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

For this is as the waters of Noah unto me. For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be angry with thee nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, the hills shall be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.

O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors and lay thy foundations with sapphires, and I will make your windows of agates and the gates of carbuncles and all of the borders of pleasant stones. And all of your children shall be taught of the Lord and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established and thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear from terror, for it shall not come near thee.

Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me. Whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire and that bringeth forth the instrument for his work, and I have created the waster to destroy.

But no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn, for this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. Their righteousness is of me. Our righteousness is not of ourselves.

It's not of our works. It's not by the works of righteousness that we have done, but by His grace alone. God declares their righteousness is of me.

Of course, the primary promise here is being made to the nation of Israel after He has regathered them and claimed them as His people. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper. Every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn, this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, so that it goes beyond just Israel.

And it comes to us as servants of the Lord who find our righteousness in Christ. Ho, everyone that thirsteth, going into the glorious kingdom age. Now, God detests and hates commercialism.

God hates how people take advantage of one another, profiteering on someone else. God is going to bring down the whole commercial system. And when God brings it down, there is going to be great rejoicing in heaven, though on earth there's going to be tremendous mourning and lamentation.

But in Revelation 18, God spends a whole chapter telling of how He's going to bring down this whole commercial world that have put people into bondage through credit cards and have made slaves out of people, put people under all kinds of financial pressures, taken advantage of people's misfortunes. And God hates it with a passion. And He's going to bring it down.

And in the new age that is going to be established by Jesus Christ, no commercialism at all. Man's greed will not have an opportunity of exploiting the weaker man or his fellow man or the poorer man. Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come to the waters.

He that has no money, come, buy and eat. Yea, come and buy the wine and the milk without money and without price. God is going to allow the earth to just bring forth abundantly and every man shall sit neath his own vine and fig tree.

And they shall live in peace together. There won't be the greed that has actually created so many of the horrible wars in our history. Those men who profit over wars.

Those men who have the commercial interest and all, who can make great gain through bringing a nation against a nation, all be gone. The basis of greed will be gone. Everything will be free.

Ho, everyone that thirsteth, just come. Help yourself. Take what you want.

No money, no price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, the Lord said? You labor for that which does not satisfy as he speaks out against, you know, our whole system today. How that we labor so hard to get things that really don't satisfy.

Why is it that you do this? Hearken diligently to me. Eat that which is good. Let your soul delight itself in fatness.

Incline your ear. Come unto me and hear and your soul shall live and I will make an everlasting covenant with you even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and a commander to the people.

So Christ shall come and sit upon the throne of David and order it and establish it in righteousness and in judgment. And he shall be as a witness to the people, a leader, a commander. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not and nations that knew thee not shall run unto thee because the Lord thy God and for the Holy One of Israel for he hath glorified thee.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found. Call upon him while he is near and let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him to our God for he will abundantly pardon. Oh, what beautiful words of God to us tonight.

Call upon the Lord while he is near while he may be found. Seek him while he may be found. Call upon him while he is near.

Let the wicked forsake his way. The unrighteous man his thoughts of evil. Return to the Lord for God will have mercy.

He'll abundantly pardon you for God says my thoughts are not your thoughts. Neither are your ways my ways saith the Lord. I will vouch for that.

I don't understand so many times why God does the things he does. His thoughts are not my thoughts nor are his ways my ways. I would do many things much differently.

I wouldn't do them more wisely. I just do them differently. But you see, the difference between God's thoughts and my thoughts and God's ways and my ways is that God knows the end from the beginning.

Therefore, he doesn't do something and wonder if it's right. When he does it, he knows it's right. Now, the way I do things, I do them and I hope it's right.

And sometimes it is. But many times it isn't. But when I started doing it, I was sure it was.

So many times I think that this is the best way and then I find out it isn't. There was a much better way. So God says, Hey, my thoughts are not your thoughts.

My ways are not your ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than yours and my thoughts than your thoughts. I mean, there is such a difference.

And yet, herein is the folly of man because I get angry with God sometimes because he doesn't do it my way. Now, isn't that ridiculous? For a person to get angry with God because God has done something a way they didn't want it done or a way they wouldn't do it. Now, if I did it my way, I would never have any troubles.

I would never have any weakness. I would never have any problems. If I did it my way, it would just be smooth sailing all the way.

No storms. But that's not God's way. For you see, if I did it my way, I would never develop any strength of character.

I would become a very weak, flabby, spoiled person, miserable to be around because I would not understand a person that did have problems, a person that did experience weaknesses. I would become intolerable towards them. And so God doesn't let me do it my way.

God lets me fall. God lets me stumble. God lets me experience weaknesses.

God lets me experience troubles, trials, problems, difficulties so that when my brother is in need, I can come to him in meekness and lift him as I consider myself realizing that I too am tempted. So, God's ways are really best. Now, for me to insist that God do it my way is sheer folly because now I am exalting my knowledge above God's.

For me to demand that God do it my way. God, I want you to do this now. I'm speaking this into existence.

I want you to do it. Oh man, how foolish. Because you see, that's exalting my knowledge, my ways, my thoughts.

It's seeking to make them supreme instead of God's supreme who knows all things and knows so much better than I know. Now, the wrath of God is going to be revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of man who hold the truth of God in unrighteousness. And, for you to hold the truth of

God and yet exalt yourself and your thoughts and your ways above Him is holding the truth of God in unrighteousness.

That's the wrong way to hold the truth of God because you say, well, God is supreme, God knows everything and then I say, now God, I demand that you do this or I command you, Lord, to do this. That is not making God supreme. That's now making me supreme and my ways supreme.

So, I'm holding the truth of God in righteousness. I'm saying, God, I know better than you know. My way is better than your way.

How much better it is. How much more glorifying to God it is. What a great witness it is when I can just say, Oh, God, your will be done.

I just commit myself and my ways to you, Lord, that your will will be done in my life. You do what is best. You do what you know is best.

And not to question and not to challenge and not to gripe and not to complain when things aren't going my way. Not to give God such a miserable time. Oh, again.

If I were God, man, would I put a plug in some people's mouths. As they come whining and complaining, you know, and the minute I'd hear that, Oh, God, I'd just... Whining to God. Of course, I'm very intolerable towards whining.

Talk to my kids. Man, that's one thing I can never stand. A whining kid.

And they learn that. And my kids may do a lot of bad things, but they don't whine. And I can imagine God's attitude towards the constant griping and whining and all that he hears from people.

Because he isn't doing something to suit me. To suit my way. To harmonize with my thoughts.

But yet, as high as the heaven is above the earth. Now, how high that is, I don't know. And I don't think anybody knows.

But it's... It's out there. It's high. Just how high, I don't know.

But it's awfully high. So are God's thoughts higher than mine. And His ways are higher than mine.

So surely, the wisest thing I could ever do is just to commit my way unto the Lord. And that's what the Scripture tells me to do. Commit your way unto the Lord and He shall bring it to pass.

Whatever He plans. Whatever He purposes. He'll bring it to pass if I just commit my way to Him.

For as the rain cometh down in the snow from heaven and returns not thither, but it waters the earth and makes it to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I have sent it. Now God here uses a very common figure, an occurrence of nature, the rain and the snow, to illustrate His Word.

How that they come down from heaven even as God's Word has come to us, not as an invention of man as some would have you to think. But all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Holy men of old wrote as they were inspired by the Holy Spirit.

God's Word has come to us from heaven. And the purpose of God's Word is to work here on earth, not to work in heaven, but it's to work here on earth. Its effect and its fruit and its result is here on earth.

Now even as rain comes down to water the earth in order that it might spark into life all of the potential that is there in that dirt. You look at a dry, parched, dusty field, barren, but yet in that dirt, in that dry field, there's all kinds of latent life forms. Out in the desert, dry, parched sand, but just get a few inches of rain and oh, the beauty, the glory that is there.

As the rain sparks into life all of the seeds and everything else that are there and the desert turns purple, it turns yellow, it turns golden, it turns blue with all of the beautiful flowers. As the seeds have been touched by the rain and brought forth into life, so our lives, as God's Word comes to us, is able to transform our lives and bring into life that Spirit. Now, the Word of God is that which comes to our spirit and brings life to our spirit and thus brings forth all of the glory and the potential of our being.

Man without the Word of God remains dead, lifeless, barren, deserty. But oh, when God's Word like rain begins to just soak my life, the fruit, the results, as it waters, in order that it might bud, blossom forth to give seed to the sower and bread to the eater. The first effect of God's work in my life is towards me, what it has done for me.

And the second is bread to the eater, what God can do through me in helping others. So is my Word. It shall not return unto me void.

God's Word will not come back void. He that goeth forth with weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again, bringing the sheaves with him. You go forth with the Word of God, the seed.

Now the seed is the Word, Jesus said. You go forth bearing the precious seed, the Word of God, carrying it to others. Doubtless you're going to come again with a harvest.

For God's Word will not return unto him void. Now learn to start using the Word and quit defending it. It doesn't need your defense.

It needs that you just use the Word of God. How many people have started to read the Bible in order that they might learn it better so that they can better argue against it and have ended up believing. I think of Lou Madison in our congregation here.

And his wife loved the Lord and was a Christian and Lou was so angry. With his engineering mind, he was going to read the Bible so that he could just tear to shreds her whole faith, destroy it. And as he got to reading the Bible in order that he might destroy his wife's faith, God's Word didn't return void and faith was planted in Lou's heart.

They ended up together in the faith instead of out of the faith. Because God's Word won't return void if a person would only read with an open heart. God's Word will not return void.

It shall accomplish that which God pleases. It shall prosper in the thing for which God sent it. Now God has sent His Word to bring you hope, to bring you encouragement, to bring you joy, to bring you life.

And all of these things will come to you as you read the Word of God. It's not going to return void. It's going to accomplish the purposes for which He has sent it.

And so how important for us is just let the Word of God soak into our lives. Just each day get a new drenching of God's Word and just let it soak in. And oh, how it will cause your life to just bud forth into glory, into beauty.

For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace. The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing and the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Oh, that person who is saturated in the Word of God.

All nature seems to just come into harmony and into tune. It's just glorious. As you come into harmony with God, you come into harmony with the nature around you.

And oh, you begin to see things you never saw before. I've always said, hey, if you're not a Christian, be sure that you give your life to the Lord before you take your vacation. You cannot enjoy your vacation completely unless you have Christ in your heart.

And I'll tell you, you'll see things through Christ-filled eyes that you have never seen before. Those flowers that used to just trample down in the meadows, you'll be enthralled with them. With their design, with their color, with their beauty.

You'll see new things. The hills will break forth into singing. The trees will clap their hands.

And oh, you'll just come in tune and in harmony with God's creation. Instead of the thorn, there'll come up a fir tree. Instead of a briar, the myrtle tree.

And it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off. God's glorious days of restoration. You know the glorious thing about teaching the Word of God? I never need to worry about the results.

Because God's Word won't return void. He's going to accomplish the purposes for which He sent it. And I can always know that you're going to go away and be blessed because you've been here.

And that's sort of comforting to know. If I stood up here and gave you my Word all evening, then I'd worry all week about what had happened to it. But because we give to you God's Word, we commend you now unto the Word of God.

That God might work in your life His glorious work. As now by the Spirit He makes application of the truths to your life. And as He begins His work of enriching you in His love, through His grace.

May God be with you this week and keep your life steadfast in Him. And may you grow up into Christ in all things as your life comes into that place of maturity that God wants you to know and to experience in Jesus Christ. And thus may your life be rich and full as God's Word works in you through the Spirit.

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