

The Glad Tidings of the Gospel

by Joshua Daniel

The Lord Jesus Christ is the friend of sinners, and his love and forgiveness are available to all, but many Christians fail to project this message and instead present a superficial and hypocritical image of Christianity.

Duration: 50:07

Scripture: Amos 5:21-24, Matthew 9:9-13, Luke 7:37-38, Luke 19:10, Romans 5:8

Topics: "Christ's Love", "Salvation"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the profound love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ towards sinners, highlighting the concept of Christ dying for us while we were still in sin. It challenges the notion of projecting a superficial image of Christianity and calls for a deep, transformative encounter with the Savior who welcomes and forgives even the most broken. The message stresses the importance of reflecting the true essence of Christ's love and salvation in a world filled with darkness and moral decay, urging believers to be genuine bearers of the cross and agents of transformation.

Transcript

Now, of course, we have always heard of our Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ, being the friend of sinners. Let us begin with Romans, the fifth chapter, the eighth verse, but God commended his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. You know, my dear friends, where the cross of Jesus Christ is unknown, this concept that there is love and forgiveness and salvation for a sinner is hard to project on anybody.

You see, how can it be, how can a holy God embrace someone out of the gutter? You know, you can think of a mother who lifts her child who has slipped into a puddle of muddy water, and she does not think of her expensive dress, just embraces the little one with delight and relief that the little one has been rescued from imminent death. Now, so when we look at the cross of Jesus Christ, forgiveness for the man, for the person who is nailing him to the cross, forgiveness for the one who whipped him and lacerated his back, forgiveness for the one who rent the air with the shakrai, crucify him. Now, this is all very hard to believe, in fact, that in the face of such hatred, the Lord Jesus Christ breathes his prayer, Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.

Forgiveness for God commended, presented his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. What promise did he see in any of us? A promise of holy living? A promise of rejection of this world's values, which are essentially selfish values. You know, there is nothing in the--there is no great evil

perpetrated by just riches, but riches, as long as I hold tight to them, and riches that deplete my compassion or even exclude my compassion, riches unapplied to righteous causes, what are they going to do? They're going to harm me.

I'm going to accumulate them for what? To what purpose? So, there would be no meaning at all to riches which are not applied to bringing the kingdom of God in. You know, the Lord Jesus Christ said that he must go and declare the glad tidings of the kingdom of heaven. The glad tidings, he called it.

You see? Now, sometimes we tend to take away the glad from the tidings. Now, we have absolutely no right to do it. These are glad tidings.

They have to be glad tidings. You know, they promise that some stores are going to be open from midnight, is it? It's called midnight madness. Of course, it is madness when you go hunting after bargains at midnight.

Well, it's insanity. Okay, but that's how our world goes, you know. Thanksgiving with a splurge of selfish buying.

Now, if Thanksgiving is all thanks to Joshua Daniel, well, it's no thanks at all. If it is all a thanks to self, what good does it do? It may boost your ego and your pride and hasten your downfall. But apart from that, I see no good which can come from such a thing.

Now, you know, in the seventh chapter of Luke, let us turn to the seventh chapter of Luke, where Jesus Christ was seated at dinner in the Pharisee's house. Thirty-seventh verse, and behold, a woman of the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping. Now, however, did this woman regard herself to be a welcome guest? She was an uninvited person.

As a matter of fact, she would not have gained admission into that house had it not been for the fact that she almost gate-crashed the place, came in, headed straight to the Lord Jesus, and began to kiss his feet. She wouldn't have dared to have gone into that house. It was a Pharisee's house.

He was no the owner of the place. The host was no friend to characters like herself. No friend at all.

And yet, when she saw Jesus, she felt she would not be refused. You know, my dear friends, we must be very careful that we are not a kind of forbidding people, you know, grim and grimacing type of people who keep a long face and an unattractive appearance, so that people are not at ease at all when they approach you. Sometimes we must confess that many people who call themselves Christians are grim, forbidding people.

They are not a very pleasant people. And I cannot understand this. Look at this woman's assurance.

I will not be cast out. My Lord will receive me. Look at that kind of assurance.

What acquaintance did she have with Jesus? Nothing at all. She was just--she's introduced to us as just one of those very bad characters who had acquired a name for herself of disrepute. And there she was, gate-crashing this place, coming in and falling at the feet of Jesus.

She was emboldened to even kiss those feet. Now, how did she get that kind of idea or assurance? Christ will receive me. This sinless Son of God will receive me.

Are we projecting such a Savior? You know, being remiss in this regard is a serious crime. In other words, we are misrepresenting Jesus. We are making him inaccessible.

I think we Christians have made--many Christians, at least, let me say--have made Jesus Christ a kind of very remote personality, an inaccessible person, not just that welcoming person. I cannot understand, you know, how Islam, which acknowledges Jesus Christ as a prophet but denies his crucifixion or resurrection, even if they should just acknowledge that he is a prophet, that would invite comparisons, isn't it, with Muhammad, their prophet? And I cannot see how anybody would dare put their deity or their prophet or their guru or whatever you might call him beside the Lord Jesus and invite a comparison since there would be--there is hardly any comparison at all. It is an obvious fact of history.

But look at the fact that in the face of historical evidence that Muhammad was a man of great violence--that is how his whole beginnings were, you know, and we have not been able to project the Lord Jesus as such a contrast, such a beautiful person, that a billion, nearly a billion people did not say, I would rather have Jesus. I feel that it is a grave failure, a kind of unaccountable and unpardonable failure that the beauty of Jesus has not been brought out and made absolutely incontrovertible in the face of such darkness. I can't understand.

Maybe it is the historical greed which has been manifested by nations which were called Christian. It may be other acts of grave cruelty perpetrated in the time of the Crusades. However, Christ has never been acknowledged as the Savior.

Now, my friends, let us turn to Matthew 9th chapter. Matthew 9th chapter brings us to this passage, 9th verse, and as Jesus passed forth, passed by, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom, and he saith unto him, follow me. And he arose and followed him.

And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meet in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, why eateth your master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, they that behold need not a physician, but they that are sick. So, here again, the company in which the Lord Jesus Christ sat was the kind of company with which none of those religious crowd of scribes or Pharisees would ever keep.

They would never keep such company. They had nothing to give such a company. You see, folks, suppose you're seated next to a politician.

I wonder what you will have to pass on to that person. Politics today being as corrupt as it is, what is it that you will be able to give that man? Would you be able to challenge him and say, is it really your objective to lift this nation? Is it really your objective, or is it only to feather your nest and make yourself a little more comfortable or a lot more comfortable? Or suppose you were seated next to a commissioner of the IRS or the top bosses, one of the top bosses of the internal revenue. Would you have something which you can give him? Would you be able to say, hey, look, the nation is losing billions from tax cheats who do not pay in their taxes, billions.

And much of this deficit budget can be easily counterbalanced if we bring the righteousness of Jesus into the nation's conscience. You know, very often it is found that some of the top people have been evading taxes. Top people who know better.

And as for the fraud involved in all the handouts that are given and the false claims, Medicare and Medicaid claims, false claims put in by doctors that we have educated a bunch of thieves to be physicians and surgeons is something terrible. Would we have something to give this nation in the realm of economics and the budgetary woes of the country? Here was the Lord Jesus amongst these financial officials who were handling the taxes and he could give them something higher. And it was so evident to them by the steps which their colleague Levi took.

The immediate, you know, rising up, what do we see? Sitting at the receipt of custom. Follow me. He said unto him, follow me.

And he arose and followed him. You know, it's not easy to cut away some of these earthly ties. Not easy at all.

We have got a strong idea that it is the dollar that will eventually secure our joy or our well-being. That's a fallacy. But it is so deeply entrenched in our minds that to find a release like Levi's release is something which is most amazing.

Here is a man indoctrinated from probably his childhood like the rest of us here. It's money that will make you. It's money that will keep you.

It's money that will satisfy you. You know, it's such a deep, entrenched idol in the heart. We have embraced it.

We have not even bothered to question its veracity. Is this true? Can you show me one man who has been truly secured by his wealth? No, we don't even question it. We have just swallowed it lock, stock, and barrel.

The whole thing. But when they saw their colleague, Levi, released on the spot, my, surely they would pay attention to what this man had to say. This man who happened to pass by.

So, my dear friends, a friend of sinners. Why did the Lord choose that location? Why didn't he go to a seminary instead and say, I'm going to find some of my best disciples here? It is rather sad to see the difference in the response to the Word of God one finds in a Bible college situation and a state college situation. In a state college, one can be forgiven if one faces these issues with indifference, because he has seen nothing better.

But in a Bible college, I find a kind of disinterestedness. We know it all. We are fine.

I simply cannot understand as a preacher and as one who has preached now these 62 years. I cannot pronounce that my product is fine. No, I cannot.

I say to myself, how many men of the apostolic caliber have come out of our labors? How many men who walk like Jesus have come out of our retreats? You know, to look upon your product in a kind of self-congratulatory manner is a deep failing. And many Christians, many people, religious people, do not even recognize that they are not being the salt of the earth. They just don't recognize it.

They don't see it. All right, if I ask you, whom have you salted? If you are a salt, whom have you salted? Did the salt dissolve? Did the salt perform its function? Whom have you salted? All right, when I turn on the light and put the switch on, I expect something to happen. I expect the lights to come on.

All right, whom have you enlightened? Christ is the friend of sinners. Christ our Lord makes us light where we are. Salt.

Well, my dear friends, as a matter of fact, when I see the failings of Christian preachers and those who profess Christianity, now are Christian people fit at all to proclaim, the harlots enter the kingdom of God before you? Would you trust them? With people like the woman of Sychar? Have they got that holiness of life that they can confront such situations? Now, isn't it a sad day in America's history when we see preachers failing, Christian workers failing? A woman came to us after one of the meetings in Suriname and said, now I know that there are preachers here who have left their wives and they are still preaching. I do not know the circumstances, but I know that we are not to divorce our wives like the Muslims do. The Muslims only have to speak three words, utter three words.

I divorce you. I divorce you. I divorce you.

Three times and it's finished. It's legal. Now, one cannot accept Christian marriage and Christian families to come to a state of such gross instability.

Which speaks of a total lack of integrity and truth. Where is the problem? Has this marriage been conceived in holiness? Has this marriage been consummated after the blessing at the altar? Can we trust this man to be faithful to this woman until death parts them? Has the friend of sinners really estranged their heart from their old ways? Has the friend of sinners been acknowledged? Or is this just a kind of function through which we go through in a casual manner? Now, see that a Christian cannot be trusted in the kind of company that Jesus kept. Shows me that there is no caliber at all.

Shows me that there is nothing there at the heart of their profession. He is the friend of sinners. That means it does not matter if everybody around me are consuming alcohol or being as wicked as possible.

I can still win them for Jesus. You know, my dear friends, one of the most, what I would say, inhospitable places for the gospel, where others, wonderful people, had failed when we went in and saw the wrecks of humanity, what sin had done, what crime had done in their midst, what diseases brought on, venereal diseases brought on by irresponsible and wicked lives, had done. What seemed so dismal and impossible to correct when my father went into that scene, he just took to it like a duck to water.

All burglars, highwaymen, bootleggers. Amongst them, when we first went in, I don't know what it was that drew my dad so much to that scene that he stuck to the battle. He would not be deflected until the transformation there has resulted in a great explosion of the gospel.

That wicked, notorious place, becoming a center out of which thousands of converted people have gone out with the gospel. That's what the gospel does. That's what the friend of sinners does.

That's what Jesus does. How sad that we seem to kind of contain the gospel and keep it to ourselves. The thrust of the gospel is neutralized.

The potency of the gospel is negated. Why is that? He's the friend of sinners. Am I going to label him as the friend of religious people only? What's wrong? Am I not able to project my savior as the one who saved a wretch like me? He saved me.

And he's able to save you and use you. Oh, my beloved people, we are scarcely utilizing the power which is in the Lord. We just heard, turn your eyes upon Jesus.

Look full in his wonderful face, and the things of this world will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace. That's what should normally happen. And when it does not happen, and the world continues to appear very big, let me tell you, we are a bunch of frauds.

We are not real. Our faith is not real. Our our yielding to the friend of sinners has been very tenuous and superficial.

It has not gone to the depths. He is the friend of sinners. You can't change that.

I came to seek and to save that which is lost. You can't alter that. But here we are in a state today where some of the foremost figures in the Christian world are showing themselves to be men with feet of clay.

Can't really stand before temptation. How tragic. What a display of our being removed afar off from the cross.

What a demonstration of spiritual sterility. God must help us. This is our Lord, the savior of sinners, the friend of sinners, the one who saves the lost.

Let us not bring him down to a lower pedestal and say, you just kind of give me a nice looking appearance, fine Christian profession, and that's enough. No. The cross can never be reduced to such superficiality.

Let us pray. Loving Father, in our day and generation, we are in this miserable state where the Muslim is looking askance at us, saying, hey, we have a superior morality. Without the cross.

Oh, loving Father, we can't think of a morality that is stable or in any sense reliable without the cross of Jesus. If our righteousness does not stem from the cross, it is not righteousness at all. It is some form of flimsy eyewash which cannot stand before temptation.

Please, Lord. Help us to establish the truth of your word and not take away from it. Let us not deplete or deny the power of the cross or of the resurrection.

Let not our product be something which is unrelated to the cross. Oh, forgive us, we beseech you. Every such deficiency and discrepancy.

Forgive us, we beseech you. Lord, we are born of the cross. It is your death and resurrection which has underwritten our entire destiny.

And by the cross we stand. And by the bearing of the cross, we shall win. And by no other means can we retrieve this horrible situation.

Forgive us, Lord. We pray come to America at this time when its values are all being lofted by the heathen. Oh, please, Lord.

Let us not let you down, we pray. Hear our prayer. In Jesus' holy name, amen.

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