

Audio Sermon: Dying to Self

by Keith Green

To truly follow Jesus, we must be willing to give up our own desires, rights, and interests for the sake of others and for the sake of God.

Duration: 1:49:30

Scripture: Matthew 16:24, Romans 12:2, Galatians 2:20, Philippians 2:3

Topics: "Self Denial", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

This sermon delves into the in-depth study of self-denial or death to self, exploring various scriptures that emphasize the importance of denying oneself. The speaker encourages the audience to write down the scriptures shared, study them, and pray over them to truly internalize their meaning. The focus is on digesting the scripture in one's spirit rather than mere memorization, highlighting the significance of meditating on God's word.

Transcript

This is going to be a pretty in-depth study, going from scripture to scripture. We're going to be studying all the basic facets of denying self. You can title the study Self Denial or Death to Self.

And it's important that you realize we're going to be going quickly through many scriptures. You're to write the scriptures down and then go back at another time and look them up and study them and pray over them. Some of these are very good memorization scriptures, although I don't believe in a lot of scripture memorization.

I think you'd better get your head up with too much of the scripture without meditating on it, without really... I mean, I've seen people that memorize chapters and chapters and chapters and they can recite it to you, but so can a parent. It doesn't matter how much of the scripture you have memorized. It's how much of the scripture you have digested in your spirit.

I know there's many people that would disagree with me, but I started memorizing scripture and I was more into the memorization of it than the practice and assimilation of it into my life. But there's some great scripture here for memorization. 1 Kings chapter 17, verse 12.

Let's start at verse 8. Then the word of the Lord came to him, Elijah, saying, Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and stay there. Behold, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you. So he

arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks, and he called to her and said, Please, get me a little water in a jar that I may drink.

And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, Please bring me a piece of bread in your hand. But she said, As the Lord your God lives, I have no bread, only a handful of flour in the bowl and a little oil in the jar. And behold, I am gathering a few sticks that I may go and prepare for me and my son, that we may eat it and die.

Now this is in the middle of a famine. It hasn't rained in three years. I mean, at this point it's probably two years because he stays with them for a year or so.

Maybe it's only one year, but it's an incredible drought. No water, and she's living in a lancet. All she's got left from her stores is a little bit enough to make a meal for her son and her, and then that's it.

They don't have anything else to eat. Then Elijah said to her, Do not fear. Do as you have said, but make me a little bread cake first from it, and bring it out to me, and afterward you may make one for yourself and for your son.

For thus says the Lord God of Israel, The bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty until the day that the Lord sends rain on the face of the earth. But she went and did according to the word of Elijah, and she and he and her household ate for many days. The bowl of flour was not exhausted, nor did the jar of oil become empty according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke through Elijah.

Now, how rude can you get, right? Now God has already told him, I've commanded a widow to provide for you, in verse 9. And he comes to her, and this is the way God's going to provide for her, by giving him the first cake from the last meal that she has. I find that when we are exhausted, that when we have nothing left to give, when we have absolutely the last bottom of the jar, that's when God will ask us for peace. When you're just about to fall asleep, that's when the counseling call will come in.

That's true. When you have no more room, then God sends the people. When you have no more money, then the bills come in.

This is the test of the Lord. We're going to end, this is real interesting, we're going to end this Bible study with an Old Testament test, and we're going to start, I'm sorry, we're going to start it with an Old Testament test, and we're going to end it with an Old Testament test, with a lot of New Testament scripture in between. This is an Old Testament test.

You want to be provided for, widow? She's ready to die, what's she got to lose? You want to be provided for? God's going to use you to provide for me, but I'm going to do miracles in your midst. I think it's incredible, God says, I have commanded a widow to take care of you. I've commanded a widow to provide for you.

Dig that, verse 9. The widow isn't going to provide for him. He goes there, she's got one bit of flour left, and he says, alright, you can provide for me out of a supernatural bowl of flour and a supernatural jar of oil, that always only has one serving left. First you must deny yourself and give it to me.

Then every day will be a day of faith. You'll only have enough left for that day. But he swears to her.

In verse 14. For thus says the Lord God of Israel, the bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty until the day that the Lord sends rain on the face of the earth. Now there's a lot of New Testament scripture on this that we're going to go through.

I think the amazing thing for us in the scriptures is that the only way for us to have anything is to give everything away. The only way to be exalted is to humble yourself. The only way to increase is to decrease.

The only way to receive love is to give love. The only way to grow is to get smaller. The only way to be taken care of is to take care of somebody else.

It's the rule of the kingdom. Somebody once said that hell was a place where there was food. There was a big table and there was a feast in front of them.

And their arms had no joint at their elbow. They couldn't bring it to their thing. And there's this thing and they could carve the turkey and everything, but they couldn't get it to their mouth.

And they said heaven was the exact same scene with people whose arms couldn't bend either, but they were feeding each other. The same situation that they were saying, here, you feed me, I'll feed you. The only way, the only difference between those two things is selfishness and giving, sharing.

The situation is exactly the same. You can have hell in a situation by having two people who are afraid to love and give to each other, by having people who are afraid to give themselves up. And that's hell.

That's selfishness, that's hurt, that's anguish. In the same situation, with the same amount of love and need, and they give to each other. Here is two people who have nothing to eat at all.

She's got enough to live and he's got nothing. She's got just one last meal. Well, he says the only way you'll be provided for is if you give me a meal from that last meal first.

And that's the rule of the kingdom. Okay, turn to Matthew 10, verse 37. You have that on the middle speed, right? Four hour speed, right? The middle one.

Okay, Matthew 10, verse 37. He who loves father and mother more than me is not worthy of me. He who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

He who does not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. He who has found his life shall lose it. He who has lost his life for my sake shall find it.

He who receives me, he who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives him who sent me. Okay, the key there, he who has found his life shall lose it. That means he who tries to save his own life shall lose his life.

Again, back to the widow. Do you want to be saved? Give away the last bit of your substance. Now, how this reads into our life is that we need to be continually laying our lives down for each other, continually thinking about how we can make the other person in our lives better.

And if we're always worried about what's in it for me and why, even reading it into our life here, whether it be the schedule or the job, why is it that I'm always making the salad? Why do they have me cutting the onions all the time? Well, that might be the nastiest job in the kitchen. Be grateful that you're able to do it

so somebody else doesn't have to do it. You're benefiting somebody else.

If we would think of the body instead of us, if we would think of the whole, we would be glad to do the nasty job. I'm sure you're glad when the grease is on your hands instead of your face. You know, when you're working with something greasy, and all of a sudden somebody says, hey, I have grease on your nose.

And you look down, and you had it on your hand, and you rubbed your nose. And now you can't see your nose, but you can see your hand. I'm sure your whole mind is grateful when you realize you didn't rub your face, and you see the grease, and you catch it first on your hand.

Now, if your hand had a mind of its own, it wouldn't be grateful. It wouldn't be grateful that it had grease on it. Boy, I'm sure glad.

Well, I'm not. I've got grease on me. Well, that's the way the body has to be acting.

I'm glad I got the grease instead of the more honorable part of the body, whatever that is. They say there's some parts of the body to honor and some to dishonor. We walk on our feet.

It gets the brunt of weight. If we step on something, it gets hurt first. Our feet, if they had a mind of their own, wouldn't be grateful.

They wish that we'd walk on our hands. So it could be up, and you could shake feet with people. You could wave to people, you know.

But which part of your body gets more honor, your feet or your hands? Your hands do. You cook, you sew, you work with it. You don't cook, sew, and work with your feet.

You don't love with your feet. You don't go up to somebody and give them a foot rub with your foot on their back. The reason I'm saying this is that there is parts of the body that are supposedly, the Bible calls it, parts to dishonor and parts for honor.

There are parts of your body that are covered up. No one ever sees, except your husband or wife. And those are for intimacy, those parts of the body.

There are parts of the Christian body that no one ever sees. Only in the bridal love between the body and the Lord do they get exposed. Only when God is being worshipped and only when God is blessing and anointing are those parts of the body lifted up and shown.

And God sees them only in private. That's why Jesus said, when you do your giving, give in private. For your Father sees thee in secret and rewards thee openly.

Anyone who's married will tell you that there's intimate moments between a husband and a wife that they don't share with anybody. But it beams from their face during the day when they're doing other things. That love, that intimate fellowship between a husband and a wife.

It's not sex that I'm talking about. It's the intimacy that's a part of it. That makes a man, a husband or a wife, at ease.

He's not alarmed. He's thinking of his beloved or he's thinking of his mate. And he has a peace and a joy about that person, even though he's not with them.

That is the way it is with Christians. And you probably, whoever you are, are probably a part of the body that's not getting as much honor as Billy Graham or not getting as much honor as somebody in the spotlight or an elder or a group leader or a team leader or whatever it might be. And everybody sees them and they're the hand that's always getting shaken and they're the hand that's always getting patted on the back and they're the people that are always getting written about and talked about and you're just not noticed at all.

But if you remain intimate with God as part of the body, then God will honor you openly at the proper time. And it has to do with this losing your life. It has to do with this, the only way to find your life is to lose it.

And I think that there needs to be, you know, this Bible study is not a rebuke. This Bible study is a remembrance. And it's for me, it's more for me than any of you.

As I read through this, as I'm teaching this, nobody needs to be humbled more than those that are in the public eye. Nobody needs to be at the foot of the cross more than those who are being given honor or being given esteem or being given attention. Those are the people that need to be the humblest because if they're not, they're doomed to fall.

And everybody that's depending on them is doomed to fall with them. Matthew 13, verse 44. Matthew 13, verse 44.

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field which a man found and hid. And from joy over it, he goes and sells all that he has and buys the field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls.

And upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. Now, what is it that you seek from the Christian life, really? I mean, a lot of people that are Christians were losers. In fact, most Christians today were losers in the world.

And they traded in a losing life for what they hoped would be a winning life. That's not salvation. That might be something that will spark you to get saved.

That might be something that will put a desire in your heart to meet the Lord. But that is, I think, the bulk of the testimonies you hear. I had nothing.

I was down and out. I was this and that. And my testimony is very much like that, too.

And that's really not serving the Lord. That might be meeting the Lord, but it's not serving the Lord. I didn't have any happiness.

I was unfulfilled. And I met Jesus, and since then, things have been wonderful. That's the attraction between a man and a woman.

That is not a marriage. I was lonely, and I met her, and my life has changed. She has just thrilled my heart.

That is not a marriage. That's attraction. That's the spark that might bring two people together.

That is not commitment. That is not relationship. People today are so emotional-minded.

People today are so... They need to be fulfilled. They need to have all their goodies. And it's just not like that in man-woman relationship.

And it's not like that between Christ and the Church. You can be attracted to Jesus. I have nothing.

Now I can have everything. All right. That's valid.

Then he's going to say, all right. You really want everything? Give up everything. A man found a treasure hidden in the field.

He sold all that he had so he could get it. He gave up everything to have it. Well, it's easy to give up.

As Winky Prattney says, you know, you say, I gave up smoke, and I gave up drink, and I gave up fornicate, and I gave up drugs. It's easy to give up your wrongs. But have you given up your rights? Giving up your wrongs is easy.

Those things are killing you anyway. You didn't do God any favors by giving up things that are sending you to hell. God is impressed when you give up the things you love.

It was one thing for Abraham to send Ishmael away. It was another thing for him to put Isaac on the altar. He had to give up his wrong by getting rid of Ishmael.

Then he had to give up his right by getting rid of Isaac. Put him on the altar. Offer him as a burnt offering.

There couldn't be anything more distasteful to a father to do. Nothing could be worse. Nothing.

Absolutely nothing could have been worse. He'd rather cut his own head off with a machete than to burn his own son. Giving up the things that are killing you is a favor to yourself.

Nobody ever did God a favor by getting saved. Nobody. It's when you are saved and you're a beautiful Isaac that God has given you your talents, your riches, your future, your images of what you should have as a human being, your rights, what I could be.

I could be making you such and such. I could be a so-and-so. I have the talent to do this and that.

I could be writing books. I could be making records. I could be a great chef.

I could be married by now. I should have married that guy instead of coming to this place. Whatever it was.

I have four kids. Do the lot and bury them. I'm glad I'm here.

Your rights is what God gives you. Your wrongs, you can get rid of those yourself. If you're smart enough.

There's people in the world that use self-hypnosis and S and Eastern stuff. They gave up drugs. They gave up fornication.

They knew those things were killing them. You can give those things up without the Lord. You can't give up yourself without the Lord.

You can't. It's impossible. Because all you do is benefit yourself unless you give yourself up for the Lord.

The man found a treasure and he got rid of everything he had to possess this treasure. What is the treasure? What is it? What's the treasure? What's the treasure? Jesus is the treasure. Jesus is the treasure.

I am the resurrection and the life. I am the way. I am the truth.

I am the life. He is the bridegroom. Who is the treasure? Jesus.

You can't have him if you have any of yourself. You can have part of him. You can be on your way.

You can be growing. You can be going step by step on the Christian installment plan. But you better... You'll always be making payments until you have that experience where God karate chops you behind the knees and you're on your face.

And the best thing to get you there is to give up the things you love the most. Your dreams. Your ideals.

The things that you always wanted out of life. Throw them away. You know, one of the things... I always wanted to live in Colorado.

I don't know why. I just always wanted to live in Colorado. And I wanted to have a... I wanted to have a ranch up in Colorado with a recording studio and a learjet.

And so that I could go up there and do all my records and I could fly, you know, to L.A. or fly out and do concerts and come back. That would be, you know, a little paradise away from everything else. You know, just my family and my friends.

This was in, you know, B.C. days. You know, just going up there and partying and so on. That was my dream, you know.

And then when I became a Christian, you know, all I had to do was to get rid of the drugs and the party and put the Bible studies in. And I could have that. I could still, you know, I could still have the ranch in Colorado and the recording studio and the learjet.

And everybody would say how blessed God had blessed me. I did it. I mean, it would be totally acceptable in the body, you know.

That's the crazy thing. Today we have a Christianity where you can have anything you want to and just put Christian labels on it. That's not Christianity.

You can have anything you want to and put Christian labels on it. You can say I have a burden for this and I have a, you know, I feel led to do this and whatever. And it's all, you can still, you can Christianize your selfishness.

You can put a, you stamp a dove and a fish on it, you know. And God is not impressed with your dove and your fish. He's impressed with nothing more than the heart.

The heart after him. A heart that when finds the pearl, sells everything he has, he sells everything he has to buy it. That's self-denial.

That is everything. It doesn't say he sold most of what he had. There's a story that I read once about a guy, I think Winky tells this.

Guy comes into the pearl shop, right? He's a pearl collector. And he goes, and there's a pearl the size of a globe. And the guy goes, I've been looking for a pearl like that all my life.

I've collected pearls. What does that pearl cost? Oh, it's very expensive. How much does it cost? You probably couldn't afford it.

Well, how much is it? Everything you've got. Is that all? Everything, is that it? Well, that's great. What do you got? Oh, man, I don't know.

Open up my wallet. \$117. All right.

What else you got? Well, I've got a check here in my bank account. All right. There's \$40,000, \$50,000 I've saved in stocks and bonds.

All right, write a check. \$40,000. Sign over your stocks and bonds.

Okay. What else you got? Well, that's all I've got. I mean, you know, I don't even have much left to make my house payment with.

Oh, you have a house? Yeah, I have a house. All right. We'll take that.

Oh, where do you want my wife and I to live? In our car? Oh, you have a car? Yeah, two of them. Two cars. Well, where do you want my wife and children to go out in the cold? Oh, you have wife and children.

One wife. How many children? Three. Three children.

Oh, you expect me to live alone? Oh, yes, you too. That's the whole thing. People, when they think God wants everything, they stop short.

They think He wants my money. They think, well, He wants, you know, this and that, but He wants everything. It has to be under the blood.

Everything has got to be committed. You can't think of just money. You can't think of what I could be doing.

You can't think of who you could be or what you're hoped to be or any other thing. It's got to be everything. Okay.

Number eight. Luke 12. 36.

Starting at 35. Luke 12, 35. Be dressed in readiness and keep your lamps alight.

And be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find on the other when he comes. Truly, I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve and have them recline at table and will come up and wait on them.

Now, this goes with the scripture in Luke 17. I just want you to read that first. It says that when we're with Jesus, it says that he will gird himself, have them recline at table, and will come up and wait on them.

Now, this might just be a parable. It also might be literal. At the wedding feast, Jesus might come up and say, what would you like? That's incredible.

The king, the master, will gird himself to serve and have them recline at table and will come up and wait on them. Now, this goes with Luke 17. We'll come back to this.

Luke 17, verse 7. But which of you having a slave, plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, come immediately and sit down to eat? But will he not say to him, prepare something for me to eat and properly clothe yourself and serve me until I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink? He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he? So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded, you say, we are unworthy slaves. We have done only that which we ought to have done. Now, that is the attitude when you serve God.

I'm just doing what I'm supposed to do. Remember Paul said, I don't have any reward for preaching the gospel. Woe is me if I don't preach the gospel.

My reward is that when I preach the gospel, I offer it without charge. But think of that. Think of that.

It's like whether it be Kevin on the press, or whether it be Julie Lynn in the track department, or whether it be Carol up in the office, or Terry in the art department, or whoever you are in this ministry. If that's where God has you, you don't get a reward for doing those things. Not at all.

I don't get a reward for playing the piano and singing. Woe is me if I don't. Woe is you if you don't draw pictures.

It's not that that gets us a reward. It's serving God in everything we do with a proper heart. It isn't the deeds.

God isn't going to give art points for him, and car points for him, and music points for me. God isn't impressed with my songs. He's got better music in heaven.

God isn't impressed with any of us and what we do. He's impressed with how we do it. He isn't impressed that this guy is out tending sheep.

He isn't impressed. He isn't impressed that he comes in and cooks him a meal. He's impressed that the guy says, I'm doing all I'm supposed to do.

This is wonderful. He isn't patting himself on the back. I'm just an unworthy slave.

That's the best slave there is. And yet, to tie it into Luke 12 that we just read, I'm sorry, Luke 12, it says, He's going to wait on us. The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve.

And to prove it, in John 13, turn to John 13, verse 3, John chapter 13, verse 3, Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come forth from God and was going back to God. That's an interesting start. Rose from supper, laid aside his garments, and taking a towel, girded himself about.

Then he poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. He dressed as a slave. He took off his clothes and put a towel on the way a foot

slave would be girded.

And then used the towel that was around him. I mean, it's a pretty big towel to start wiping their feet with. Not only did he say he's going to serve, but he showed his disciples he was going to serve the ninety doctors.

He says, Now the hour has come for me to be glorified, not until I wash your feet. He goes on. So he came to Simon Peter in verse 6, and Peter says to him, Lord, you washed my feet? Jesus said, What I do, you do not realize now, but you shall understand later.

Thank you. Peter said to him, Never shall you wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I don't wash your feet, you have no part in me.

Simon Peter said to him, Lord, not only my feet, but my hands and my head. He's the guy that opened his mouth and changed feet all the time. He came to serve.

Yet our attitude, he says, must be, and when we do what we are commanded, we are to say we are only unworthy slaves doing what we are supposed to be doing. We don't deserve to live with what we have done against God. With the lives we have lived for selfishness, we do not deserve another breath.

We deserve only hell. It's only God's grace that we're saved. We did not do anything to get saved.

We did not turn around and go, Okay, God, I promise I'm going to be a good boy now. And God says, Okay, I'll save you. It was that God saw that we were lost in our sins and he made provision for us and then he offered us a way out and we said, Come and get me.

And he saved us. We didn't save ourselves. He saved us.

And we've got to remember that that we are on borrowed time. It's just like a man, you've heard this expression before, a guy, he gets healed of cancer, you know. He has an operation to take out half of his lung and he says, I'm living on borrowed time.

I should have been dead a year ago. All the time that I've had since then is borrowed time. You all hear that expression, I live on borrowed time.

Who did he borrow it from? From God. We're all, as they say, as Lenin said, Lenin, from the communists, said that communists were dead men on furlough. They were dead men on furlough.

And I tell you that Christians are already to be living martyrs. They're already to be dead. You already were crucified with Christ.

You've already been destroyed. There shouldn't be anything left in me of, you know, trying to build Keith's kingdom or trying to build up Keith Green or in you trying to build up you. There's all got to be building up Jesus.

There shouldn't be anything left in John the Baptist of trying to build up John the Baptist. He says, no, I shall decrease and he shall increase. There shouldn't be any looking to what we can gain from being in these ministries or we can gain from being in this department or being the head of this or the tail of that.

It's got to be we're trying to build up Christ. We're trying to expand his kingdom. We are serving him.

I don't care if it's if it's washing toilets, I want to be the best toilet washer in the universe. I want to clean the parts of the toilet no one will ever see that God sees. I always remember that somebody told me that they were he says, it was in a C.S. Lewis book.

Has he ever thought about the wildflowers that are in the crags in the hills that no one ever sees that just bloom they're beautiful flowers that no one ever sees? He says, I meditated on that once and after that when I had bathroom duties he says, I used to polish the bottom of the toilet behind the toilet I'd polish it. Sounds ridiculous but it's God sees the bottom of the toilet. Who are you polishing the toilet for anyway? God sees everything, and I've never forgotten that and when I make the bed my wife and I make the bed together it drives me crazy when the sheet underneath isn't totally straight.

If there's a wrinkle in it I still remember God sees the wrinkle we're not really making the bed right because these eyes are under the blanket. Who do we make beds for? Who do we wash dishes for? Who do we clean toilets for? Is it so that people will go, boy she's a great toilet cleaner but they're never going to look behind the toilet. I think Wayne can tell you in the service they have what's called white glove inspection.

Put on a white glove and go to the place behind the foot locker and run a white glove behind it and see if there's any dust back where nobody can look. They want everything spick and span. They do that at McDonald's too I hear.

It's important that we realize that it's God who sees the back of our minds the back of our toilets the back of everything and when we're given a job to do or to do it that he's the one we are to impress and we are not to try to impress anyone but him. And if you can impress God who else do you have to impress? And he, like any loving father wants you to impress him. Not by impressing others but just by impressing you.

Okay. This is getting exciting. John 12 verse 24 Back a chapter.

This is beautiful. Truly, truly verse 24 I say to you unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies it remains by itself alone. And if it dies it bears much fruit.

He who loves his life loses it. He who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal. If anyone serves me let him follow me and where I am there shall my servant also be.

If anyone serves me the Father will honor him. Now look at verse 25. That's a good memorization verse.

We ought to write that up on the wall. He who loves his life loses it. This is different than he who finds his life loses it.

He who loses it finds it. This is he who loves his life not just finds it but loves it loses it. He who hates his life in this world shall find it to life eternal.

That's that's getting right down to it. Remember it says he who loves father and mother more than me he who loves he who does not deny father and mother he who does not love me more than even his own life. In another place it says he who does not hate his father and mother or his son and daughter or his wife or husband even his own life.

The word hatred there means by comparison to God's love comparison to your love for God. What's important to you? You know we had to go through a time I went through a time when the newsletter was important to me believe it or not. There was a time when opening the mail was important to me two and a

half three years ago.

And and now I find that I've got to keep my interest in the newsletter up. It's not so much that God is so important to me it's just that I have had my heart and my treasure in so many things in my life. I think the hardest thing to give up my treasure right now is my kids my treasure and my kids a lot.

First it was music and then it was fellowship and bible study. Anything but God is wrong. And then it was ministry and concerts and then it was the community and the newsletter.

Then it was administration and so on. Now it's the children and I don't even know I guess it's the kids and indecision about what to do in the future. But after a while you kind of get the hang of it.

After a while you get something in your hand and God slaps your hand and you let it go. And then you get something else in your hand and he slaps your hand and you let it go. And then you get something else in your hand before he can slap you and you let it go.

You get used to letting things go. It becomes a habit. You see your heart loving something and you immediately know there's danger because a hand is going to come out of the sky and slap you.

And he slaps you lovingly like you would if your kid had a scorpion in his hand. You'd slap his hand and get rid of that scorpion and you wouldn't say please let go of the scorpion. Why daddy? Well you know here's a book read this book on scorpions.

I can't understand these people these parents that have children that are six months old you know or eight months old or nine months old and the kid only understands one thing. And they pick the kid up and they start explaining to this nine month old why they can't touch the wall socket. That can really hurt you.

The kid doesn't understand. He just understands pain and rebuke and encouragement. That's about it.

And it's even more the tone of voice than what you're saying. The greatest thing was when Josiah hit the age of reason when I could sit down and explain to him why he's not supposed to ask why when I say no. So it was wonderful.

It was just wonderful when I realized I didn't have to keep dealing with at that point when if I said no you can't do it and he asked why he got a spanking. I said and another time he asked the it was really good he says can we go somewhere or something and I said yes and he turned around and said why? He says I can say why when you say yes, right? But I can say why when you say no, right? I said yeah you won't get a spanking if you ask why when I say yes and he said you can ask why about anything you just can't ask why when I say no. You can't question me when I say no because I'll tell you why when I say no you can't do that because of that and that's it.

So it was real. When you reach the age of reason it's not any more pain rebuke and encouragement it's explanation and in the Christian walk there's a time when God doesn't explain because it doesn't make a lot of sense. It doesn't make sense to give up something you love.

It's easy to give up something you hate. It doesn't make sense to give up something that is benefiting you except it's competing with God. God is more jealous than you know because he's jealous for our good and the best thing for us is to have God one and only and that's the whole thing.

He's not as jealous in a selfish way. He's jealous with us the way a husband's jealous over a godly husband's jealous of a wife or a father's jealous over his children that he doesn't want anybody hurting his children or deceiving his children or misleading his children so he's jealous for their good and God knows the best for us is to love him with everything that's in there. Therefore, whenever we start loving something else he's jealous for us because it's harming us not because he ain't getting all the glory it's because it's not for our benefit it's not for his benefit which is not for our benefit and when he doesn't get the glory it destroys us.

We think it feels good for a while when we get the glory but it kills us. Okay. Memorize that scripture.

He who loves his life loses it. He who hates his life in this world shall keep it till life eternal. Okay.

Luke 17, verse 7. Oh, we've already gone there. Sorry. Luke 21, verse 2. Verse 1. Luke 21, 1. And he looked up and he saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury.

And he saw a certain poor widow putting in two small copper coins. And he said, Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all of them. Now, can you imagine that? Here comes, you know, Mayor Sadie's, you know, the mayor of Jerusalem coming down there and he's writing out a \$40,000 check, you know, putting it in.

Ba, ba, ba, ba, ba, ba, ba, ba, ba. I have a \$40,000 cashier's check. Roarer, royer! Oh yeah, that guy comes in he writes a \$60,000 check, you know.

They're all standing in line. Yes, yes. I pay 25% this year.

I pledge it so that they get the Temple Treasury television fund. Okay. And here comes, you know, this little widow, she's dressed in rags and she's got two cents.

She puts it in. Get out of the way, you know, we've got more important gifts today. And Jesus turns and says to the disciples, she's put in more than all of them combined.

Why? For they all out of their surplus put into the offering, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had to live on. Now, that's self-denial. They didn't deny anything.

Do you know how, I do this all the time to Melody. You know, we go out to eat and I don't like something, you know, that she likes. I'm very generous with it.

Here, you can have this. You know, I don't like pickles and I don't like tomatoes, you know, so I'm always giving her my, she's grateful. She likes tomatoes.

She likes extra tomatoes. It's great. But it wasn't a gift.

It's garbage to me. It is, it's just garbage. It's cluttering up my plate.

I don't want those little gooey seeds all over my hamburger, you know, pickle juice on my mayonnaise. It's just, to her, it's a gift. She goes, thank you.

It's great. I have more and I'm saying, I have more without it, you know. Really, I have more to eat without that stuff on my plate.

And so many people, and the other time, this was the, our first Mexico outreach that we had in L.A. We didn't really have a, we, every, the first Christmas, we were going to put together clothing to take down to an orphanage. And we knew this Mexican brother that knew some people in Mexico and we were going to take it down. And Melody had had Josiah, and when she was pregnant with our first child, Josiah, she was, we were very well known around the area and people started giving her maternity clothes.

And we had about four or five pregnant girls in the ministry. And so we put in the newsletter, you know, we have pregnant girls and if you could send us work clothes for our guys and you can send us shoes and you can send us maternity clothes and baby clothes, we could appreciate it. Anything left over we'll send to Mexico.

Well, she went out and I bought her some maternity clothes and some people had given her some really neat maternity clothes. So she had about five or six really neat, like, you know, maternity blue jeans and a blue jean skirt and really nice, you know, maternity plaid this. And then she had all these goofy maternity stuff and the stuff that you wouldn't be caught dead in Tijuana wearing, you know.

And she was going to give that all away, you know. And she had all the good stuff put away for when we had our next child and she had all the other stuff ready to go to Mexico. And then we had the revival.

And, and lo and behold, the week of the revival, the guy comes to pick up the stuff from Mexico and she's in the back, he's going through it. She goes out and she goes, this is what I just did. I go, what? She goes, I gave away, I kept the bag for Mexico for myself.

And I gave all the prize stuff that I was saving to the Mexican orphans, you know. And I knew it wouldn't matter to them, but it really mattered to God. I knew that they'd be grateful to get the big polka dot bow tie.

The stripes with the dots on it. But, um, she goes, I knew, and I knew it really mattered to me that I wanted those, but I knew it mattered to God that I gave something away that was really giving. That's denying self.

When the person works so the other one can eat. It's not, okay, you, you work and I'll eat and then I'll work and you eat, you know. It isn't, that's a trade.

That's not giving. I'm not saying you should not eat and only work. I'm not trying to, you know, lay any of those things on you.

I'm just saying that giving is a final, giving is painful. Real giving is painful. That was painful for Melody for weeks and weeks after that.

She kept kicking herself. She didn't grumble. She just kept going, how am I going to wear those clothes, you know? And she kept saying, well, you know, I know it's the right thing.

And, you know, she gave it up to the Lord and finally got through, but it was like, it was painful. It cost her. Real giving, that widow could have gone out and I bet you two cents would have bought a lot in those days.

I bet you she came to follow Jesus. I mean, it doesn't say she did, but I bet she became one of his disciples and was there when he split the 5,000, when he fed the 5,000. I bet you she, you know, she's probably one, she's probably one of his followers because she had the right heart after God.

Okay. First Peter four. First Peter four.

Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh, no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. Self-denial is suffering in the flesh. Self-denial is putting to deeds the lusts of the flesh.

Self-denial is putting away the appetites of self. It's saying God is more important. You are more important.

Others are more important. Spiritual things are more important. And there's nothing wrong with eating, and there's nothing wrong with joking, and there's nothing wrong with playing games and recreation, but those are some of the things that are fun that are also beneficial for us to give up, in part at least, and sometimes, like when we fast, in totality, for the sake of arming ourselves with the purpose of suffering in the flesh, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.

I'm not talking about becoming a sage with a long robe on and living in a cave, and so that then you become spiritual. I'm talking about putting aside your own selfish and physical lusts and desires, and it makes it conducive for prayer, and it makes it conducive for fellowship, because you're a lot easier to live with when you're not hard to please. You can write that down.

That's important. You're a lot easier to live with when you're not hard to please. And somebody who's willing to suffer in the flesh is very easy to please, and they're very hard to wrong.

You're a lot easier to live with when you're not hard to please. Okay, Revelation 12, verse 11. Starting in verse 10.

Revelation 12, verse 10. And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come. For the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night.

And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony. And they did not love their life even to death. Now, this is an after.

This is the end of the world. Here's the testimony of God concerning the testimony of the saints. They overcame him by these things, by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of the testimony, and the fact that they did not love their life even to death.

That's pretty important for you to understand. The blood of the Lamb, that's the death of Christ. The word of their testimony, that means the explanation of praise to God and telling of the deeds of God, which helped them overcome and build up their faith, and their hatred of their own life.

Their inconsiderateness of themselves. You know, the great saints we read books and biographies about. Hardly ever considered themselves personally.

Okay, finally we're going to end the study in Jeremiah 35. It's going to read the whole chapter. Incredible story.

Jeremiah 35, the test of self-denial, you can call this part. This is an incredible story of God testing the self-denial of a group of people. God testing, not the devil.

I love the parts of the Bible that don't fit in with our concept of God. Those are my favorite parts of the Bible, because I love having my concept of God expanded, twisted, stretched. That God's much bigger

than I can put him in a box.

I love when parts of the Bible, when God does things, says things, reacts to things in ways that are inconsistent with our 1981 church, western United States concept of God. Anything like that in the Bible alerts my attention, flags my view, because it shows me that God is bigger than we have allowed him to become, in reality. Okay, chapter 35, let's just read it.

The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, go to the house of the Rechabites, or the Rechabites, and speak to them and bring them into the house of the Lord, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink. There's a test. Why is it a test? You'll find out in a minute.

Then I took Jezeniah, the son of Jeremiah, son of Habezinah, and his brothers, and all his sons, and the whole house of Rechabites, and I brought them into the house of the Lord, into the chamber of the sons of Haman, the son of Igdaliah, the man of God, which was near the chamber of the officials, which was above the chamber of Messiah, the son of Shalom, the doorkeeper. Just in case you don't know where it is. Then I said, before the men of the house of Rechabites, pitchers full of wine and cups, and I said to them, drink wine.

But they said, we will not drink wine, for Jonadab, the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, you shall not drink wine, you are your sons forever. And you shall not build a house, and you shall not sow seed, and you shall not plant a vineyard or own one. But in tents you shall dwell all your days, that you may live many days in the land where you sojourn.

And we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, our father, in all that he commanded us, not to drink wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, and our daughters, nor to build ourselves houses to dwell in, and we do not have vineyard or field or seed. We have only dwelt in tents and have obeyed and have done according to all that Jonadab, our father, commanded us. But it came about when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came up against the land that we said, come and let us go to Jerusalem before the army of the Chaldeans and before the army of the Syrians that we have dwelt in Jerusalem.

In other words, the Babylonians came to occupy Israel, and they rushed ahead of the occupying army to find shelter with the people of Jerusalem. Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, Thus says the Lord of hosts to God of Israel, Go and say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will you not receive instruction by listening to my words, declares the Lord, the words of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, which he commanded his sons not to drink wine or observe? So they do not drink wine to this day, for they have obeyed their father's command. But I have spoken to you again and again, and yet you have not listened to me.

Also I have sent you all my servants, the prophets, sending them again and again, saying, Turn out every man from his evil way and amend your deeds. Do not go after other gods to worship them. Then you shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your forefathers, but you have not inclined your ear to listen or listen to me.

Indeed, the sons of Jonadab, the sons of Rechab, have observed the command of their father, which he commanded them, but this people have not listened to me. Therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing on Judah and on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the

disaster that I have pronounced against them, because I spoke to them, but they did not listen, and I have called them, but they did not answer. As I read this, I was hoping that God would somehow give a nice word to the poor family that could not live in houses and so on.

Then Jeremiah said to the house of Rechab, Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Because you have obeyed the command of Jonadab, your father, kept all his commands and done according to all that he commanded you. Therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not lack a man to stand before me always. Test passed.

Who tested them? God. Now, God wanted to use them as an example. He said, He looked all over the land.

Let me find a righteous family around here. He sees them. Well, before I use them as an example, I better give them one last test.

So he has Jeremiah, the heaviest, righteous man, most righteous man in Israel, bring them into the house of God, set wine before him and command them to drink it. In the church. Here's a righteous prophet.

He never is listed as sinning. In the house of God, asking them to drink wine, which is commanded in the law of Moses for people to drink wine, except for the Nazarites. It wasn't against the laws of the land.

It wasn't against the laws of the temple. They can drink wine in the temple. They said, our father said, and that's, we're not going to do it.

And you can see it wasn't, would you like to drink wine? It was drink wine. They'll come a time like with Balaam, when God said, go ahead and go. I'll come a time when God's made it clear to you not to do something.

And God will tell somebody to come to you and say, do it. There will, there will come a time in your life that is consistent with the word of God. And you'll jump at the chance because it's something you always wanted to do.

His family always wanted to drink wine, especially the kids that weren't around when grandpa said don't drink it. You know, all my friends drink wine. The priest drinks wine.

Even Jeremiah probably drank wine. It was part of the culture. It was part of the religion.

How unreasonable for our father to make us outcasts and weirdos. There'll come a time when God says to you, deny yourself. Don't raise your standard of living.

Raise your standard of giving when God blesses you. And some other man of God will come through and say, feed yourself, bless yourself. Some other man of God will come through and God will say, and then God will say, okay, what did I teach you recently? What did I teach you about not raising yourself up? What did I teach you about not dressing yourself up? Bringing attention to yourself.

Don't ever change that. God never changes his principles. Sometimes he changes his ways.

And sometimes, as in the case of, you know, Paul says, I've learned the secret of abounding and abasing. I've learned the secret of having much and enjoying it, having little and enjoying it. Some people like that.

I'm not talking about money. I'm not talking about anything. I'm not talking about there being any benefit in giving up things.

I'm talking about there being a benefit in worshiping God through putting down everything else but God. You must understand there is no benefit in giving up food and giving up sex or giving up money or giving up anything in its proper place. There's only benefit in worshiping God above all else and denying him nothing and denying yourself everything so you can have him.

Okay. Any questions? Yes. In the scripture John 13, 6 to 10, we talked about Jesus washing his son's feet.

Something that confuses me about the symbolism of washing the feet because Jesus says later on after verse 10 that anyone who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet. So apparently the symbolism, the way I read the symbolism is that Jesus has washed our entire bodies and we're clean again because of his sacrifice. Yet our feet have to be, we're touching the ground with our feet.

You take a bath and you walk around your feet, you're dirty but yet you're still clean and he had to keep washing. There's a lot of different interpretation of that. Can you explain? No, I wouldn't expound on it.

All I would say, it also has been explained as just being his reaction to Peter saying wash my hands and my head. He says, no, your hands and head are clean. You took a bath earlier.

Your feet, you walk in the dust. That's what needs to be washed. I don't need to wash them.

Maybe it could just be a practical, physical thing that he was telling Peter. You know, I'm not saying it couldn't be spiritual. I just, I wouldn't want to get into it, especially now.

Yes, Laura. When you were saying about, um, there, about the coming of time when God told you something and then he'll send someone or allow someone to come and ask God to, or something, to look at like it's really okay to not do what he said. I thought about that prophet that, um, prophesied about Josiah and prophesied against the altar and the other prophets.

That's a heavy story. God told him not to go and the other guy said, well, God said you could go. You know, you could come into my house and eat.

God told him. All right. Can you turn to John chapter 11, gospel of John.

This is a, um, study that I prepared for our own ministry last night and I got sick yesterday and I didn't feel like presenting this. As God works together to forgive everything, I know that, uh, that possibly there are some here that needed to hear the principles that Jesus lives out and presents in his life through this chapter. And, uh, I just, this morning I felt the spirit.

And I needed to call Dale and see, I knew that Leonard was out of town and, uh, that it's possible for us to teach this here tonight. And he said, no, there wasn't any plans for anybody to be here to take Leonard's place. And, um, I always feel kind of strange sitting in Leonard's chair.

I don't, uh, I don't feel that I have his years or anything that he has, except the same God and the same Bible, which is a lot. And, uh, so, uh, tonight we're going to, we're going to look at, I think one of the most exciting, dramatic, it's more dramatic than anything that ever happened on a soap opera or on a Hollywood screen. It's the death and resurrection of Lazarus.

And there is, this chapter is peppered with, there's several verses in here that you could teach on for a week, if you have one of those same mentalities. I never could get into people that took a verse and went a week on it. I've never been able to do that.

Each the, uh, the Bible is sort of like a love letter, you know, and there's stories. And, uh, there are, there is a couple of books in the Bible that you can spend weeks on verses, but the only two I can think of really is Romans and Hebrews. They always kind of stump, stump the stars in the theologian field.

Uh, but the gospels are, I think they're meant to be read, you know, read them, go through them and pick out the good parts and, uh, and expound on them. I don't know how you would feel if you'd written a couple of letters to somebody and they took a week, you know, going sentence, you know, dear Fred, okay, dear Fred, look at the way he said, dear. Oh, look at that.

Semi-colon there at the end of Fred. Uh, you know, he spelled the date out. He didn't even laugh.

I, uh, I have trouble with spending a lot of time on one little part of scripture because you tend to forget the whole story. So we're going to go through this and, uh, there is a couple of places where we need to stop and say a few things, uh, and to point out some things that aren't necessarily obvious on the surface. Uh, but I think you'll agree taking a look at it that, uh, that Jesus's emotions are not what the people in this chapter thought they were.

Okay, let's, let's go from the beginning of chapter 11, reading from the New Matthew standard. Okay. Now, a certain man was sick.

Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. You can remember Mary and Martha. Remember, Martha was the busy one.

She wanted to make Thanksgiving dinner for Jesus, you know, the turkey and the stuffing that she was running around. She had pre-empted the microwave and everything. And Mary was kind of sitting in the gaze of the demons.

You know, Martha was kind of, that's another whole story, another whole principle, but that's the same Mary and Martha of the, hey Mary, how come you're not working? Fainting. Okay. Verse two.

And it was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. The sisters therefore sent to him saying, Lord behold, he whom you love is sick. Now, stop there.

I think that Jesus had a special relationship with his family. Now it's true that Jesus had a love for all mankind, but let's face it. As Leonard says, he had some favorites.

Nobody likes to think of things like that, but he had favorites. Not according to, like it says that God is not a specter of persons. That means that he's not impressed when you have big gold rings.

He's not impressed that you have a big house or that you've got a pretty face or a wonderful personality. He's only impressed with one thing, the state and attitude of your heart. Remember, here is Nathaniel, a man in Israelite in whom there is no guile.

That impressed Jesus. It impressed David, a man after God's heart, a man after my heart. Have you considered my servant Job, a man righteous, upright and blameless.

Those are the things that always impressed God in the Bible. There must have been something about this family that impressed Jesus, but we already have an example that he was impressed with Mary, his devotion. Lazarus also, now there's a lot of things in the Bible.

In fact, it says at the end of this book of John that if everything Jesus did were written, the world couldn't even contain books. I used to look at that and go, that's not a literal statement, but it really is. You know why? What has Jesus done? Well, he walked the earth.

What if they wrote down every single thing he did while he was on the earth? That wouldn't fill the earth, would it? No, probably not. I mean, if they wrote down everything that John Paul Gideon did, you know, he took a breath, he digested his spirits, he blinked his eyes. I mean, that wouldn't even fill the earth.

What else did Jesus do? He created the earth. Imagine all the books we take to talk about how he created the eye of a fly. What else does he do? He runs the universe.

You getting the picture? How long has he done it? Forever in both directions. Now you can find out why the earth could not contain all the books of everything Jesus has done. That's a literal statement.

But back to Lazarus. Lazarus must have done some incredible, had an incredible heart. He must have really impressed Jesus with his spiritual depth and character.

For him to be called by his own sisters, the one of whom you love. And another place in this chapter, it says, Hey, look, see how much he loved them. He's weeping.

The people, he has, Lazarus was one of his best friends. He wasn't like one of the 12, but he was one of his favorite missionaries, if you will. One of his favorite people that were supporting the ministry on the outside, somebody he liked to hang out with when he was in town.

Now there's another thing in this verse, Lord, behold, he whom you love is sick. It's almost like they're saying to him, they don't say Lord Lazarus is sick. They say, Lord, this guy is sick.

Remember how much you love him? Like they're trying to say, they're trying to talk Jesus into coming. They're trying to add a little bit of human ingenuity and human pull to get him to come. But when Jesus heard it in verse four, he said, this sickness is not on the death, but for the glory of God, that the son of God may be glorified by it.

How does Jesus know that? Jesus knows that Lazarus through the spiritual realm, he knows that Lazarus is not going to stay dead by the sickness. This is not unto death. Now you have to understand what his disciples, you guys can come on in.

There's plenty, there's room here on the couch and there's some more chairs around or the sun floor. You have to understand what this sounds like to his disciples. Now remember, Jesus had the kind of disciples that would open their mouths to change feet, especially Peter.

He had, he had disciples with six inch skulls. Imagine the night before you die, you know, you're going to be hung on a cross. You know, you're going to be beaten to a pulp.

Here's your twelve disciples, three years of intense discipleship training, three years of Bible study, three years of old Testament in-depth teaching, three years of miracles. I'm the greatest. Oh, I'm the greatest.

Oh yeah. Well, where are you going to get to the kingdom? I'll sit at the right hand. Oh no, I'll sit at the left hand.

Three years. I would've gone out and gotten 12 new disciples. Not Jesus.

He got down and washed their feet. Shows you the heart of God. So he's got these numb skulls for a second.

You have to understand how this sentence sounds to the disciples. How does it sound? This sickness is not on the death. That means very literally.

Fathers ain't going to die. How do you think it looked to the disciples when he went there and they found him dead? It looked like Jesus gave up all prophecy, didn't it? On the surface. You have to understand that when Peter said, is that you Lord out there? Jesus said, uh-huh.

If it's really you, good that I come. And the disciples said, I got to see this. Jesus said, all right, I got to see this too.

Peter starts walking on the water. All the disciples go, I wish I would've done that. He starts to sink and I go, boy, I'm glad I didn't do that.

So Peter was eager to jump to conclusion. All the disciples were too. He says, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.

Maybe it's because they didn't take bread. I'm not talking about bread. I'm talking about their teaching.

They're always taking everything literally. So how does this sound to the disciples? This sickness is not on the death, but the glory of God, the son of God may be glorified by it. Well, maybe he's going to heal them from afar.

He did that before. Maybe Jesus will just go around the bush and wave his hands and the disciples will get healed and it's the glory of God. Also, you have to understand, you'll find later in the chapter, they had just come out of Jerusalem where Jesus had almost been killed and been taken according to the disciples view of it.

So they don't want to go down to Bethany, which is a ripe stone served in Jerusalem. Five, now here's one of those verses that gets the Christian socialists very mad. I'll explain that in a minute.

Now, Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, and therefore he heard that he was sick. He stayed then two days longer in the place where he was. Verse five, the people that say that Jesus loves everybody equally, don't, they say, well, of course he loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus and Fred and Mary and so on and so on.

But that is one of those verses of special, Jesus had a special love for them. You better believe it. Jesus had a special love.

It doesn't mean that he didn't have, that means that because he loves more, it doesn't mean he loves others less. You have to understand God's love. God can love you with his whole heart and then the guy next to you, he can have a special love for him.

It doesn't mean he loves you any less than he can love you. You won't notice it. Remember Joseph? His father gave him the coat of men's colors.

Remember how jealous it made his brothers? His father gave them, their father gave them good things too. Their father kept with a rich man and shared among his brothers, but he desired to give a special blessing to Joseph. Remember the parable of the guy that worked in the vineyard? He says, can I do what I want with what is my own without you getting jealous and coveting? I want you to realize that because it is going to be important to store it.

Jesus loved Martha and his sister and Lazarus and had a special love for them. How many of the disciples were in the inner circle? Three. He had three disciples that only got to do certain things nobody else got to do.

They were there on the mount of transfiguration. Jesus took those three. Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

When they heard that he was sick, he got on the next train and went to Bethany. No, he stayed and premeditatedly didn't go. That is what that says.

He premeditated and said, hey he is sick, let's stay here. That doesn't sound like a very loving thing to do if you have the power to heal somebody. God works in mysterious ways.

God will withhold from us a blessing so that we can get a greater blessing later. God will withhold a small miracle so that he can do a greater miracle and get more glory. God always does the thing that gives him the most glory because it is the best thing for his universe, his kingdom, for him to get the most glory.

The healthiest thing for you is for God to get the most glory. Therefore, God will withhold from you pennies so that you can get quarters spiritually speaking. God will withhold from you those little things sometimes.

He will premeditatedly not give you what you ask for immediately so that he can give you more than you bargained for later. Things that we have not heard or seen or even imagined in our hearts have gone prepared for the end of life. His sisters weren't thinking that Lazarus was going to die.

They weren't even considering it. We all know the end of the story. Lazarus is going to get raised from the dead.

Every Christian in here knows that so I'm not going to act like you don't know the end. We are going to go through it as if we know the end already. From God's point of view, God knew he was going to raise Lazarus from the dead.

He says it right there in verse 4. Jesus is planning, God is planning to do something big. They just wanted him to get healed of the flu or the cold or acute acne or whatever he had. They wanted an easy, quick, God gives a little glory, way out.

God had other plans which caused them to doubt, which caused them to fret and you'll find out later, caused them to be a little bitter, questioning of God's wisdom. At the end, nobody questioned God's wisdom. At the end, no one had a thing bad to say about Jesus and how much he loved or didn't love Lazarus.

Verse 7, Then after this he said to his disciples, Let us go to Judea again. The disciples said to him, Rabbi, we really don't think this is a wise idea. Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you and are you going there again? Have you flipped your noodle? Can you imagine? You're the preacher, they're the students, you're the master, they're the followers and they're questioning your every move.

Are you sure this is the right thing to do? Last week he told this wind to shut up and it did and they're questioning him. Week before that, it made food stamps look crazy. He's just passing food out in five loaves of bread.

They're questioning Jesus. They're giving him a political and social statement. They're giving him the ABC World News Tonight report.

This is not good Lord, it's not safe for you to go. He just saved them from drowning with the word out of his mouth and they're questioning him. Can you believe that? What God allows people to go into in his presence and still very quietly says nine.

Jesus answered, are there not twelve hours in the day? I'm speaking in parables here. If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles because the light is not in him.

What does all that mean? It has a whole bunch of different meanings. One of the meanings is the mystical or spiritual meaning. There's a time when I can walk and not be taken.

Remember he says my hour has not yet come. He talked about a time when he would be allowed to be taken. He says no one takes my life from me but I give it willingly.

They can't take me back, don't worry about it. I'm going to walk in the day. This is the day time of my ministry.

There will come a night, the night of Gethsemane, when they'll come and take us like thieves and robbers. That's the other meaning. You don't have to worry, we're going to travel by day.

When I get taken, it will be at night. There's even other meanings to that. Then he said, and after that he said to them, our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go that I might awaken him out of sleep.

Isn't that a nice way of putting it? You know why Jesus said that? Why did he say, Lazarus take the bucket, let's go raise him from the dead. He cast it in his chest. The reason he said Lazarus fell asleep is because there's something of a finality in the word death.

He died. You don't have any hope that someone is going to come back in your lifetime. Jesus was trying to explain spiritually to them, this is a temporary situation.

He's fallen asleep, I'm going to wake him. He says it's going to be as easy as going shaking your brother when he had to wake him up from school. That's what Jesus looked at.

He was giving them a glimpse at the way he sees things. He was giving them a glimpse at what true faith is. He was giving them a glimpse of the vision of what resurrection really is to God.

It's no great feat, it isn't even a miracle. It's natural to God. The disciples therefore said to them, here's their medical advice to the Lord Jesus.

First they gave him a political report, now they're giving him the American Medical Association opinion about Lazarus. Lord, if he's fallen asleep, he'll recover. He's just a little tired.

Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he was speaking of literal sleep. Thank you John. Then Jesus therefore said to them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

Thank you Lord. Sometimes God will just say, shut up. I am glad for your sakes that I was not there.

I can see the Lord smiling through that. And I'm glad I wasn't there. So that you may believe.

Come on, let's go. But let us go to him. Thomas therefore, a man of faith who was called Legitimus, which means the twin, said to his fellow disciples, let us go also that we may die with him.

Come on, he's going to get killed, let's go die too. There's a faithful man to have around. For your treasurer, you've got a thief.

For your encourager, you've got a cynic. For your leader, you've got a guy with two pieces in his mouth. Verse 17.

So when Jesus came, he found that he'd already been in the tomb four days. Which probably means, now I don't know really where he was there, but they say it's a two day journey from there to Bethany. He waited two days, which means he probably died the same day they sent the message, which means he probably couldn't even have gotten there before he died anyway.

Right? So Jesus probably knew when he says, this sickness is not in the death, he probably had already, he possibly had already died. Because you remember, if it took him two days to get there, how long would it take the message to get to him? They didn't have air mail. Took somebody just as long to get to you as it took you to get to them.

So most likely, the message had been given to him two days before Lazarus died. When he got it, it was the day Lazarus died, so he couldn't have gotten there anyway. He waited two days, and then it took a two day journey to get there.

He's been in the grave four days. Right? Now the thing, it's probably obvious to everybody that he couldn't have gotten there before he died, but everybody here is going to be all bummed out that he didn't at least make an effort to get there, because he didn't know that he died, but Jesus did know, and they don't trust him. They worship him, they hosanna him, they say oh lord, they call him master, they listen to his teaching, they're impressed, but they don't trust him.

It's obvious by everybody's attitude including his own disciples that they didn't trust him. You can sing praise songs, you can raise people from the dead, you can do all kinds of miracles, you can go to church until your face is blue, until the church is gorgeous, you can give all your money, but if you don't trust God, your religion is like all these people. Funny.

It's either sad, it depends on which way you look at it. You can look at this and weep, and you can look at it and laugh. It really is funny when Jesus falls in the water, I mean when Peter falls in the water and he tries to walk.

It's also kind of sad. Jesus didn't laugh. Jesus said, be a little faithful.

Why did you do that? Everybody's attitude here is judgmental, critical, untrusting, unbelieving, and they're all sounding so religious. It's a picture of you and me. It's a picture of Christians who trust God a little bit, who believe because something that God did for them a long time ago, even last week, that's a long time, God's kingdom.

Because remember the manna only lasts one day. And I think it's real important you understand this. This is a picture of us.

Every person in this chapter, this is an incredible story. 17. So when Jesus came, he found that he had already been in the tomb for four days.

Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off. And many of the Jews had come to Mark and Mary to consult them concerning their brother. Have any of you ever been to a Jewish funeral? It is the loudest.

The boys, they had professional mourners in Israel. They still do. At a setting, you can hire people to weep and wail and cry at your funeral, or at your wife's funeral, your kid's funeral.

Really get the tears flowing. You know how when people are crying, everybody else cries too? If you see somebody crying, it makes you, you know, it's a chain reaction. They had professionals, they hired people that were so authentic in their care.

Remember when Jesus went to heal Jairus' daughter and there were wailing voices? Why don't you guys leave? She's already asleep. Where'd you get this clown? Okay. Many of the Jews, verse 19, come to Mark and Mary to consult them concerning their brother.

Mark therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet him, but Mary still sat in the house. Mark had therefore said to Jesus, first word, first word, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. Hi Lord, how have you been? Nope.

Gee, it's good to see you. Nope. Hey, come over and raise my brother from the dead.

No. How's the miracle been going? Three more people to yourself? No. How's the kingdom of God doing? Her sister didn't even come out.

The one that was gazing at his feet, that was so enraptured in Jesus, he's sitting in the house. She's so bitter, she won't even leave the house. Mark is so bitter, the first thing is, if you, if, if, if, what's this if business with God? If you would do this, if you had done this, then my life wouldn't be the way it was.

If you had killed Hitler in 1936, six million Jews wouldn't have died. That's what the whole world does with God. If God, if God is so good, why does he allow this to happen? Jesus, if you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died.

22. And here's her, I told you, even sounding religious, here's her even sounding religion. Even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you.

Now, do you think she means? Do you really think she means? Even now, if you say the word, he'll live. You'll find out in the next few verses. Jesus is a little hopeful that's what she means.

Now, this is a little cop kid here, check it out. She says to him, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. Even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you.

That is just a bunch of religious hogwash that she's saying. You'll find out two verses later. So Jesus replies to that statement with, your brother, shall rise again.

You're right. She says, even now, whatever you ask, I'll give you. So Jesus is saying, okay, I'll raise him from the dead.

That's what she's saying in three sentences. So she says to him, I know that he'll rise again in the resurrection on the last day. I've got my doctrine right.

I sat under the best teacher, you. I know all the theological points of doctrine. I know there's going to be a resurrection.

Martha, listen, I'm the resurrection in the last day. The resurrection day isn't a part for me. Hey, here I am, I'm resurrection day.

Who do you want me to raise from the dead? Your brother? Here I am. He who believes in me shall live even if he dies. And everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.

Do you believe this? There's a catechism question. That's the way she's taking it. She says to him, yes, yes, Lord, I believe it.

You are the Christ, the son of God, even he who comes to the world. I believe in the Trinity. I believe in the rapture.

I believe in this and that and everything. I've got my doctrine down. And when she had said this, she went away and called Mary, her sister, saying secretly.

Why secretly? The Lord is here and he's calling for you. Because Mary was stewing. Mary's in the house and she's stewing.

So she takes her aside and talks to her. Listen here, Jesus is here and he's calling for you. She can't say it out in the open because she may turn around and say, so what? He should have been in here.

You know how if somebody's kind of in one of those moods, you've got to take them aside, talk to them, answer it to them, privately. Jesus, the Lord is here and he's calling for you. The teacher is here and he's calling for you.

When she heard it, she rose quickly and was coming to him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still in the place where Martha met him. The Jews then who were with her in the house and consoling her.

When they saw that Mary rose up quickly, one act followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. Part of the Jewish custom. Go to the tomb and you weep.

Therefore Mary came where Jesus was, she saw him, fell at his feet, saying to him, hallelujah. Saying to him the exact same words as her sister. Now have you ever heard a story about yourself and two different people? Same words, guess who's the copy? The two people that told you the same story about yourself.

Gossip, mouth fighting, bad mouth, bad attitude. Well I heard that you said this. And the second person to the next, I heard that you said this.

Well guess where they heard it? From each other. How do people come out with the same exact words? They get together and grumble together. Guess who was grumbling together? Mary and Martha.

She says the same exact words. Lord, if you had been there, my brother would not have died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled.

Does anybody have a footnote on what deeply moved in spirit is? What? Troubled himself. Oh. What do you think deeply moved in spirit means? He was troubled.

You think he was touched. If you know you're about to raise somebody from the dead, you're not going to get all caught up in the fact the guy is dead. Right? I mean, say you know, say somebody's blind.

He's just been struck blind. A battery blew up in his face and battery acid has made him blind. And everybody's going, oh, he's such a great father and he's such a great husband that he's not going to be able to do his job.

And you know, without a shadow of a doubt, that you're going to touch his eyes and he's going to see. Does it make any sense that you're going to walk in and start wailing and crying that he's blind? That deeply moved and troubled Jesus is disappointed. He's extremely hurt that though he's come with good news telling them, your brother's going to rise again.

I am the resurrection. All you've got to do is ask me and I'm going to heal this guy. I'm going to raise him from the dead.

There's the weeping, there's the crying. They don't see five inches in front of their nose that the Lord of life, the creator of human bodies is right in front of them. And he's come on the earth in a human body to come and touch them from God, from heaven with resurrection, with healing, with new life.

And he is very, very bummed out. And he said, first thing he said, he's not trying to talk some sense into Mary like he did Martha. Hey, look, brother's going to rise again.

I mean, this is percolated. He realizes words ain't going to do any good. They failed last time.

I'm just going to go raise him from the dead and stop all this stuff. They said to him, Lord, come and see. Verse 35 Jesus wept.

The shortest verse in the whole Bible. That's it. John 11, verse 35.

The shortest verse in the Bible. Jesus wept. I believe it's the shortest verse in the Bible because it's like a bullet.

And Jesus is really, he's weeping. His heart's broken. They look at him and say, oh, behold, how he loves He's weeping for Lazarus.

I wouldn't weep for somebody I'm going to raise from the dead in five seconds. Who's he weeping for? The people around him. His father's heart.

He's come to bring good news. He's come to bring resurrection. They're still holding funeral service.

Don't you realize, folks, I'm going to raise this guy from the dead. He said it plainly in verse 23. Your brother's going to rise again.

Rejoice! Verse 36. And so the Jews were saying, behold how I love him. But some of them said, did not this man who opened the eyes of him who was blind and kept this man also from dying put salt in the wound? They keep blaming him for something beautiful that God's allowed to happen.

He sees the end. They're just blaming him, rubbing it in. He saved others.

Could he not have saved himself? They're doing the same thing they did to him on the cross right there. He's carrying his cross all the way through to the grave of Lazarus. They're making fun of him as he does a good deed.

They're putting a knife in and turning him. They're blaming him. They're making him sound like a bad friend and a poor steward, an uncaring person, when he is the most caring, compassionate, loving, planning to do a wonderful deed to glorify his father.

And meanwhile, they're putting blame and putting a false impression on his deeds and motives. Verse 38. Jesus, therefore, again being deeply moved within, that is what they said, came to the tomb.

Now it was a cave and a stone was lying against it. Jesus says remove the stone. I think Martha and Mary ought to get the picture by now of what he's going to do.

Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to him, Lord, by this time there will be a stench for he's been dead for a day. Does that leave any doubt that Martha doesn't have any idea of what he's planning to do? Either that or maybe he wants to have a sanitary resurrection. One without smell.

Why don't you raise him first through the stone and then we'll spray some blade air freshener and he can come out. She has no concept. He says, your brother is going to rise again.

Show me where he laid him. Remove the stone. What does she want, a drum roll? Everything is being set up for a most incredible miracle and she's still talking about stink.

They think he just wants to see him one last time. Did I not say to you, if you believe you will see the glory of God? Didn't I tell you? So they removed the stone and Jesus raised his eyes and said, Father, I thank thee that thou heardest me. And I knew that thou heardest me always but because of the people standing around I said it.

That they may believe that thou didst send me. Now what Jesus is saying here is one of the most odd prayers. It's a very interesting and odd and unusual prayer.

God, I thank you to hear me. Now look, I know you can hear me but because of them I said it so they'll know. And that's what he's saying.

I'm not praying to you for my sake. I'm praying to you for their sake so they realize that you sent me and that you're doing this and that you're giving glory. Before he did something that's one of the greatest feats on earth he brings his father into it in the people's eyes and he says why he's doing it.

He doesn't have to be reminded who's his father doing it. He doesn't have to be reminded who's giving him glory. He says I'm not doing this for me and he said that in front of them to make a point.

I don't need to give my father glory. I live to give my father glory. I don't need to say I'm giving him glory or a point to him but I'm doing it for your sake.

I don't need to be reminded of what Jesus is saying. I don't need to be humbled. I'm humble.

And when he had said these things he cried out with a loud voice Lazarus come forth. Now Leonard Rangel always says that the reason he said Lazarus come forth because if he would have just said come forth everybody in the cemetery would have come out. Don't you have to take responsibility for that? Lazarus' great great great grandmother comes out.

Oh boy. And he who had died came forth bound hand and foot with wrappings and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. He looked like he was in a cocoon.

Jesus said to them unbind him and let him go. Leonard also points out that people that don't believe that there's any such thing as a second blessing. That this is proof that there needs to be a second blessing because new life is not enough.

New life isn't enough. You have to be unbound and let go too. He was alive but he was still all wrapped up in his grave clothes, his stinky grave clothes.

All that he could move he would have died again. If they would have said hallelujah let's go to a party he would have died again. That's how so many new believers when Jesus touches them and they get saved everybody goes hallelujah and they just rejoice and they forget to unbind him from the world and unbind him from his sins and unbind him from the effects of a life lived to serve self.

People come out of the grave of the old life all bound up like that. And this is a type of that. They need to be let go and unbound and unwrapped and washed off.

Don't think they sat down to eat with this guy when he took a bath. What a great commercial they did for Dial Soap. Many therefore of the Jews who had come to Mary and beheld what he had done believed in him but some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them can you imagine having such a hard satanic heart you see this and you go and tell on Jesus.

That to me I've never met any. Well maybe I have. I've met very few people that have that much evil that they can see a resurrection of a guy that's been dead four days and the first thing they think of is oh I've got to go tell Caiaphas.

It will be the first thing you think of. Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council and were saying what are we doing for this man performing many signs if we let him go on like this all men will believe in him and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation. In other words if he keeps doing stuff like this they're going to crown him king and the Romans are going to get all upset because people are going to make him king which they do in another chapter they go ride in Hosea and the whole thing.

And the Romans are going to take away our place and our nation. But a certain one of them Caiaphas who was high priest that year said to them you know nothing at all nor do you take into account that it is

expedient for you that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation should not perish. Now this he did not say on his own initiative but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation.

It's a very interesting narrative by John isn't it? John finds good in everything. I think it's a very interesting narrative because the guy is saying hey look let's rub him out and save our nation. John is saying but even though he was high priest the Holy Spirit still is going to give some meaning to that.

Some spiritual meaning that he was going to die for the sins of the whole nation. And not for the nation only but that he might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. So from that day on they planned together to kill him.

So one resurrection produced one death plot. Jesus therefore no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews but went away from there to a country called Ephraim and there he stayed with his disciples. Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover to purify themselves.

Therefore they were seeking for Jesus and were saying to one another as they stood in the temple what do you think? That he won't come to the priest at all? Everybody always came to the priest. Is he going to be that chicken? You know he comes to the priest on donkey back with crowds cheering as he walks into town. Now the chief priest said what do you think about that? Is he going to speak in? The King of the Jews here he comes.

Who thinks he is going to come in like that? Who thinks he is going to come in with quotes? Now the chief priest and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was he should report it so that they might seize him. Then he had a big week before his horrible couple of nights. This chapter is so incredibly simple.

It is a very simple chapter. It is hard to read it and not understand that Jesus is interested in one thing giving his father glory. Everybody else is interested in blaming him for the death of his friend.

Grieving his holy heart. This created of course the beginning of the end for him. The Jews began their horrible plots because of this.

In fact in another couple of verses it says that people were starting to believe in Jesus. They had come to see Lazarus and the Jews were planning on putting Lazarus to death because he was living proof. They were planning to put Lazarus to death.

So imagine that being one of Jesus' resurrectees. People trying to kill you so they can prove you never did it. Get rid of the evidence.

Any questions? Questions or comments? Is there anything more interesting about what happened to Lazarus after that? Did he die again? I think he did. I guess the scripture on the second death didn't apply to him though. Yeah I think he did.

He might not. He might still be around hanging out in Stephanie. I don't know.

Only one resurrection right? He's waiting around. He runs a Bible bookstore in Jerusalem. He sells tickets to all the classical concerts.

Any other questions? There is one place where it says that Jesus went and had dinner there and Lazarus was at the table and people were coming. People are coming to believe in Jesus by seeing Lazarus. Are you looking forward to that? Hopefully it's done.

After the three days, his body started to decay so Jesus would have to do two miracles to bring him back to life and restore what part of his body was decayed. Well I think the greatest miracle that's ever been done was Joshua commanding the sun to stand still. I don't think Joshua realized what he was bargaining for.

He didn't realize that commanding the sun to stand still meant commanding the earth to stand still. Because the sun doesn't move. How about the sun backing up? It has to revert.

Because everybody knows if the earth suddenly stood still we'd be in Milwaukee. Sitting in your chair. Laughing.

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