

# Marks of a True Prophet

by L.R. Shelton Jr

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*A true prophet is called by the direct call of the Spirit, separated himself unto God to be used of Him, and desires to be like his Lord, meek and lowly in heart.*

**Duration:** 1:19:43

**Scripture:** Mark 1:15, Mark 13:2

**Topics:** "True Prophecy", "Repentance"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of standing behind the holy desk and preaching the word of God truthfully. He highlights the difficulty of this task and encourages the congregation to approach God's throne of grace as beggars, seeking His righteousness and guidance. The preacher discusses the virtue of knowledge and the need for wisdom and understanding to effectively apply God's word in our lives. He also emphasizes the importance of temperance, self-control, and self-discipline, using Jesus as an example. The sermon concludes with a focus on the preaching of Jesus, particularly his call for repentance. The preacher emphasizes the need for repentance and warns against the consequences of not repenting.

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## Transcript

I want you to pray for us as we go through the second chapter of 2 Peter in our exposition. It is one of the most terrible, awful chapters in the whole Bible, because it pictures the characteristics of the unsaved false teachers and preachers, prophets so-called, and it gives us a picture that is most vivid. I cannot get away from it as God has been laying this on my heart for a month or two, either here or in Jude, and the Lord laid on me to come to this chapter to go into it.

We gave you our first message last Lord's Day morning upon this second chapter. Let's read it together another time so you can see the picture and watch it as it unfolds. This is a chapter that I imagine is hardly read by anybody, unless you are reading through the Bible or reading the book through.

It's a chapter you would not go to normally to read, to meditate upon, because it's a chapter of condemnation and judgment upon the whole chapter concerning false teachers, knowing us against them, and the way of the Lord. And it's coming upon them, the judgment. 2 Peter 2 verse 1, But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privately shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

And they shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you, whose judgment now a long time loometh not, and their damnation slumbereth not. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, who cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment, and spared not the old world, but saved nor the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly, and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemn them with an overthrow.

They condemn and ensample unto those that after should live ungodly, and deliver just one, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds. Let Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the dead, judgment to be punished, but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in their lust of uncleanness, and despise government.

Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. For as angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord, but these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they do understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption, and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that tell it pleasure to riot in the daytime. Spots they are, and blemishes, supporting themselves with their own deceivings, while they feast with you, have an eyes full of adultery, and it cannot cease from sin, beguiling unstable souls, and heart they have exercised with covetous practices, cursed children, which have forsaken the right way, and have gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bozarth, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, but was rebuked for his iniquity, the dumb ass speaking with man's voice, forbade the madness of the prophet.

These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a compass, for whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever. When they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lust of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that would clean escape from them who live in error. While they themselves, while they promised them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption, for whom a man is overcome, of the same as he brought in bondage.

For if after they had escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they were again entangled therein and overcome, the latter is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happening unto them according to the true proverb, the dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

Let us pray. Our Father and our God, as we come to thee this morning and to the blood of Christ in his name, we come with fear and trembling for thou are a holy God and a righteous God and thou dost sit upon the throne and thy word is true for the judgment of all the earth doeth right and thou canst not lie and thy name is faithful and true, the true witness and we praise thy name for it. And Father, this portion that thou hast left us on the pages of holy writ came from thy Holy Spirit to the Apostle Peter to write to us for warning to those of that day and to all the ages, especially in the day in which we are living.

O Lord, how needful it is for us to understand the word of God for it to be expounded to our hearts and opened up that we might know the false from the true and the true from the false and we may walk in a

way of righteousness and true holiness keeping ourselves unspotted from the world and taking away even those garments, Father, that are spotted by the world and keep ourselves in the bump of God walking in the Spirit waiting upon thee. O Lord, we are living in perilous days. We are living in days, our Father, when all man that thinks about is his own God which is himself and has no time and no thoughts for thee, the true and the living God.

Help us. Give us thy word this morning that you would put in our hearts. May we bring it forth by the power of thy Spirit.

Lord, in this hour, my Father, do not leave us alone but through yourself. But fill us with thy Spirit and overflow us with thy love and may we speak the truth in love and may our hearts be broken at thy feet. Thank you for this day for the mercies you have shown to us for all of the grace that has been poured upon us thy love shed abroad in our hearts for the fellowship that we have would be in the Lord Jesus Christ and for speaking to our soul and saying, Thou art all fair, my love.

Thou art all fair. And we praise you for it. Fair only in Christ.

And we praise you for that cleansing blood and that cleansing righteousness. So help us. Praise through us.

Give each and every one of us hearts to receive your word. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Now, last Lord's Day morning as I told you, we began to go into this chapter and we began to show you the characteristics of the false teachers and the false preachers. And all week long, as soon as I left the pulpit, last Lord's Day morning, it was laid upon my heart that this morning I should go through the scriptures and show you what God's word teaches concerning His true teachers, His true preachers and to show you what God has done and will do. And how He raises up those whom He wants to preach His precious word and to teach His precious word and He equips them.

And we will see that this morning by the grace of God. I did not want to go any further than I went last Lord's Day morning in showing you the characteristics of these false prophets without going into and showing you the marks of the true prophet so that in our messages from here on out, you will have the comparison between the two. And I pray that you ask the Lord to give you understanding this morning that you might put this in true perspective and that you might keep these things in mind as we go through the remainder of this chapter.

Because every time I read it, it makes me tremble. I was trembling even reading it this morning because I see the awful doom of these who have raised themselves up as teachers and preachers and are nothing but false prophets and teachers and preachers in the sight of God. And we have their characteristics here and the judgment that awaits them.

And that's what is awful. The judgment that awaits them and they know it not. And beloved, I walk in fear and trembling.

Lest I would be one of these. Lest in the end I would turn back. Lest in the end I would apostatize.

Lest in the end it would be said of me that happened to him according to the true proverb the dog has turned to his own vomit again and the sow that was washed her wallet in the mire. Do you mean to tell me you doubt your salvation? No. Do you doubt God's hand to keep you? No.

The Lord said he was among the Corinthians in fear and trembling. And he says in 1 Corinthians 9 that as when I keep my body in subjection that while I preach to others I myself will not be a castaway. So beloved, with scriptures like that don't you think it's wise on my part to walk in fear and trembling? Lest at last I would be found to be false and not take these things home to my own heart and ask God to search my own heart out with him and to use the sword to cut asunder everything that's not founded in the Lord Jesus Christ.

So I want you to pray for me. I want you to pray for us as we work and labor and lead here by the grace of God. Brethren, I don't want to come to the inn and find it all gone.

All grinded by the godless world. I'm often knocked by all of those tapes I have in that paper. All those radio messages that I preached for 15 years and got into print.

And I said what an awful, awful place in hell I would have if I repudiated all that I have preached. I do not stay true to the end. I'll be in the bottomless pit forever and forever.

Do you believe you're a false prophet, pastor? No. I don't. I'll be by having the marks of the grace of God that I'll study day and night this message for a day.

I'll be by having the marks of a true shepherd of God. But that doesn't make me not be willing to be careful to walk in the way of righteousness and true holiness continually. You bear with us now, hear? I want you to hear.

God has a word for our hearts this morning. I'm already giving it to you. And I want you to listen by the grace of God.

Now, I could not go into this message on true prophets without giving you a little background of our message last Lord's Day morning to show you what we did go into. Just a little, I think. Now, I'm going to preach that sermon again.

Not now. Maybe some other time. But a lot of characteristics of a false teacher are prophets.

They're just one fellow. They subtly bring in damnable, destructive, heresies, teachings which will not stand upon the word of God. I will show you that word heresy refers to a chosen course of thought or action that an individual takes or that a group of people adapts or adopts as an article of faith in the way of life.

And how many have gone off astray preaching works for salvation, damnable heresies. They bring in the fact that you must be baptized to be saved, a damnable heresy. You must belong to this church to be saved, a damnable heresy.

They preach that there are many routes to heaven. That's a damnable heresy. They preach that you have to speak in tongues to be saved.

We went on and on, you remember, in this. And the thing that they leave out, which is a characteristic of an unsaved false teacher and prophet and preacher, the thing they leave out is holiness. Holiness is not in their theology.

They do not preach on it. They do not run it. And they deny the Sovereign Lord who brought them.

And how do they do this? They deny Christ by leaving Him out of their ministry. They deny Him in that way. He is not the central, vital, essential place in their preaching and in their living.

They deny Him by ignoring Him. Denying His person. Denying His Lordship.

Denying His deity. Denying that He was true man and true God in the glory of God. And they do not make the centrality of Christ as the centrality of the cross for all of their life.

Their whole life. Because they deny the Lord who bought them. And whatever teaching a man may have to offer, if the Christ of Calvary is left out.

And He is not climbed daily. Climbed daily, O Lord. Thy cross and Thy Christ, I cling to.

And daily I come to Thee, for the need is false. But again, in verse 2, these false teachers so preach that they get many to follow their pernicious ways. And that word pernicious means their lascivious ways.

They get many to follow in their unbridled lusts. And here's how they do it. They say the blood covers it all.

Didn't you know that? Sanctification or holiness is not part of their theology. Watch their lives, watch their preaching. You can tell a false prophet a lot of times by what they leave out.

Instead of what they say. And they leave out. Sanctification and holiness.

Verse 3, this man is filled with covetousness. He's not preaching or teaching for the glory of God. But if he was, he would be crying unto God for a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

He would be full of humility. He would be desiring to be like Christ in every phase of his life. No, what he's doing is with vain words and cunning false arguments he comes to exploit the people.

They want it over God's heritage. He loves power. He loves dominion over people.

He will do anything and everything that he can keep you under his power. He covets your gold and your silver and your lands and your houses. Doing his best to keep all he can to use upon his own lusts.

And then the favorite expression of those who cannot keep you under their rule and reign. Don't touch God's authority. But my friend, they're false, they're false.

In verse 10, they walk after the flesh and indulge in the lust of polluting passion and scorn and despise authority. They know nothing about authority. They are authority unto themselves.

Presumptuous and daring, self-willed and self-loving creatures are they. Cross their will, cross their thinking and their plans, and they will do all before they will tell them to lie out of hell upon you and turn everybody they can against you until you wonder if you even have a friend left. They do this because you are denying ungodliness and world lust and are living soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.

And the believer who is walking in this way, their life of holiness convicts these individuals. And their only recourse is to put you out of business, to put you out of the way, to blackball you, and to kill you if possible. And that's why you ask all day, I'm only preaching God's word and what I've experienced.

I know in my own heart what a false prophet and a false teacher is. And then verse 14 we'll go on from there. They are of eyes full of adultery and sad about the sin, that they guile and bait and lure away

unstable souls.

Their hearts are trained in covetousness, in lust and greed, and they abide under the curse of God. And then I read to you 2 Timothy chapter 3 and warned you. Have in a form of godliness that they deny the power thereof and God's word says from such turn away.

For of this sort are they which creep into houses and lead captive silly women laden with lust led away with diverse lust ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. And I warned you women to be careful about who you listen to, who you follow, what you read. Let these ungodly men walk through to you as it was said that they did here in Timothy.

They have a form of godliness that they deny the power thereof, God said turn away from them. For of this sort are they which creep into houses and lead captive silly women laden with sins and led away with diverse lust. So I warned you.

And I warned you again this morning. Now I had to say that so you would know a little bit of the chapter and what it teaches and what we want to go into and to show you the difference this morning by the grace of God. Beloved, if you think it's easier to stand behind this holy desk and bring an asthma up on people, you don't know what you're talking about.

You don't know anything. To stand here and be true to the souls of men is the hardest thing in all the world. Because by nature I'd rather go around ten city blocks to get away from contention or anything in connection with it.

But God has put me in positions that I've had to do it. I had to tell you a couple of weeks ago, it comes to my mind now, I'll tell you when my friend died in New Orleans and they buried her up at Roseland, Louisiana the other week. They took her to the same church and buried her in the same graveyard where I was 35 years ago.

I had to go preach a funeral for a man who died of cirrhosis of the liver. He had been a drunkard, a white breeder, a child breeder all of his life, that's all the life they knew. Because that woman had cried on my shoulder too many times.

And all the way up there, it was about a hundred miles above New Orleans, all the time I was going, the only word I could get a hold of was what's the other man sewing? That's where he also weeps. And I had to stand there with this big country church packed with people. All relatives coming to hear me preach him into heaven.

And I had to preach her in that message. I had to preach that into that whole audience as one man ready to turn on me and kill me for preaching the truth. I had to tell them where the man was.

His life showed it. And they never repented. And I never forgot as I walked out of the pulpit and started down the aisle his wife came out of beside one of the first pews.

She gripped my hand and she said, Pastor, thank you. We both knew. And I'm glad God gave you grace to tell her.

It had to be grace. It had to be grace. Can I ask you two more pleasant subjects now? And let's look and see the characteristics of a true teacher and preacher after the example of our Lord Jesus Christ.

First of all, this man called by the grace of God, the direct call of the spirit upon his soul until he could do nothing else but do what God told him to do, to leave all that he might teach and preach his word, and has separated himself unto God to be used of him wherever, whenever, however, for God's glory. This man wants to be and act like his blessed Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ. He wants to preach as he preached.

He wants to walk as he walked. He wants to follow his example in all things. And so as he reads the word of God, he desires to be like his Lord, and that is to be meek and lowly in heart, according to Matthew 11-28.

This is his desire of his heart, to be meek and lowly in heart. This is the opposite of what's taught in 2 Peter chapter 2. Not only that, he reads in 2 Corinthians 10-1, he will have us to be, have that meekness and gentleness of Christ. Anytime that I've gone to that verse of Scripture, that may be like my blessed Lord, in meekness, in humility, and in gentleness, to be in gentleness.

And not only that, he said in Luke and again in Matthew, he wants to be like his Lord and be able to say, I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. I did not come to get what you have, I came to get your soul for the Son of God. I came to preach that your soul might be delivered from going down to the pit.

I came that you might be delivered by the grace of God. And not only that, but he reads also in the word, that he should wash the brethren's feet. To be like his blessed Lord, is to take off his outer garments as it were, wrap it all around him, and give stand upon his all fours and in humiliation and brokenness of heart, to wash his brethren's feet.

And the Lord Jesus said in John 13, he said, as you have seen me do. He said, you call me Lord in your right, Lord and Master in your right, and you should. And he said, you see what your Lord and Master has done.

He's washed your feet. Now you do likewise. He left us that example.

And the servant of God should speak the truth in love. But he should be a man. And we'll show in a little while the characteristics of him from another angle.

But he should be a man that is willing to take the Lord's place. He is willing to wash his brethren's feet. He's willing to do what God wants him to do.

And then he will desire to put into practice Romans 11.2 and Galatians 6.2, that every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself. So we have to please our neighbor to edification, and value one another's burdens, and so fulfill the Lord Christ.

Christ has borne our burden of sin. He wants us to bear our brother's burden, bear one another's burdens. And all of these apply to you as well as to myself, all of the true servants of God.

But this is an outline of where they're coming from. And then he has Ephesians 4.15 He greatly desires to put Ephesians 4.15 into practice for the word of God said speak the truth in love. He wants to keep a heart of the grace of God that is filled with the love of Christ.

There'll be no animosity in his heart. No animosity in his voice. He does not use the people to be him over the head.

He does not use the prophet to come and get at people. But he comes to speak the truth in love by the grace of God. Not only that, but his most urgent desire his most urgent desire is to heed 1 Peter 1.15 as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation or behavior.

He's urgent about that. He's concerned about that. He never lets God at the throne of grace alone.

He's always coming back. Make me like Christ in holiness. That I walk in a way that pleases you at all times my Lord.

I walk holy. And then when he goes to 1 Peter 5 he hears these words and he desires to put them into practice. For it says the elders which are among you I exhort who are also an elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed.

Feed the flock of God which is among you taking the oversight that not by constraint but willingly not by filthy lucre, that is the love and fathomless desire for wealth but be of a ready mind neither as being lords over God's heritage but being examples to the flock. There's so much fear that the true man desires to have in his life is to take the oversight willingly and not by constraint and not for his soul to be saturated with the love of filthy lucre and that is the unfathomable desire to have and to hold and to get rich off the people but having a ready mind. And then he's got to be very very careful when he cries to the Lord about this neither being lords over God's heritage but being examples to the flock.

He watches, waiting, longing for he might be walking at will of humility and not to lord it over the heritage of God. But beloved, if you don't think that that's going on today, you haven't been around. You haven't seen anything.

It's authoritarian spirit to dominate, to rule, to lord it over God's heritage. As if the man in the pulpit was different from the man in the pew in regard to the grace of God. The only difference between is where God has put them.

They both have been saved by the grace of God and why should I want to lord over God's heritage? They're not mine! I did not buy them! I did not die for them! I have no nail prints in my hands! But to lord it over them. I don't want it. I've seen it.

I don't want it. And when the two shepherds shall appear, he shall receive a crown of glory that they did not arrange. So you see, these are some of the marks.

And he prays, like his master, to be like his master. Go with me through 2 Peter chapter 1. How can he be like his master? Well, for what did he do? He cries over that 5th, 6th, and 7th verses of 1 Peter chapter 1. Look at all those things are there. And besides this, give all diligence to add to your faith virtue.

Virtue, knowledge. And to knowledge, temperance. And to temperance, patience.

And to patience, godliness. And to godliness, brotherly kindness. And to brotherly kindness, charity or love.

Brethren, these 7 things or 8 things, if you count faith, they are all pictures or a portrait of the Lord Jesus Christ. Look at it. You ought to memorize these things.

This is for you as well as for me. You ought to memorize these verses of scripture, and this will be your daily prayer. You should make it a habit daily of going to 2 Peter 1, 5, 6, and 7 as you cry to God.

You don't have to have any Bible if you memorize them. Cry to God to make you like this. For these things, these characteristics to be in your heart and life because they make up the characteristics of our Lord.

First of all, faith. He's the author and the finisher of our faith. Let us never forget that.

We did not get faith except by a gift from God. It was not some moral asset that we made. It's not by some mental asset that we live.

It is by the faith of the Son of God who loved us and gave Himself for us that we live day by day. He's given us that faith and all the precious promises that go with it. So what does He want us to do with that faith? He wants us to add to that faith.

He wants me to add to that faith. Virtue. In other words, virtue, let's put it like Christ first.

Christ is the essence of all excellency and uprightness. That's what the word virtue means. Excellency and uprightness.

He is the essence of all excellency and uprightness. So when you are praying this prayer, that your faith, your God-given faith, will take on virtue, then remember that Christ is the essence of all excellency and uprightness, and we get that from Him. So let's come daily and be beggars of His throne of grace to make us in His likeness that we might take on this virtue, and we might be excellent in our walk, upright in our walk, and that we might be filled with the Spirit of God.

Then we're going to add the virtue of knowledge. And the knowledge, of course, knowledge is wisdom and understanding. God gives us knowledge.

The Word of God is knowledge. But we do not, it does us no good unless we have wisdom to put it into effect and know how to put it into effect, and knowledge of understanding the Word of God, that we may walk in that way of righteousness and true holiness day by day. And then He wants us to add to that knowledge the message being like Christ, temperance.

So, what's the life of our Lord in the four Gospels? He is the essence of moderation, of self-control, and self-discipline, as the true man that walked among men day by day. Look at His life and see that. He is the essence of moderation, self-control, and self-discipline.

And that's what He wants us to do. To walk in that way of temperance, self-control, in everything. The essence of moderation.

Oh, beloved, this is the one thing that is very hard to do. Is live in moderation The one phase does not overbalance another. As you do not give over to this or give over to that, but your life.

I don't care how much tumult is going on the inside. I don't care how much Satan is bombarding you in the mind. I don't care how much he comes with his fiery darts.

I don't care how dark the way may be. But in all of this you walk in moderation. All life! That's the way God wants His ministers to walk, in a way of moderation.

He wants you to walk in that way of moderation, and self-control, and self-discipline. And then, to add to that temperance, that temperance, patience. And beloved, patience means endurance.

Endurance also means perseverance. It also means forbearance. And I like that word, perseverance.

Patience is persevering in the truth, enduring in the truth. And I love to look at my blessed Lord with His eye set like bent to go to Jerusalem. He never forgot for which He came, and that was to die upon the cross for sinners.

He let nothing get in His way. And a true man of God persevered. His name might be floated around, kicked around as a football.

He might be threatened to be killed. He might be lies told on Him. Misunderstood in everything.

His every move, and walk, and demeanor might all be misunderstood. But He's to persevere. He's to go on waiting upon the Lord and set His face like flint to go on to die even more by the grace of God.

And then there's the word godliness. Fabulous, patience, godliness, and of course, there's His holy and righteous living. Beloved, if that's not a man, he doesn't have Christ.

Do you know what I said? I said if godliness, if holy living and righteous living is not in a man, he's not saved. And the Lord, one old divine, I think it was Baptist, said, you don't jump from Delilah's lap into Abraham's bosom. What he meant by that is, you don't jump from the cesspool of a harlot's house right into Heaven.

You can come to Christ from there and be saved by the grace of God and your whole life will be changed. But you're not going to live in a harlot's house and expect to go to Heaven. You're making sin the practice and rule of your life and God breaks the power of sin when He saves you and sets you free.

Then He moves on to brotherly kindness. That is to walk with compassion. And beloved, pray for me, will you? I believe this is one thing that I feel more than even others, is to have compassion for others.

I feel in my own soul, that's the thing I lack more than anything else, is compassion for the souls of men. I cry for it, I want it, it looks like I need it more than anybody else does. Lovely kindness is compassion.

Graciousness and tenderness and dealing, or loving kindness and dealing with our brother. And then he talks about that love. And if you use love as a noun, it means tenderness and endurance.

Which is loving. But if you use it as a verb. Now I want you to get these words now.

If you use love as a verb, then you come up with these meanings. Love means to yearn for. And I'm telling you, I like to shout it last night.

Then I got the definition, when I got, that got a hold of me. So I use everything I can get my hands on to get God's message to get up on Sunday morning. I don't come up here just to pat my lips together.

I want to bring you something that you can feed upon by the grace of God. Love as a verb means to yearn for. And brother, this takes us on back to eternity, when the Lord God of glory, the Father, yearned for us in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In other words, he loved us with such love for God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish. He yearned for us so much that he had to have us. He sent his Son to die in our place for he yearned over us.

Don't you think that's good? Listen to these two words. Love uses a verb means to hold dear. Behold it he holds us dear.

That's the love I want. To yearn for y'all. To hold you dear in the sight of God.

Hold dear. Now if that wasn't enough, the word love means to enjoy. He enjoys us.

Oh beloved, how many of you continuously read the Song of Solomons? He enjoys us coming. He says let me see your face and then let me hear your voice. Oh and then he says thou art all fair my love.

Thou hast eyes like dove eyes. Thou art mine. And the bride says thou art mine.

And the love making goes on. We enjoy fellowship with the living God and the true pastor, the true shepherd, the true teacher and preacher should be one who enjoys fellowship with the living God. When he has fellowship with the living God it's one of the characteristics.

He's living in heaven. According to Philippians 3.21 we are little colonies of heaven. Every one of us, our citizenship is in heaven and every one of us are little temples and little colonies of heaven.

And we enjoy heaven on earth. And we enjoy the presence of the Lord. We enjoy fellowship one with another in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We love each other. We want to be with each other. And the thing that always amazed me was how people could say they were saved and never loved the fellowship of the saints.

And never loved to come to the house of God on Sunday or wherever you meet for worship and to meet with the people of God. I'll give you one more. Are you ready? Love uses a verb means to be light.

He's a medium of light. Are you ready to tell you something? Ready to tell you something? That's one of the hardest things in the world to believe. Do you know you can't con a man into saving faith? You can't con a man into believing this sort of thing about his life and fellowship with God that God delights in him.

And he loves to see his face. And he wants to have fellowship with him. And so what does he do? Well, he goes to Zephaniah 3.17 and he reads these precious words.

The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty. He will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy, like as he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing. Oh, singing goes on in heaven all the time.

The Father and the Son and the Spirit join together with all the people of God as they sing praises to him. He rejoices and delights in his people. When Satan had access to heaven, which my understanding he doesn't now after he fell, after our Lord defeated the Calvary, was cast out, it said then, Job 1, Have you seen my servant Job? I delighted in him.

Have you seen my servant Job? Beloved, that's what we should do. We should love all these things, all blessed things in the sight of God. Alright, let's hurry because I have two more points I want to bring out this morning and it is this.

What or what did our Lord Jesus Christ himself preach? Now, the true shepherd, the true preacher and the teacher. What did our Lord say? What did he preach? That's what I want to preach. I don't want to preach anything else.

And all you have to do is read the four Gospels to find out what he preached and then you want to hear all of these things he preached magnified and opened up in special doctrines and truths as to read Acts and all of the epistles as they open up That's what our Lord said. This business of the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5, 6 and 7 is for the Jew in some millennium down the road down there some place. It is not in the word of God.

For I have patiently taken every verse of Scripture in the three chapters of Matthew 5, 6 and 7 and proved by taking and showing that the doctrine taught there is taught in the epistles. You can find it. You can search it out.

It's all taught there. And so what did our Lord preach? How did our Lord preach it? Well the first thing he did he preached grace. Because he says he came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

In the letter it takes the grace of God to say sinners and these sinners are not any kind of sinners. They are ungodly sinners. What kind of sinner was Abraham before God saved him? You read in Romans chapter 4. What kind of sinner was Abraham when God saved him? He was an ungodly sinner.

What did he tell us in Romans 5, 6? That when we were yet without strength and due time Christ died for who? For the ungodly. For ungodly sinners. That's where he finds us.

So that's what we are to preach. The grace of God to ungodly sinners. He preached grace.

Wasn't that his business when he sat down by the well, Jacob's well in Samaria and the woman came through and he began to talk to her? And what did he say? He said if you would have asked of me I would have given the living water. Now how was he going to get that living water? Which was himself and his spirit if it wasn't a grace. God's unmerited favor toward us.

It's a grace. Did anybody here this morning that could raise their hand and say I've got one spiritual thing apart from the grace of God? No. How does God how does God's people live? By grace.

How do we go from day to day? Because God gives us that grace day by day. Then when you go to the when you go to the fifth chapter of Matthew and you begin to read the Beatitudes and they start off in that third verse by saying blessed are the poor in spirit. Watch out.

Watch now who this grace is coming unto. Those who are poor in spirit. The prayers of the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted. Mourning sinners. Blessed are they that meet humble sinners for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled. He preached a message of grace to ungodly sinners and he says those that are poor in spirit there should be the kingdom of God. Those that I hear mourning over sin he said they should be comforted.

He said those that are meek and lowly and come to me in that way they shall inherit the earth. They shall walk day by day and not only that but he said those who do hunger and thirst after righteousness they should be filled. So he preached a message of grace.

So beloved could you say that anything else is grace but what he teaches in Matthew chapter 7? Ask and it shall be given you. Seek and you shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you.

For everyone that asketh receiveth. And he that seeketh findeth. And to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

For what man is there of you whom if his son ask bread shall he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish will he give him a serpent? If he then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children how much more shall your father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? That's grace. He's telling us that we have a father who will give us all things freely because of the Lord Jesus Christ. He preached grace.

He preached the sinners. But not only that but he preached repentance. Over and over throughout the four gospels.

We'll find our Lord saying something about repentance. In the first chapter of Mark where he first got started verse 15 he said the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent ye and believe the gospel.

He calls upon us to repent. He told those in Mark 13 who were talking about the judgment that fell upon the people he said there were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans whose blood-powered had mingled with their sacrifices and Jesus answered and said unto him suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans because they suffered such things I tell you nay but except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish. He preached repentance.

And then what was his closing word to his disciples in the last chapter of Luke verse 25 verse 46 thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer the lives from the dead the third day and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem. He preached repentance. What is repentance? Repentance is a change of mind.

It is a change of mind, an attitude about my sins and about myself and about my God. But there other. I want to show you that repentance is no repentance except obedience follows it.

Turn with me to Matthew 21 and you'll see exactly what I'm talking about. Repentance is no repentance unless it's followed by obedience. And that's what our blessed Lord preached verse 28 of Matthew 21 What think ye? A certain man had two sons and he came to the first and said son go work today in my vineyard he answered and said I will not.

But afterward he repented and went obedient. He changed his mind and he went and he came to the second and said likewise he answered and said I go sir but he went not. Who did the will of the master? The one who changed his mind in repentance and obeyed by going.

Beloved obedience to Christ follows a broken heart where Christ has entered in. But I'm the priest there. Obedience.

That's what's so lacking today. People are herded in herded in to make decisions and all that kind of stuff and they know nothing about obedience to the living God. Their hearts have never been changed because you see true repentance is a mighty work of God.

It's a work of God the Holy Spirit that brings a man to see and to feel his sins and the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Repentance by the grace of God humbles a man. He grieves.

He shuts his mouth and becomes guilty before God. He believes the whole wide world knows all about it. That's facts.

He believes the whole wide world knows what's going on and it is hard. Don't they know? I'm a rebel. Don't they know I'm an ungodly sinner? Don't they know that I'm an undelete? Don't they know that I'm unrighteous? Like the man outside the city gate who had leprosy and as people began to approach him he put up his hands and cried I'm clean.

I'm clean. I'm clean. Don't come near.

Beloved, therefore we are in our own sight and therefore we should stay humbled before him. We are unclean but by the grace of God and the cleansing blood of our Lord Jesus Christ and that's you and you only have I said and done this evil in my sight and this horribleness of sin leads to an abhorrence of sin and you desire to confess it. You desire to get it off your heart.

Beloved, I fully believe in a man when God beat him with his heart for salvation. If he lays up on his heart to make restitution for what he has stolen, he better do it. I had to.

I had to make restitution. God would not let me come until I came clear for those people. I worked at a place where it was very easy to get out of there with two or three gallons of paint, tools.

All you had to do was put the ticket in your pocket. Nobody knew what you were doing and then the next day when you come, they went through the yellow sheets and got that sheet out and just took it and tore them both up. Oh, they left me where they were.

And what the end of it brought about was that I said to myself when I did it, when God saves me, he'll wash all that away and God would not let me get away with it. And the time clock I punched every afternoon, the easiest thing in the world was take a red pencil and turn that five into a six and I'd get an hour's extra work in. And you know, when God was here in my heart, he would not let me rest until I made restitution.

And I wrote a letter to the trustees of that company or the head of that company that I worked for and I took that letter in there Monday morning and I had to shift the whole place up. And I sat down with the vice president's desk whom I worked for and I said, Mr. Munden, would you please read this? He read it said, what in the world is all of this? When did you do this? And I told him. Man, he said, it's a long time ago.

Why are you doing this? Mr. Munden, I'm a lost sinner and going to hell and I've got to make restitution. God was breaking my pride? Breaking my pride. I don't tell you this to tell you that you've got to walk the way I walk.

I'm just telling you how God dealt with my heart. And I believe that when he lays it there you've got to do something about it. He read it.

He said, well you've been doing this a thousand times since then. He said, we knew about you changing the card. He says, we were wise to that.

I said, I know you stole all this. He said, but you worded this thing that I've got to have a board directive meeting. I can't just... There you go.

I wrote it back. Because I had told him Munden, you can fire me. You can take out of my pay so much.

Or you can prosecute me. You can prosecute me. A few hours later he came out of the back room and he walked by my desk and he laid a thing on my desk and he says, you know we all make one mistake in our lives.

That was yours. Forget about it. Well I did what God wanted me to do.

Repentance of crimes not only is confession but restitution. And God will not leave us alone. I can tell you some other sinners along that line that don't have time this morning.

What does the Holy Spirit use to produce repentance and conviction of sin? I want to read you from one of the greatest theologians of all time. Mike Martin Luther. You might have heard from your friend, do you? I want to quote you something from Galatians that he wrote in his book on Galatians.

And watch what he says about the instrument that God uses. He says in Galatians 3.19 in his usual vigorous style Paul described the spiritual purpose of the law in the words, the cause of transgression to reveal to a person his sin, his blindness his misery, his ignorance his hatred, his contempt of God his death his hell, his condemnation. Beloved, if you think I'm hard you should have said in the Martin Luther's preaching this is the principal purpose of the law and its most valuable contribution.

As long as a person is not a murderer, or an adulterer or a thief, he would swear that he is righteous with God. How is God going to humble such a person full of unbelief and pride and self-righteousness those secret sins? How is he going to humble it? Except by the law. The law is the hammer of death, the thunder of hell and the lightning of God's wrath to bring down the proud and shameless hypocrites.

When the law was instituted on Mount Sinai, it was accompanied by lightning, by storms, by the sound of the trumpets to tear to pieces that monster called self-righteousness. As long as a person thinks he is right and he is going to be incomprehensibly proud and presumptuous he is going to hate God, he is going to despise God's grace and mercy, and ignore the promises of God in Christ. The gospel of the free forgiveness of sins through Christ will never appeal to the self-righteous.

This monster of self-righteousness this stiff-necked beast needs a big axe. And that is what the law is, a big axe. Accordingly, the proper use and function of the law is to threaten until the conscience is skewed stiff.

The law is also a light like the gospel, but instead of revealing the grace of God, righteousness in life, the law brings sin and death and the wrath of God to life. This is the business of the law. And here the business of the law ends right there.

Praise God. Did you hear what he said? He said repentance is a thing that kills, by the law kills our self-righteousness. If that God didn't send me on to hell where I deserve to go, I'll never know I was the most self-righteous devil there ever was.

Trying to pawn off from God my righteousness which was nothing but filthy rags in His sight. You see what a true messenger you've got to preach? That's what Christ preached. The man will write that.

He wants something for his feelings. He wants something that's going to deal with his emotions. He doesn't want to be told that he's a lost sinner going to hell.

He doesn't want to be told that he's got to bring forth fruit suitable for repentance. He doesn't want to be told he's got to leave his sins. He wants to be told that he can still live in his sins and go to heaven when he dies.

That's the reason men love. That's the reason men hate the doctrine of lordship salvation. Because lordship salvation makes a demand upon you that you are going to leave all for Christ.

And beloved that's something else he preached. I'm going to spend some time here but my time's gone. But let me just get this over to you before we go this morning.

And it's this. Our Lord Jesus invited all kind of people to come to Him in Luke 14. But my Lord was one that never tried to pull the wool over a person's eyes to get him to follow Him.

He wanted him to know all it was going to cost him to follow Him. So in the 14th of Luke, we have these words. And there were great multitudes with Him because they had been invited to that feast.

And He turned and said unto them, If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brother and sisters, he hateth his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. That's lordship, brethren. Leave it all for Christ.

We've got to leave all behind to follow Christ. Then He goes on and makes this statement. And whosoever does not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

He tells us we don't bear a cross if we follow Him. We don't bear a cross. Then look at the culminating words of that whole story is this.

In verse 33 of chapter 14 of Luke. So likewise, whosoever be that forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple. That's a total irrevocable surrender of all that I am.

Unto Christ. And beloved it is hardly a day go by that I have not claimed I want to have again today that irrevocable surrender. Here I am.

I go before Him and I say, Father, my Lord, here's my feet, here's my hands, here's my lips, here's my eyes, here's my ears, here's my emotions, my imagination, my understanding, my affection, my will. That's me. That's what I do to me.

I'm yours. Do with me as you please. I lay myself upon the altar of the sacrifice unto you which is wholly acceptable in your sight.

Here I am. I want to have nothing of self by the grace of God. And that's the way it's with me.

This is characteristic. These are the characteristics I put before you this morning of a true messenger of God. Then again I wanted to read to you one thing that my dear friend, Brother Lloyd-Jones said.

He said in his exposition of Romans chapter 1, he said, the person of Christ is one and invisible. And if you think that you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ without realizing that he is Lord, I will not hesitate to say unto you your belief is of no value. That's kind of weird, isn't it? But he goes a little further.

Then another quote from Preaching in Preachers his book on Preaching in Preachers and this is what he said. You cannot be in relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ unless he is your Lord. Our realization of this,

of course may vary from time to time but to teach specifically that you can take him as Savior without taking him as Lord is nothing but sheer heresy.

He didn't mind branding it, did he? And I don't mind branding it this morning myself. A preacher is to preach the Lordship of Jesus Christ and if you do not come to him as Lord you cannot have him as Savior. You cannot break him up.

He's prophet, priest and king. You can't separate him. And when you come to him as Jesus Christ the Savior you come to him as Jesus Christ the Lord.

He's the king to all of us, to all we preach. I have a lot more down here but my time is completely gone. He preached on faith.

He preached on the work of the Holy Spirit and regeneration. He preached on forgiveness of sins. He preached on the judgment and wrath to come.

This is a characteristic of our Lord's preaching that you should hear and beloved don't go really with these things that we bring to you over and over again but rejoice in the grace of God. You see each week I'm getting more material and I can preach on it. But I've got to tell you one more thing.

Are you with me about another five minutes? Thank you. I've got to get over this. I want all of you to turn with me to 1 Timothy 3. All of you.

I want you to look at it in your Bibles and I want you to see from the Word of God exactly what the life and testimony and the quality of that man's life as a true preacher and true teacher should be. Sixteen things were mentioned here. That will take me the rest of the afternoon to go into them.

And I've got the definitions written down here and it's a message within itself. We'll see what God has for next Wednesday. But I just want you to see it.

This is a true saying. If a man desires the office of a bishop, he desires the good work. Then he lists sixteen things that characterizes a man who is qualified for the ministry.

First of all, he is to be blameless, have an irreproachable character, unoffending character. He is to be the husband of one wife. That's the reason I believe only in men preachers and teachers.

A woman cannot be a preacher. She cannot prove she's the husband of one wife. And the only qualifications for a preacher that's given is given for a man.

He must be the husband of one wife. So, I don't even have to go into that do I? It speaks for itself. Then he's to be vigilant.

That is, he's to be watchful, careful. He's to be sober. He's to be clear-headed.

He's to be temperate. A serious man, a sober man, a serious man. He's to have good behavior.

That is, that he is to lead an orderly and a disciplined life wherever he is by the grace of God. He is a man that is given to hospitality. That is, he shows love for the audience, for his friends, for the believers, the strangers, for the foreigners.

He is ready and willing to be hospitable in all things. Then the next, he's apt to teach. That is, he's to have the qualifications and be capable to be a teacher of the word of God, to rightly divide the word of truth.

And then he's one who's not given to wine. Any kind of strong drink is to keep away from him. He's not to get into it at all.

He's to be no striker. That is, he's not to become combative. That he's always ready to put his fist in fight, defend himself.

No. He's to be gentle and considerate. He's not to be greedy or filthy or lucre.

He's not to have a love for money. That insatiable desire for wealth and ready to obtain it by questionable means. He is to have, he is not to have a spirit of greediness or covetousness after filthy lucre, the money, the things of the world.

He's to be a holy man. He's to be patient, understanding, forbearing. He's not to be a voyeur.

In other words, he's not to be coercive about everything. Take the low place. Forbearing, being peaceable, waiting upon God to defend him.

And then he's not to be covetous. That is, grasping, selfish, lustful after everything that covetousness means. He's not to be that kind.

One that rules his own house very well. He's to rule his children in love. He's to rule them with patience.

He's to rule them primary by example. He's to use the rod. He's to use it and not spare it.

And then having his children in subjection of all gravity, that is, he's to be sober-minded again by example before his children. And then the man should not be a novice. That is, a new convert.

A beginner. Why? Lest being filled with pride he form the condemnation of the devil. Now what did I tell you this morning? I've told you the characteristics of a true man of God.

And not only a true man of God, the believer, if you were listening, he was talking to you. And if you were listening to your soul outside of Christ, we preached the gospel to you this morning. Repentance and Lordship.

And the death and burial of our Lord Jesus Christ held out, we hold out him to you this morning. Who alone can deliver and save from going down to the pit. He is all in all.

We should walk looking to him. For there's one thing we cannot do. We will not walk out of this building this morning neutral.

We're either going to go out hating what was preached, or we're going to go out of this building loving what we heard and crying that God will work it in our hearts. If you thought I was preaching to myself, I was. So you came to return to me.

But I also was preaching to you, for the prize to you. You cannot go out of this place neutral. You're going to go out hating it, and ultimately hating me because you can't get the job for what I said in the word of God.

But you'll go out of here asking God to give you a broken heart, a contrite spirit. And if I were you, I would get last week's tape and today's tape of these messages and listen to them and compare them in one sitting if you will, you've got two hours to spare, and go through them and see what God would have your minister to be, and what He wants you to be. If you follow Christ and follow Him.

Don't you want to come to Christ? Don't you want to be like Him? Don't you want to follow Him with all your heart? Don't you want to seek Him with all your heart? Don't you want to love Him? Don't you want to have that intimate relationship with Him? Where you can look in your eyes and He said, all thine eyes are like thine eyes, thou art all fair my love. And your soul just goes out after Him. And that's not a figment of the imagination, but that's to be in the throne room, and the love room with the Lord.

And I point you to Him.

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