

Real Estate

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- [0 : 00] profoundly human, because the human being is the person whom God created and the person whom Jesus came to redeem.
- And so it's very important that you recognize that you are a human being and you're not to apologize for it. You are to accept it and to embrace it.
- Now, the text which comes from Luke chapter 20, and which you can look at in your Bible, but I'm not sure you should.
- It's just that if you go to St. John's, you look at it in a Bible or else. The reason I say I'm not sure is because it is a parable, and the function of a parable is that you will hear it and then you will carry it away with you.
- And if reading it helps you to get hold of it, then look at it and make sure you get hold of it, because Jesus used parables for a lot of people who didn't understand what he was talking about, but they could take something away with them in the parable, which they might later come to understand.
- [1 : 25] So this is a parable, and you can take it away with you. The function of a parable is that it is, in a sense, a full-length mirror in which you can see yourself if you look at it carefully.
- You might not look at it carefully right now, but take it with you, because you will have opportunities subsequently to look at it carefully.
- The parable starts with a question of the authority of Jesus when the Pharisees came to him and said, By what authority? And they weren't prepared to submit to his authority, so they weren't prepared to acknowledge that he had it.
- He gave them that wonderful question. You answer my question, Jesus said to them. Was John's baptism from men or from God?
- And it's interesting that they didn't answer that question, because they knew that if they said from men, that the people would turn on them, because the people knew better than they did, because they knew that John was a prophet.
- [2 : 46] And if they had said that he was from God, then Jesus would have said, Well, why did you not submit to his baptism? And so they were silenced by his question, and they were about to go away when Jesus said, Just before you go, I want to leave this with you.
- And then he told them the parable. Now the parable tells, and I want to just repeat it again, though it's been read to you just a few minutes ago.
- A landowner had a vineyard. He let it out to farmhands or laborers. He went away to a far country. When the harvest came, he sent back a messenger to receive what belonged to him.
- Hundreds of farms in this country are sharecropped. That is, the person who does the work shares the harvest with the person who owns the land.
- And that's the same thing that you have here. So when he sent a messenger, they sent the messenger away empty-handed, refusing to give to the master through his messenger what belonged to him.

[4 : 05] So he sent a second messenger, whom they treated shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. So he sent a third messenger, and they wounded him and threw him out.

At this point, any self-respecting gentleman would have called in the army, called the police, thrown the book at them, hired a lawyer, evicted them, and done various other things to them.

So that, I mean, all of you would have, and the lawyers would be lined up, ready to take the case. I mean, it was right there.

But the landowner said, perhaps, if I send my beloved son, they will respect him.

And so the son arrives at the vineyard to collect what belongs to his father, and they plot for the lot, and say, let us kill him, and the inheritance which belongs to him will be ours.

[5 : 32] And so they took the beloved son, and threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. The story ends fairly summarily after that by saying that the owner will take, will kill them, and give the vineyard to others.

It's a very sort of simple story. It's a story that could be told about a land. If a land ceases to hear the messengers that come from God, and to give him what belongs to him, if a church ceases to hear, if a congregation ceases to hear, if an individual ceases to hear, then something has to be done.

So, when he said that, the people were shocked by the consequence of that, because they felt that the owner should go on and on and on indefinitely, I suppose.

And they said, this must never be. And Jesus looked at them directly and said, the scriptures say that the rejected stone has become the cornerstone.

It seems that the point of the parable is to acknowledge the rightful ownership. And if you fail to acknowledge the rightful ownership, then you're in deep trouble.

[7 : 39] because there is no further way of carrying on. Now, when I say that you are a human being, the supreme function of a human being is to acknowledge the one who rightfully owns you.

the one and if you think that's you, you're going to have to dispose of the one who makes the claim.

You see what I mean? If the beloved son comes to you and you say, I will kill him and then I will be my own person, then then you have to suffer the retribution of the one who has a rightful claim upon all that you are.

Now, I really have been very concerned in talking to you tonight to try and help you see what I think it means to be a human being because I think so many people are ashamed of it and yet it's a glorious thing to be.

As I said, it is a human being is the person for whom Christ died and you can be subhuman or something I suppose but you are meant to be a human being there are lots of humanists in the world and they tend to think of human beings as being those who have said to the rightful owner no I will do what I want to do but human beings as they are portrayed in the scriptures are those who come to the fullness of their humanity when in the course of their lives they are able to acknowledge the one who has a rightful claim on their lives now I came across a very exceptional human being recently certainly it was very impressive to me to read in a newspaper about him

[10 : 11] I had never ever heard of him before about a month ago and I asked all my friends if they knew him and almost all of them did but I didn't know about him I had no idea who he was and this I think quite brilliant article about him portrayed him as an intensely human being and I want to talk about him but in order to talk about him I want you to hear him first and when it's all over what you hear I will hold up this finger and ask you to tell me what his name is so that I know whether you know him because if I'd have been asked that question a month ago I would never have known who it was so listen carefully and tell me who this is would you know my name if I saw you in heaven would it be the same if I saw you in heaven

I must be strong and carry on cause I know I don't belong here in heaven would you hold my hand with my soul in heaven would you help me stand if I saw you in heaven I'll find my way through night and day cause I know

I just can't stay in heaven time can bring you down time can bend your heart have you begging please begging please turn me to go like do

Beyond the door, there's peace of shore And I know there'll be no more to heaven Would you know my name?

If I saw you in heaven Would it be the same?

[14 : 46] If I saw you in heaven I must be strong And carry on Cause I know I don't belong Here in heaven Cause I know I don't belong Here in heaven Here in heaven Here in heaven Here in heaven And his name is...

I'm glad you all know I'm impressed with you that you all know The story is that...

You see what I think about him is that he is... He's a very human being The reason...

I mean this comes out in the story that I read about him And I don't... You perhaps know more about him than I do But the things that I know are... First that at 12 years old He was a model student in school And discovered that he was an illegitimate child And discovering that he was an illegitimate child He became moody and nasty And wouldn't try He subsequently was thrown out of art school For drunkenness and anti-social behavior He had probably a disease that belongs to a lot of you And it's not all of you But some of you That is I think he genuinely thought he would be dead before he was 40 And for you 40 is such a long way away That you may not think you will last that long

And a lot of people when they don't think they're going to last beyond that Behave as though they're not going to last beyond that And get into quite a lot of trouble I think that isn't very helpful to them when they find they're 40 and still going as he did He made a wonderful distinction which a lot of people have never successfully made It's said that after one of his performances Somebody said Clapton is God To which he replied I'm not God I'm just the greatest guitarist in the world Now that's a fine distinction for a lot of people And you might not be able to say that

[18 : 08] And you know particularly if you have a high level of achievement It sometimes becomes difficult for us as human beings To make that distinction Nobody usually asks us though Because they're not deceived He said that That he was a lot happier after he was 40 For this reason He says I'm a lot happier with what I am Even though I don't know what that is Which I mean that's That has to be from a spiritually very sensitive person And part of the argument I want to develop in looking at this man Is to show you How profoundly spiritual it is To be a human being If you are genuinely a human being You are profoundly spiritual I'm not saying you're a Christian

All I'm saying is that you're spiritual It talks about a grail-like search For a woman with whom he was very much in love And again there's that religious motivation there That grail-like search There was one thing for which he sought Above everything else And that again is a kind of picture of a spiritual search For a companionship Which interestingly enough Once he had achieved it He wasn't able to sustain it Again because of his humanness I'm sure The inspiration of that grail-like search Was behind some of his music Which you know I'm sure He had an understanding of the fact

That the meek shall inherit the earth When he said I got where I am by being as low-key By being as low-keyed as possible He seemed to have done that to himself Put himself down Which is remarkable Because almost all his contemporaries Have exalted themselves right off the map now And he still can fill Albert Hall in London Whenever he puts on a concert Of which he's put on over 90 now He went through the experience of Luke 11 In terms of moral reform Because it says of him that he Or he It said that he He managed to sweep his demons Under the carpet And you know how inadequate a process that is And if you don't

Read Luke 11 Songs of Faith Kept cropping up throughout his career In a remarkable way He belonged to a group Which apparently had a meteoric career And short-lived Called Blind Faith It would be interesting to know what that meant But you see again It's a He's a very spiritual person It would seem And it was while he belonged to that group That their hit tune was The presence of the Lord And of which he said And what he quite meant I leave you to figure out He said I found a place to live In the presence of the Lord He had what was described as

A temporary immersion in religion When a couple of fast-talking Evangelical Christians Talked him into some kind of commitment But his holy zeal Didn't last long And of course That's what a lot of I mean you're liable to get Fast-talked into a period of holy zeal And it's not going to last very long What you need to understand Is not The commitment that you make And the zeal with which you follow through That commitment But the commitment that is made to you And the fact that that commitment Doesn't let go of you That's what the basis of Christian faith is Well The song you heard As some of you will know

[23 : 20] Was written Because At the pinnacle of his career In some ways His four-year-old child Fell out of a fifty-third story window And was killed And he wrote that song About Would you know me in heaven And again It's He seemed to I mean he just seems to be An intensely human being And And that He He went through that He went through that Well then he went through drugs And he went through alcohol And He went through all these things Jimi Hendrix was a great friend of his Who didn't survive And Eric Clapton didn't think he was going to survive Underlying it all Which I

Think Is a great mystery That I'd like you to solve Is his involvement in music Which I Don't know Music is a great mystery to me And I would like to know If Somehow Our spirituality Can get expressed in music But I think that I That That I Think our Response to music Is Is very much a spiritual response But I Think it can be Profoundly deceptive too And so I'm not sure whether to trust His music Which I find very moving And Very Captivating He said He

Glimpsed eternity Through music And there's a line from the song Which he says I Ain't gonna stop till the 25th hour Because Now I'm living On Blues Power And Blues Has An enormous amount of power But You see I Tell you this Because Because To be a human being Is At the same time To be Profoundly spiritual As he was And To ache From the heart With The tragedy And sorrow And Suffering Of which his life is absolutely full So that there is This This sense of Of Of a spiritual reality And the And the suffering And agony of life And And there he's caught And he says I'm Happier with myself now The way I am now

I I You You How I You the vitality and all the wonder and all the suffering and all the joy that belongs to being completely a human being in the fullest possible sense.

I have a longing to overcome the trials of my fleshly nature. I have a longing to live a life which has meaning and which has purpose.

That is, all things belong to you. You belong to Christ. Christ belongs to God.

[33 : 06] And, I would like you to be about your business. Amen. Amen. Amen.