

# "A Divided Heart"

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Preacher: Tyler Dueño

[ 0 : 00 ] Well, good morning, brothers and sisters. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Tyler. I'm one of the lay elders here, and it's a joy for me to bring you God's Word this morning.

So before we dive in, let's go to the Lord together for help. Father in heaven, Lord, would you help us?

Open our eyes to see wondrous things in your Word. Incline our hearts to fear your great name. Give us understanding.

Father, take these few loaves of bread and multiply them. And would we richly feast this morning on your Word by faith? Help me to declare the glories of your great name.

We pray this in our great Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ's name. Amen. Tombstone Tourism.

[ 1 : 04 ] I wonder if you've ever heard of that. Tombstone Tourism. A friend recently explained that his wife is a Tombstone Tourist.

traveling and blogging about her adventures, visiting cemeteries. And cemeteries are richly furnished with stories to tell, architecture to see, people to remember, family histories to learn.

Tombstone Tourism. Now, you might be one, too, a Tombstone Tourist, if you've ever looked forward to visiting the Arlington National Cemetery.

You know, for many, this is not just a visit to a cemetery, but a walk through history. To remember and honor the courage and sacrifice of fallen American soldiers.

Each grave tells a story. And it's to remember the history of a nation. Now, we've had recently weddings that we've rejoiced over here as a church.

[ 2 : 09 ] But, you know, it's a good thing from time to time to walk through a graveyard. It's good to be reminded of Moses' words. To teach us to number our days.

To get a heart of wisdom. To remember Solomon's words. That it is better to go to the house of mourning than go into the house of feasting. To remember the clock is ticking on all of our lives.

And to remind ourselves that there will come a day where that second date will be etched onto our tombstone after our birthday. This morning, the chronicler will be our guide as we tour a graveyard.

And he's going to point to an epitaph of King Amaziah. And the epitaph could read something like this. Here lies a person who has lost nothing by being buried.

For he is just as good a man underground as he was above. And how tragic would it be to leave a legacy of failure.

[ 3 : 15 ] A legacy of a wasted life. And the story of King Amaziah is a warning to all of us. About the dangers of human pride.

And you could be so close, yet so far away. So let's turn to page 350 in the Pew Bible. And if you're not familiar with the Bible, the big numbers are the chapter numbers.

And the smaller numbers are the verse numbers. So it will be helpful to you to turn your Bible open to page 350 as we look at this together. And we'll look at this story in three scenes.

First, the rising storm. Second, the downward spiral. And third, the supreme sovereign. So let's read the first 16 verses together as we see a life that quickly unravels.

Amaziah was 25 years old when he began to reign. And he reigned 29 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoadin of Jerusalem.

[ 4 : 25 ] And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. Yet not with a whole heart. And as soon as the royal power was firmly his, he killed his servants who had struck down the king's father.

But he did not put their children to death according to what is written in the law in the book of Moses. Where the Lord commanded, Fathers shall not die because of their children, nor children die because of their fathers.

But each one shall die for his own sin. Then Amaziah assembled the men of Judah and set them by fathers' houses under commanders of thousands and of hundreds for all Judah and Benjamin.

He mustered those 20 years old and upward and found that there were 300,000 choice men fit for war, able to handle spear and shield. He hired also 100,000 mighty men of valor from Israel for 100 talents of silver.

But a man of God came to him and said, O king, do not let the army of Israel go with you, for the Lord is not with Israel, with all these Ephraimites.

[ 5 : 32 ] But go, act, be strong for the battle. Why should you suppose that God will cast you down before the enemy? For God has power to help or to cast down.

And Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do about the 100 talents that I have given to the army of Israel? The man of God answered, The Lord is able to give you much more than this.

Then Amaziah discharged the army that had come to him from Ephraim to go home again. And they became very angry with Judah and returned home in fierce anger. But Amaziah took courage and let out his people and went to the Valley of Salt and struck down 10,000 men of Seir.

The men of Judah captured another 10,000 alive and took them to the top of the rock and threw them down from the top of the rock and they were all dashed to pieces. But the men of the army of Amaziah sent back, not letting them go with him to battle, raided the cities of Judah from Samaria to Beth-horon and struck down 3,000 people in them and took much spoil.

After Amaziah came from striking down the Edomites, he brought the gods of the men of Seir and set them up as his gods and worshiped them, making offerings to them. Therefore the Lord was angry with Amaziah and sent to him a prophet who said to him, Why have you sought the gods of a people who did not deliver their people from your hands?

[ 6 : 59 ] But as he was speaking, the king said to him, Have we made you a royal counselor? Stop! Why should you be struck down? So the prophet stopped and said, I know that God has determined to destroy you because you have done this and have not listened to my counsel.

This is God's word. Well, the vast majority of the kings of Judah were not good men. Amaziah? Well, he's no exception.

And verse 1 sets the stage for a rising storm. Who was King Amaziah? Well, he was the son and successor of King Joash.

Remember how the last chapter ended. His father was murdered by a conspiracy. And look down at verse 3. The kingdom is now fully in his grasp.

The royal power is his. He's now in charge. In verses 1 to 4, Amaziah avenges his father's death. He executes judgment. And his grievance would have been personal and emotional.

[ 8 : 03 ] You killed my father. Prepare to die. Some of you got that reference. Now, normal Near Eastern practice would have been to completely annihilate not only the threats, but the threats of friends and family.

But Amaziah doesn't do that. Notice his respect for the Mosaic law. Verse 4. But he did not put their children to death. Why? Because the law forbade it.

Quoted straight from the Mosaic law, fathers shall not die because of their children, nor children die because of their fathers. But each one shall die for his own sin. God's law protected against generational grievances.

The children are not to be put to death because of the sins of their fathers. And Amaziah is kept in check by the law of God to the letter. So far, so good.

Not so fast. Notice verse 2. At the very beginning, the chronicler wants you to know something about Amaziah. He did what was right, meaning he walked in a straight path.

[ 9 : 12 ] But here was the devastating assessment. Not with a whole heart. Verse 2 is a shadow that is cast over this entire chapter. Half-heartedness.

And already you see the cracks in the foundation which will lead to a great collapse. A divided heart always leads to divided loyalties. And his divided loyalty will lead to his downfall.

Now, brother and sister, we understand that the tug of war that exists within our own hearts, we all have clay feet.

We understand this, and we stumble in many ways. We lack perfection, and if we say we have no sin, we are a liar, and the truth is not in us. This, in verse 2, cannot mean sinless perfection.

David is said to have obeyed God with his whole heart. But he certainly was not perfect. So what's the difference? Well, God draws near to the broken-hearted and contrite in spirit.

[ 10 : 20 ] A sincere heart is broken over their sin. A divided heart remains a stone. A divided heart is not poor in the spirit.

A divided heart is complacent. For the true Christian, sin has no happy home in our hearts. A broken heart is a sweet perfume of flowers to God, while a divided heart is a stench.

You see, the Lord is not pleased by mere half-hearted actions. Obedient actions that do not stem from a desire to please God actually is not obedience at all.

The greatest act of obedience to give all you have to the poor, to let your body be burned, if it does not arise from love, from a desire to please God, they're but filthy rags.

They mean nothing. God demands worship from the heart. Now, many wonder why. Why does God demand worship? You know, He's not like a drill sergeant arbitrarily barking orders.

[ 11 : 30 ] Do this, do this, because I said so. And God is not insecure, craving compliments to boost His self-esteem. No, there's another possibility. Consider this.

His demand for worship flows from His love for His creation. And the best news is that there is no, there is no conflict between God's glory and your joy.

God's supreme regard for Himself flows from the fact that He is infinitely worthy. That's what you were created for, to worship God. Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

To worship God is what you were created for. And God demands that we serve Him with a pure heart, a whole heart, complete loyalty. And the Shema in Deuteronomy, remember, Israel was to confess not only that God is one, but God, You are the only one.

The only one my heart desires. To love You with everything inside of me. A divided heart says, I'll love You, God, but isn't it okay if I also love Baal?

[ 12 : 38 ] What's the big deal? Verse 2 is the essence of sin of idolatry. See, sin is valuing things, wanting things above God Himself. Treating God like a vending machine.

God, I want what I want. God, give me the family I want. God, give me the job I want. Give me the size church that I want. Give me respect. God is not our highest aim.

God is just a means to an end. Frank, consider this a health check. How is the health of your heart this morning? Do you treat prayer like a ceremonial pitch before a baseball game?

Something to do before getting to the main event? Parroting words without a heart? You know, coming to church is a habit? Nothing more. I mean, you love community, yes.

To a downward spiral. Point number two, the downward spiral. And there's three sub-points. Amaziah's pride, one, leads to rash decisions.

[ 13 : 40 ] Second, a rejection of God's Word. And third, hitting rock bottom. First, it's rash decisions in verses 5 to 13. You get a section explaining what went wrong with the Edomites.

First, just like David's sin, he gathers together and numbers the people. Whenever you see a king taking a census to count his soldiers, it's always a bad sign. Look at verse 5.

He counts and numbers 300 choice men. And then he hires 100,000 mercenaries, what the chronicler will call mighty men of valor.

Now, what is this telling us? Well, notice he doesn't even consult the prophets before he engages these mercenaries. He doesn't consult the prophets to see whether God is with him or not.

So rather than reliance on God, he takes the matters into his own hands. Rather than trusting God as a warrior, a shield, and a help, he makes the rash decision by making an alliance with these mercenaries.

[ 14 : 43 ] In verse 7, God in his mercy sends a messenger, an unnamed prophet who says, wait, wait, wait, wait, don't do it. That is a bad idea. The Lord is not with you in this army. If you keep going, you're going to lose everything.

Verse 8, go, be strong for the battle. Why should you suppose that God will cast you down before the enemy? For God has power to help or to cast down. He's saying, do not be foolish.

Look to God as your source of strength. He is a helper for those who trust in him. Isn't that what we've seen so far in Chronicles? Now, this exhortation is a good word for us.

It's a good word in a situation where you face uncertainty. It's not literally fighting people with swords, but maybe your situation feels frightening, daunting, scary.

Maybe it's a scary diagnosis. Maybe it's uncertainty about your immigration status. Maybe you recently lost a loved one and you're facing an uncertain future.

[ 15 : 47 ] An empty house where all your kids have now moved away and you're alone. Uncertainty about finding a job. Maybe it's uncertainty of how you're going to get through this sermon. Be strong for the battle, brother and sister.

And he tells us why we can be strong. God has the power to help. The Hebrew word is ezer, helper. God, you are my helper.

Now, not like elves, you know, Santa's helpers. No, God is a warrior who fights for his people. I lift up my eyes. Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.

God, you are my azer. He has unbounded power to help his people. He's a protector, a preserver, a provider for his people. God helps those who call out to him.

And he has no rivals. He can take a few farmers with pitchforks and shovels and topple Egypt, the most powerful nation on earth. Hasn't he demonstrated his power to his people already?

[16:49] What is Amaziah's response to the exhortation of verse 9? Is it, you're right. How could I have been so stupid? No, look down at verse 9.

He says, what about all the money I paid to the mercenaries? A modern translation would be, bro, what about the bag? 100 talents of silver, that's \$2 million. For you accountants in here, his main reference for obedience is his return on his investment.

About taking a loss on the balance sheet. The question itself shows how half-hearted he is. He never even considered that he offended God. This is not repentance.

The question is, what are you willing to give up for the sake of wholehearted devotion? Would you give up \$2 million for the sake of obedience to God's word?

What cost is too high? What about your reputation? Give up your money, your prestige, your popularity, pleasure. What if the world started to call you intellectually benighted and bigoted for following Christ?

[18:01] Would you follow him even then? To lose your status? Ah, but friend, the prophet responds with a word that has encouraged many a very saint. In verse 9, the Lord is able to give you much more than this.

You'll gain much more if you obey God than what it would have cost you otherwise. Oh, this is a call in confidence in God's goodness. Paul would say all these things are rubbish.

They're trash in comparison to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ. These are nothing compared to God. So, brother and sister, rest assured in this, that losses that you suffer for the Lord's sake are not losses.

Even in this life, the Lord will give you much more than you will ever lose. Of Jim Elliot, he is no fool to give what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose.

Friend, is God calling you to give up sin? Much more will he give you. So much more joy and delight. He gives you himself. Friend, are you facing rejection from friends and family for your devotion to Christ?

[19:11] He provides abundantly. So much more. He gives you himself. He gives you the communion of saints. Jesus, a new family across the world. Jesus would say in Mark 10, verse 30, anyone who leaves behind possessions or relationships for my sake will receive a hundredfold return in this life and eternal life in the world to come.

Now, if you can go back to the year 1980, and you were given the opportunity to purchase shares in the startup Apple, knowing what you know now, a company that has returned more than 2,000 times the original investments, how much more, how much would you give away?

A dollar? Ten? A hundred dollars? No, you'd give away everything. How much more will Christ return for those who give their lives to him?

Now, at this point in verse 10, Amaziah sends the soldiers off. But again, his obedience is fool's gold. Yes, he checks the box, but it appears he is more out for immediate material gain rather than a desire to please God.

And notice his rashness in hiring mercenaries causes a problem. In verse 10, The army was very angry. Fierce anger. Why? Well, it seems this army had lost their opportunity for the real prophet.

[ 20 : 31 ] The real prophet was plundering the people. Their wages were nothing in comparison to the spoils of plundering the people. If you look down at verse 13, that's exactly what they do. Plundering and killing Amaziah's own people.

Amaziah's sin risked the lives of his people due to the rashness of his decision. You know, the effects of sin in our life are terrible. Sin darkens our minds. But, you know, sin doesn't just affect you.

Sin affects those around you. Spouses. Children. Fellow church members. Leaders, it affects the people whom God has put into your care.

Whom God has called you to protect. Amaziah's people are reaping the consequences for his disobedience. And meanwhile, look at the bloodthirsty treatment of the Edomites. Verse 12.

These Edomites are thrown off the cliffs. One commentator said this. What they should have done is thrown their idols off the cliffs. Because as we'll see, these become a snare.

[ 21 : 36 ] So first were his rash decisions, but the downward spiral continues by his rejection of God's word. In verses 14 to 16, he does something mind-blowingly stupid.

Lukewarmness always leads to false religion. Look down. A conquering king worships the idols of a defeated nation. How stupid. It was the Lord who gave him victory.

Yet he thinks these idols can help him? This is like getting on a lightning rod in the middle of a thunderstorm, cursing God to his face. This shows how low sin drags us down.

It darkens our judgments. You know, there is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end, it leads to death. You know, how often do we turn to other gods? Though you and I know they make empty promises.

And they will ultimately fail us. How often do we treat idols like our Messiah? They'll protect you. They'll save you. They'll give you that feeling that you can't live without. We know they make empty promises, but we continue to go back.

[ 22 : 38 ] You know, sin is actually really irrational. Always. You know what else is irrational? Owning a wolf dog.

Have you heard about these animals? A wolf dog? These aren't huskies, which are great dogs. Bulldogs are okay, too. He who has ears, let him hear.

Wolf dogs are like 80% wolf. And when these wolf dogs are young, they look cute. So what do people do? They'll adopt them as pets. You know, people say they're misunderstood, marginalized even by the prejudices and misinformation out there.

And so they bring the wolf dog into their home. But then something happens. Around two years old, these wolf dogs start to behave differently. They start to behave as predators. At two years old, these wolves begin to challenge their owner, asserting their dominance in the house as the alpha.

And at that point, the owners realize they've invited a vicious predator to live inside their house. You don't own the wolf. The wolf owns you. Many are maimed and killed by their wolf dogs.

[ 23 : 46 ] Friend, isn't that how sin works? Our desires are wolves so often clothed in sheep's clothing. And sometimes we wrongly think sin is a domesticated pet that we can control.

But in Romans 6, Paul writes that sin is a slave master seeking to enslave you. As John Owen said, be killing sin or sin will be killing you.

And sin provokes God's anger in verse 15. A man of God approaches him. Verse 15, why have you sought these gods out? They never gave you the victory. Now, Amaziah does something even more irrational.

What does he do? He scoffs and mocks God's messenger. He says, who made you a royal counselor? The answer is God. He is now standing in judgment above God's word.

And standing above in judgment of God's word is the clear sign of God's judgment over you. The prophet responds, I know that God has determined to destroy you because you have done this and have not listened to my counsel.

[ 24 : 52 ] Now, teenagers, your parents are not perfect. They're not authoritative like the word of God. But when they bring the word of God to you, listen to them. The path to apostasy is paved by apathy toward God's word.

Listen to your parents when they bring you the word. After rejecting God's word, pride now leads him to hit rock bottom. Let's pick up the story in verse 17.

Then Amaziah, king of Judah, took counsel and sent Joash, the son of Jehoiach, son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, let us look one another in the face.

And Joash, the king of Israel, sent word to Amaziah, king of Judah, a thistle on Lebanon, sent to a cedar on Lebanon, saying, Give your daughter to my son for a wife. And a wild beast of Lebanon passed by and trampled down the thistle.

You say, See, I have struck down Edom, and your heart has lifted you up in boastfulness. But now stay at home. Why should you provoke trouble so that you fall, you and Judah with you? But Amaziah would not listen, for it was of God, in order that he might give them into the hand of their enemies, because they had sought the gods of Edom.

[ 26 : 05 ] So Joash, king of Israel, went up, and he and Amaziah, king of Judah, faced one another in battle at Beth Shemesh, which belonged to Judah. And Judah was defeated by Israel, and every man fled to his home.

And Joash, king of Israel, captured Amaziah, king of Judah, the son of Joash, son of Ahaziah, at Beth Shemesh, and brought him to Jerusalem and broke down the wall of Jerusalem for 400 cubits, from the Ephraim gate to the corner gate.

And he seized all the gold and silver and all the vessels that were found in the house of God in the care of Obed-Edom. He seized also the treasures of the king's house and also hostages.

He returned to Samaria. Amaziah, the son of Joash, king of Judah, lived 15 years after the death of Joash, the son of Jehoach, king of Israel.

Now the rest of the deeds of Amaziah from first to last, are they not written in the book of the kings of Judah in Israel? From the time when he turned away from the Lord, they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem.

[ 27 : 05 ] And he fled to Lachish. But they sent after him to Lachish and put him to death there. And they brought him upon horses, and he was buried with his fathers in the city of David.

Pride leads him to hit rock bottom. By verse 17, Amaziah says to the northern kingdom, let us look one another in the face. In other words, he's saying, let's face off.

See you at noon on the playground. And at this point, he thinks he is it. He's the boss. He's a pretty big deal. He's the next Alexander the Great, conquering the world.

But in response, what does the king of Israel say to him? Well, he begins to wax poetically. What's with the marriage metaphor? I think Joash is saying, I know you're trying to get the upper hand, but here's what's about to happen.

The small thistle is about to be trampled down. He's saying, Amaziah, stay at home. Don't embarrass yourself. When you come over here, you'll find out we're not like the Edomites.

[ 28 : 09 ] You're a big shot on the playground, but you're about to step into the ring with Mike Tyson. Stay at home. Don't embarrass yourself. What happens? Well, pride comes before the fall.

Literally, Amaziah does not listen. Verse 21, he goes up. By verse 22, he is trampled down. End of verse 23, the wall of the city is exposed. Now the people are exposed and defenseless.

The king is taken captive. Treasury is seized. Hostages taken. The king is assassinated. In verse 27. Amaziah thought these idols were a good deal, but sin hides the price tag.

Look what he had to pay rather than listening to God's word in obedience. Point number two is the rising, point one is the rising storm. Point number two, the downward spiral. Point number three, the supreme sovereign.

Now verse 20, we are essentially taking, if you will, behind the scenes of what is happening here. Joash attempted to talk Amaziah out of such a fight, but we are told very clearly in verse 20 that Amaziah would not listen.

[ 29 : 17 ] He gives a reason. Why? For it was from God that he might deliver them into the hand of Joash. This is Pharaoh 2.0. The king of Judah has become a Pharaoh that God will now destroy.

Remember, God can help or he can cast down, and God has now chosen to cast down. If you were to ask Amaziah the question, whose idea was it to reject the prophet's warning?

He would say, it's my idea. No one controls me. But look at verse 20 again. It was of God. Amaziah did not listen because God had determined it to be so.

It's mysterious, isn't it? Human responsibility and divine sovereignty. Now some people think human history is all about human. destiny determined by our decisions.

But the chronicler rejects any human-centered view of history. This is a God who lifts up kings and brings them down. Proverbs 21, the king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord.

[ 30 : 22 ] He turns it wherever he will. He exercises sovereignty over nations. And has God stopped being sovereign since the time of the chronicler? friend, God governs governance.

He is infinitely supreme, always in control. He is powerful over Israel's prophets and priests and kings. He is powerful over current presidents.

He is powerful over planets. Psalm 2, the rulers rage, the people plot in vain. And what does God do? Is he pacing back and forth in his heavenly throne room wondering what he's going to do?

No. God sits in heavens and laughs and he does all that he pleases. See, the most cataclysmic event is like a butterfly landing on Mount Everest.

God is immovable. Do you think the creature can limit the creator's sovereign power? That is not the story you see in Chronicles. And if we go behind the curtain, not only with Amaziah, but all of human history, will we not expect to find the same truth?

[ 31 : 30 ] It was of God. Now, for all you news junkies out in here, I know there are some of you. Stop. But I don't know how you do it.

But if you can't, here's a piece of advice that Amanda gave. Every time you read an article, at the end of each headline, write, it was of God. And surely it must be so. There's only two alternatives.

Either God must reign or he must be ruled. And the emphatic witness of the scripture is that God is reigning. You know, the cancer in Amaziah's heart disguised itself and it's spread like a predator.



And this church is a hospital. And there's honesty at a hospital. And the truth must be told. Because you see, the sad story of us is we are naturally like Amaziah.

Half-hearted obedience means nothing to God. We are apathetic to God and his word. We don't, we cannot reach up to God.

[ 32 : 39 ] We're like the paralyzed man on the side of the road. We can do nothing. But the good news, my friends, is that God has reached down to us.

God hasn't just sent us a prophet. He has sent us his own son. And this is the message of the gospel. You see, God made you to bear his image.

And because of that, he has authority over you. He demands full worship in your heart. And he is good and he must punish sin.

He will not brush your sin under the rug. And by nature, we rebel. By nature, we are God-ignoring and God-belittling. By nature, we deserve God's wrath.

Friend, do not be deceived. Outside of Christ, you do stand under God's judgment. God can help or he can cast down. And the good news is this, God is a helper to those who call out to him.

[ 33 : 38 ] Because even though he is surrounded by idolaters, his heart is filled with steadfast love. We are filled with hatred, his heart filled with mercy. And God sovereignly works out his plan by sending his son.

Fully God and fully man. And unlike Amaziah, he was the perfectly righteous king. He obeyed God not with a half heart or divided heart.

He obeyed God with his entire heart. And he came down and lived the perfect life of obedience that we should have lived. But despite never sinning, he goes to a cross.

And isn't the cross the greatest mystery of divine sovereignty and human responsibility? After all, who sent Christ to the cross? Jesus was carried away, maybe against his will, to be tortured, to be killed, to be crucified.

And humanly speaking, didn't Judas send Christ to the cross? Humanly speaking, wasn't it the chief priests, the scribes, and the Pharisees, plotting and scheming to publicly shame and execute this Jesus?

[ 34 : 48 ] Humanly speaking, didn't Pontius Pilate and Herod send him to the cross? Humanly speaking, didn't the people who yelled, crucify him, crucify him, didn't they send him to the cross?

Friends, higher above them all, it was of God. Who sent Christ to the cross? The Father sent him in his great love. Sends him to die.

Why? So he could be our substitute, bearing God's white-hot wrath against sin for all who had returned from their sin and put their trust in Christ alone.

And on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. And now Jesus stands and says, there are two possibilities. Either I will be your help or I will cast you down in judgment.

And that hope is held out to you today. He promises that he will remove your heart of stone and give you a new heart of flesh. He will give you a new heart by his Holy Spirit.

[ 35 : 51 ] Friend, if you are here and you are not a Christian, consider this chapter. Consider what it means for our lives. You know, in our proud hearts, people tend to think better of themselves than what God thinks of them.

You know, and we tend to think that Christianity is an unnatural way to live. We've got it backwards. You see, Jesus lived the most natural life.

He never bowed down before idols. You and I and our sin are the abnormal ones. See, we are slowly dying, hopeless, on our knees, bowing before idols.

Treating career and cars and cash as our functional gods. We are on our knees, bowing before idols and this one comes to offer us life, water to the thirsty soul and what do we do?

We belittle him. Our entire life is backwards when we reject Christ. God destroys the wisdom of this world. There are only two possibilities. He will help or he will cast down.

[ 36 : 56 ] Friend, do not be deceived. Your sin blinds you to who Jesus is. Friend, don't be blind to Jesus. Don't be like Amaziah, so close yet so far away.

Look at Jesus. Look at his works. Look at his miracles. Look at his words. Look at his deeds. Look at his actions. Look at him being raised from the dead in history. The very thing God has been making clear since the dawn of creation.

He has been saying all along, look for this one. Don't be blind to Jesus. what happens when you go to Christ. Immediate forgiveness.

I'll repeat that. Immediate forgiveness and intimate fellowship. True grace reaches the bottom of your heart and God can take your ruined life and make something brand new.

Oh, but friend, if you are here and you're a Christian, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. He is your Azir. And if he is sovereign to cast down, do you not see that he is sovereign to be your helper?

[ 38 : 02 ] He is your sovereign helper, the maker of heaven and earth. He neither sleeps nor slumbers. Rest in everything that he has done for you. That is a pillow to lay your head on at night.

And we have no reason to boast in ourselves. It's all of grace. It's all of God. All to his glory. Today he says the same to you. I will be your help. And I will never fail you.

And to close, during an interview of the late Christian scholar Carl F. Henry, who at the time was in his 70s, was asked how he managed to remain so humble for so many decades.

Dr. Henry replied, how can anyone be arrogant when he stands beside the cross? Amen. Let's pray, friends. Father in heaven, we pray that we would stand at the foot of the cross.

and Father, we would boast only in the cross. Father, we pray that Christ would be a magnet drawing all people to himself. And Lord, that you would get all glory and honor and that we would serve you with our whole hearts.

[ 39 : 09 ] Pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.