

Are You Still Sweeping The Room?

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Matthew chapter number 12 is where we're headed to this morning. Hope you will go there and we will look at these paragraphs together.

I'll have to talk quickly. Even though I can't fill our pastor's shoes, I can fill his time pretty easily. And so I either talk fast or I talk long and you've got to make a decision. So I think you probably want me to talk fast.

So we're going to look at these three paragraphs, but we're going to start with the second one. And if you were paying close attention when we read through it earlier, you probably got maybe a little confused or you really wanted to pay close attention to what Jesus was saying in a parable.

Because as I read through it over and over again, I was saying, what exactly is being said here? I want to make sure you get that first off this morning as we get going. And I'd like to ask Jake Cherry to come up here.

I know he loves that. You're the next contestant in our service this morning. But I'm going to need your help this morning to illustrate a point. But as you look at Matthew chapter number 12, you can just find you a seat here, Jake.

[1 : 02] As you look at Matthew 12, I want to remind you that Jesus is speaking directly to the Pharisees. It's an encounter there. The Pharisees, their heart has now overflowed into their life. Because as they come into contact with Jesus being Lord, they had to make a decision.

And he's saying, you've seen the miracles. You've got to make a decision. And they say, yes, you're supernatural, but you are of Satan. And he said, what you said, blaspheming the Holy Spirit, you have shut down the avenue of forgiveness.

You have went into an area of unbelief that you can't come back from unless you change your opinion of who I am. And it was a very serious passage in the fact that we realize there's no middle ground.

When two kingdoms at war, you're either on one side or the other. And Jesus made a plea to the Pharisees there. But there's other people watching as well. There's a crowd. So as you're picturing Jesus having a conversation with the Pharisees, you picture some other people that are in the crowd.

And Jesus is going to extend an invitation. And because we have the word preserved for us today, the crowd is not just the ones we read about. It's every one of us have an opportunity to look in on the story.

[2 : 06] And when he gives an invitation, you have an opportunity to respond to it. So let me remind you of what was said here. This is Jesus' words starting in verse number 43. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places seeking rest and findeth none.

Then he saith, I will return into my house for once I came out. And when he come, he findeth the empty, swept and garnished. Then he goeth he, and he taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than themselves. And they enter in and dwell there.

And the last state of the man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation. The people of Nineveh had Jonah as an example.

And they could respond to it. And if they didn't, they were worse off. The queen of Sheba had Solomon. She went there. She could either respond to God's wisdom or she would be worse off. These Pharisees, they have the opportunity now to see the resurrection.

They have a sign. And they're getting to see Jesus visibly right there. And if they don't respond to it, when he walks away, they will be worse off because they are going to say no to what they're seeing.

[3 : 08] And every one of you have been given evidence that Jesus Christ is God. And if you come here today, you don't put your faith in him, you'll be worse off than before you came with this witness of it.

So there's a story about demons here. And then when we hear about demons, it's kind of shocking. You don't just usually blend that into a conversation when you're talking to your friends. You know, you're talking about sports.

And you're like, yeah, the other day there was a demon at my house and I told it to leave. We don't have conversations like that. But in this context, it would be a much more natural flow because it's something that they thought about, that they understood.

And we learned in Mark 9 that demons sometimes will reenter. They'll be cast out, but then they'll come back into the life of somebody. And in this passage, we learned that demons are willing to work in a messy house or in a clean house.

So, Jake, thank you for coming up here today, sir. Good to see you today. All right. So if you can imagine, you'll stand right here. There's no tricks going on. All right. If you can imagine with me, think real hard about a messy office.

[4 : 08] I don't imagine you have an office. Can you imagine with me real hard? You did a good job. All right. There you go. So you have your office here, Jake. And you want to clean it up. Maybe Abby's coming over.

All right. You want to show her the office. Your parents have told you you've got to clean up your office. And so you work really hard to clean your office. All right. And so this is what it would look like.

Ta-da. Good job. Don't you wish you had an app for that for your room? And so we make it. And so let's go back to the messy office. So let's say that this is his life. And it's in a ray.

It's in a mess. There's things going on. And he needs to get it cleaned up. And so there is a demon that lives inside of his life. This evil spirit. This evil spirit leaves.

And when he leaves, he goes out. And while he is gone, Jake works very busily cleaning his room. He puts everything away. He throws away things that don't belong there.

[5 : 05] He straightens up. He brings in an organizer for a shelf. He brings in some curtains. He goes down to the pottery barn, which I'm sure you have a frequent customer card over there, Jake.

And you go down there and you get some things and you clean up your room. And then he gets cleaned, Tim. And the demon comes back and he says, hey, I kind of like this place. I don't mind that you cleaned it up at all.

It was kind of messy around here. And he goes back and he gets seven more demons there. And he says, hey, guys, the house that I was living in, the one that I left and took out a journey on, it's really nice now.

Why don't you come with me? And seven more people, seven more demons come into the house. And they're there. Thank you, sir. You can have a seat. And so we see a visible, what here is what Jesus is talking about.

And so the demon that leaves there and he goes out into a dry place where there's no water and they're walking in the desert where they believe that demons would like to reside. And when he comes back, he finds that the house is clean.

[6 : 06] And he doesn't say, I can't live in a clean house. I got to go to another place. He says, I like this place even more. And he goes out and he gets even more demons.

Why would you tell a story like this? Jesus is not like this preacher who just goes off telling random stories that, hey, this is a really cool story. Let's work it into a message. Jesus doesn't do that.

He had a plan there. And when he's speaking to the Pharisees, he's talking to them about the fact that you can reform your life all you want. You can turn over leaves. You can be moral. You can be ethical.

You can be as religious as you want or as one person said, religious, meaning you can have as many rules that you want. But it isn't going to keep you away from these demons coming into your life.

You have to get a new tenant. Somebody new has to move into your life. You have to have a relationship with me. What a powerful illustration. And what do we expect any less than the God of heaven?

[7 : 02] Just to draw a vivid illustration here for us. What would happen here? And so we call this here, it's a synthetic type of righteousness. The Pharisees were proud of their clean houses, but their hearts, they were empty.

They were outwardly moral. They were outwardly changed. But they were still inwardly empty. Nicodemus goes and sits down with Jesus and says, hey, I'm doing really good.

What else you got for me? You know, I'm filling all these rules. Why don't you give me a few more? I can handle them and I can get it. And Jesus says, you're not getting it, buddy. There's not a few more rules. You need to be born again.

I can't give you another rule book. You got to be born again. You know, in here, every one of you could raise your hand when I said you have unsaved family members or friends.

And I would typically say that are living a life of sin. Maybe they woke up this morning not knowing where they're at. They were hungover. Maybe we have family members that attempted suicide.

[8 : 02] I lost a roommate from college this weekend who had taken his own life. And you have an idea of who this unbeliever is. But in this passage, all of us are reminded that we have contacts and friends and family that are unbelievers.

And they look like really good people. They are moral. They spend time at the food bank. They give to the poor. They do all these things. But if they have not found the righteousness that is given by doing the will of God, then they're an unbeliever still the same.

And that's what Jesus told these Pharisees. It's that even though your house is clean, I still don't live in it. Even though you have everything in order, you need a new tenant. You need Jesus Christ to move in.

Now when that demon would come back, he would see the house and he would notice that Jesus is there. And he would say, there's no place for me here anymore. And so it's a synthetic. It's a man-made type of righteousness.

And they were outwardly moral and good. But inwardly, they were empty. I asked the students here, they're going to get a video ready. But I asked Sergi to make some videos. They went and found three people in our city.

[9 : 07] It isn't like they took a dozen videos and I just took three to make our point. But the three people they could get to agree to make a video, we're going to show you real quickly here of their response when we asked them if they understand who Jesus is and the gospel.

Hello. We are currently at the skate park. I am Sergi Caprion. And this is Harry Brown. And I got a couple questions for Harry Brown. Harry, what do you think it means to be a Christian?

To me, what it means to be a Christian is to believe in God. Okay. Believe that Jesus came to save us. Okay. And then basically you take what you have and try to give back to the community and humanity.

Okay. All right. My name is Ben. Mrs. Emerson. And we'd just like to ask you a question. Emerson, what do you think it means to be a Christian? The Christian, I think, is to respect each other and love each other.

Yeah. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Yeah. Hey, my name is Andrew Wilder. And this is Zach Owings. Okay. And what does it mean to be a Christian?

[10 : 23] Well, for me, I'm not really sure. I was, come from a Jewish family, but after my parents split up when I was eight, I went and lived with my dad. He was non-practicing.

So I didn't grow up with a lot of religious background, but as for myself, I guess I would say maybe an agnostic, but I don't know. I think there's definitely something up there and definitely something more powerful than we are.

Okay. And I've always felt sure of that. But as I said, not much of a religious background, but more of a feeling that there's something bigger than myself up there. All right, these three interviews were taken this week, just the three men here in our community.

I have some stats here for you that I was going to read this morning. Forty-three percent of Americans say that it doesn't matter what religious faith you follow because they all teach the same lessons. Some 70 percent of America says they're Christian.

The 43 percent of America says that all religions will lead the same place. 50 percent of Americans believe that eventually everybody will be saved or accepted by God, and only 40 percent of people disagreed, with 10 percent not sure where they stand.

[11 : 36] So with 70 percent of America professing to be Christian, the 43 percent of America saying that all religions are the same and they teach basically the same lessons, you should know that there's a high percentage of people in America that profess to be Christian that are confused about what is the will of God concerning the righteousness that is provided by the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

I know reading these stats to you, they probably do like me. Numbers don't often have a pull, but if you look at it and say it's represented by those men there. You know, that's just a short sound bite, and sometimes you're not prepared to give an answer, and so we don't cast judgment.

All three of those men are given an opportunity to study the Word, and the guys that interviewed them are going to follow up with them. But that's just the three interviews, but that represents what the common opinion of what Jesus is here in our community.

And I want you to see that Paul makes an understanding the true righteousness a priority in his teaching ministry. If you'll look with me in Romans chapter number 10, verses 3 and 4, we're going to see that much of what Paul teaches is addressing people that think they can make a synthetic type of righteousness.

The type of people who think that if they clean their house up good enough, then that is good enough for themselves. And Paul deals with that. Paul's ministry is not towards the type of legalist that has standards that you may not have, and he does not go around preaching against that.

[12 : 59] As some people, if you read the day, they would think that's his main ministry. His ministry is getting at the heart of the gospel and saying, you think you're understanding the gospel, but you're trying to produce a righteousness which man can't produce.

Romans 10, 3 and 4. Paul makes it clear they tried to establish their own righteousness. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves into the righteousness of God.

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth. Then in Matthew chapter number 5 and verse number 20, he's going to tell them that their man-made synthetic brand of righteousness is inferior.

And it says here that unless you accept your righteousness, exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. That if you showed up and you said the Pharisees, their type of righteousness, I have to exceed it, you would feel hopeless.

Because you're saying if what they've done to produce righteousness is not enough righteousness, I have to go above and beyond that? Then we're miserable. Because we don't have a chance. You're not memorizing the Old Testament.

[14 : 08] You're not living by these dietary laws. You are not living the life that is as strict as they are. And it says it has to exceed it. Not because they've got to produce more of what they're making, but it has to come from another source.

Paul explains in Romans 9, 30 through 32, how we attain righteousness. What shall we say then that the Gentiles which follow not after righteousness have attained to the righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith?

But Israel which followed after the law of righteousness has not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, for they stumbled at the stumbling stone.

So how was the righteousness of the Gentiles? How did you receive a righteousness that exceeded that of the Pharisees? Is that we did it by faith. We came to God and recognized that we can't do anything to please Him.

That all our good works are as filthy rags. And that we can spend our whole life, but we do not have the system in place to produce the type of righteousness that would allow us to spend eternity with Him.

[15 : 13] And so we came to Him. And by our faith, that righteousness was placed upon our account by the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior. Romans 10, 10. For with the heart man believeth on the righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made on the salvation.

It involves the whole being. It involves more than just cleaning up your life. It involves doing more than giving back to the community. It involves more than being nice. It involves the whole being giving your life over to the Christ.

And Paul spends a lot of his time preaching about this. True righteousness averse false righteousness. And can I tell you that in our Christian ministry, because God has placed us here, this being our mission field, that is going to be a great deal of your ministry talking about that.

When 70% of people say they're Christian, the 43% of them think that all religions are the same. When 70% of people say they're Christian, and why are all those religions the same? Because they say, do good, do good, do good, do good.

And because they all say, do good, they all look alike. Because that is the type of Christianity that we're exporting. When we say America's a Christian nation, we have to define it.

[16 : 23] And it isn't a nation in which we preach that you must be born again. It's just a place that has a therapeutic, moralistic view of the Bible and what God should do for our lives.

It's a plug-in. It's part of the American dream. You have a wife, some kids, you have a white fence, you have a nice house, and you take your family to a church that has programs for you. And it's just part of who we are, but it's not what the Bible teaches and not what He demands of our lives.

So it says that there's an empty house here. It said that the Pharisees, that the demon left and he came back and the house was empty, it was swept, and it was garnished. It was prepared for visitors.

You know, when you have family over, we've had a lot of visitors over recently with having a baby and we always want to prepare for them. When family comes over, you don't worry about cleaning the house. So my mom came to visit, we're like, you know, you can help out.

You can do some dishes while you're here because you're family. So we didn't straighten it up the same way. But when you have visitors coming in, you straighten it up. And that's what was happening there. You straighten it up for a visitor, but if you don't allow Jesus to come in, that other things are going to come in to their life.

[17 : 29] Which is to say that a person who believes that they're earning their righteousness because of their morality is in many ways worse off than the person who is all messed up.

Because the person who woke up today hungover may recognize that he's a sinner and may recognize that he should probably get to a church and that he needs help. And then another person thinks they're doing a very good job at attaining righteousness.

And we know people like both of those. But if you would admit with me today, I'm only concerned often with one side of the equation, with those that are messed up. And my heart often doesn't cry out to God for those that are moral, but still unbelieving.

As it was prepared for a guest. So the Jewish nation was delivered from bondage and captivity who fell victim to this legalistic religious system. But it's still true.

And Satan is still using this from his bag of tricks today, especially here in our country. And Jesus is teaching here to avoid eternal condemnation. We must align ourselves with Jesus Christ by becoming his disciples and doing the will of the Father.

[18 : 35] Father, there's no other way, Pharisees. You can't get into the kingdom on your own terms. That I am the king. I give the marching orders around here. And you must repent and believe on me.

Many of you in here have probably read Pilgrim's Progress. If you haven't, I'd strongly encourage it. If you'd read the biography of the man and what it took for him to write it, anybody that goes through all that to write a book ought to demand the fact that we would take the time to read it.

But let me read this here for you. It's called, the chapter heading is called, The Dusty Parlor. Then he took him by the hand and led him into a very large parlor that was full of dust because never swept.

The witch, after he had reviewed a little while, the interpreter called for a man to sweep. Now when he began to sweep, the dust began so abundantly to fly about, the Christian almost therewith been choked.

Then said the interpreter to a damsel that stood by, Bring hither water and sprinkle the room. The witch which she had done, it was swept and cleansed with pleasure. Christian says, Then what means this?

[19 : 36] The interpreter answered, This parlor is the heart of a man that was never sanctified by the sweet grace of the gospel. The dust is his original sin and inward corruptions that have defiled the whole man.

He that began to sweep at first is the law, but she that brought water and did sprinkle it is the gospel. Ne'er whereas you saw that so soon as the first began to sweep, the dust did fly about, that the room by him could not be cleansed, but that were almost choked therewith.

This is a show to you that the law, instead of cleansing the heart by its working from sin, does revive but strength into it and increase it in the soul, even as it does discover and forbid it.

For it does not give power to subdue. Again, as you saw, the damsel sprinkled the water, the room with water, upon which was cleansed with pleasure. This is to show you that when the gospel comes in, the sweet and precious influence is thereof to the heart.

Then I say, even as you saw the damsel lay the dust by sprinkling the floor with water, so is sin vanquished and subdued. The soul was made clean through the faith of it and consequently fit for the kingdom of glory to inhabit.

[20 : 45] Every one of us have friends and family members that are very busy dusting their house and they're sweeping and they're working so hard and they're working so hard and oftentimes put us true believers to shame by the way that they live their lives.

And you need to go into that house and you need to sit down with your aunt or your uncle or your longtime friend that's just a good old boy and you need to say, here is water.

However, if you want to make this place clean, it has to be done by the grace of God and that you're only making matters worse. That if you sweep a room with a broom that is dusty and no water, you don't make it better, but you make it worse.

When I was going to camp, they always have competitions. It was a smart move. They would say, we're going to say who has the cleanest cabin today. And we'd all run around and clean the cabin. It was genius. Trying to work it out with my kids, but they're smarter than I was.

And so they were going to have who's the cleanest cabin. You know, God doesn't come down here and say, you're going to be entered into heaven because you're born again and made righteous. But I'm going to choose a few of you because you did so good on your own that I think you're fit for the kingdom of God because you were able to do it without my divine cleaning product.

[21 : 57] And so we have to take the word into those places. And I hope we'll get concerned about it. This is not in contrast or in comparison to saying we should go under the bridges of Alana. We should knock down doors where people are shooting up right now and their lives are messed up.

But we should also knock on the doors of some people that we love that are trying to make their own way of righteousness. We need to be the type of friend and family member that is willing to tell people that we love to stop sweeping and apply water.

And so this brings us here to the first paragraph. Because I want to talk about the power and the importance of the resurrection. They requested a sign, but what they really wanted is they wanted failure. Had they not seen enough signs?

Start at verse number 12. Jesus had healed somebody. They had seen signs and wonders. Nicodemus is honest enough to say, you've proven enough. I know that you're the son of God by what you've done.

But they say, we want to see something. They might have wanted something cosmic. They might have wanted fireworks in the sky. Or probably, they're knowing their hearts as God reveals it, they probably wanted him to fail.

[22 : 58] No matter how good he did, they would say, we want just a little bit more. However, and Jesus had seen this before, in Luke chapter number 6, they were watching him, the scribes and Pharisees, in verse number 7.

They said they were looking to see if he would heal on the Sabbath. In verse number 8, it says he knew what was in their heart, so he went forward and he did it. And then in verse number 9 of Luke chapter number 6, he looks at them and he says, Is it lawful on the Sabbath day to do good or to do evil, to save a life or destroy it?

He doesn't run from this. He goes straight to it. They were watching him. They were testing him. He does the job. And it's still not enough. But Nicodemus, we see, he learns it. There's never going to be enough evidence for them.

He knew their unbelief was due to a lack of evidence, not to a lack of faith. Because after all the evidence is there, they have to make a decision. They say, okay, what you did was supernatural, but you did it because you're a Beelzebub.

You're supernatural, but you're of Satan. You're not of God. No matter how much evidence is given. John 7, it's even comical. They said, you can't be the Messiah because you wasn't born of Bethlehem.

[24 : 01] And he doesn't even respond to them. Because he says, there's no reason arguing with you. You make up stuff. You're like a little kid playing a game. If you play a game with little kids, what's the name of the game? I win.

They change the rules. No matter how good you do, you lose, right? That's the way the Pharisees were. That's the way their heart was. No matter what he did, he would lose there. Mark Tolson and I, some 11 years ago or so, we were at the University of Cincinnati.

We had started a campus ministry with a church there. And there was a Chinese man and Mark that was dealing with him. And the guy said, I just don't know if there's enough evidence if there's a God.

So we took him in the stadium there at the University of Cincinnati. Took him up to the very top so he could look out and see a little bit. We told him to close his eyes. And we said, when you open your eyes, we are going to give you ample evidence that there is a God.

And he opened up his eyes. He was able to look out and see God's creation. And he says, I still don't know. And we said, you may not know. But it's not because there's not a lack of evidence that there's a God. And we see that.

[25 : 01] That there's a filter in which we put on our lives here that says it's just not going to be enough. And he says, now is the sign of Jonah. The Ninevites had seen a death, burial, and resurrection. If you're Jesus, you wouldn't think that you would want to associate with Jonah.

You would not want to make him a type of you. Because Jonah was a bad missionary, okay? Jeff Bush would not accept Jonah, the Vision Baptist missions, okay? He didn't have the right attitude. He wouldn't make it through the initial interview process.

But he became sin. Jesus became sin and entered into death. And Jonah had entered into the well and he was there. And he tells them, Pharisees, I'm not going to give you any other sign but the sign of Jonah.

Meaning I will die and be buried and I will raise again. And will that be sufficient? Is that enough evidence for them? Matthew chapter 28 verse number 11 gives us the answer.

It says, now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city. And showed him the chief priest all the things that were done. And the chief priest paid them off. They said, tell them that you were asleep.

[26 : 02] And while you were asleep, somebody came and stole them. Not very, it wouldn't hold up in court, would it? How do you get to give an eyewitness testimony if you were sleeping? I was sleeping but I saw everything.

Alright? And that's what they told them to do there. And they become illogical. Tell them you were sleeping. And they were bought off. That Jesus rose again from the dead. And they said it's not enough evidence.

Because there's not enough evidence for the heart of disbelief. Which we ought to all think right here. To your family members that have heard the gospel and they've not responded. This ought to drive us to our knees in prayer. And when there's no more evidence to give.

We have to pray to the God of heaven. That the Holy Spirit will convict. And will crush that heart. And let them see. Because there's so often times you get this pressure where you think I just haven't presented it right.

If I would do just a little bit better. Well they get to a point where the gospel is clear. They have a preacher. They understand it. And they're still saying no. And we should pray. Resurrection is not an incidental doctrine here.

[26 : 59] It's the greatest sign we're given that Jesus is God. In 1 Corinthians chapter number 15 and verse 14. If Jesus didn't rise from the dead. Then our preaching is vain.

If Jesus didn't overcome death. Then our faith is vain. If Jesus didn't rise from the dead. Then all the apostles and every preacher is a liar. And they're a false witness. And if Jesus had not risen from the grave.

Then people like me now. And people like you. We should be put in prison. Because what we're doing would be incredibly wicked and wrong. But he has been.

If Jesus didn't overcome the grave. Then we are all still sinners. And the application. This is what Paul said. If the resurrection wasn't true. He wouldn't eat. He would eat.

Drink. Then die. Verse 32. And after the manner of men. I fought with beasts of Ephesus. What advantage it made. If the dead rise not. Let us eat. Drink. And for tomorrow. For tomorrow. We die.

[27 : 56] He says. In life. We would all be most miserable. If it wasn't for the resurrection. Those of you that understand the gospel in here. If you say. Take out the resurrection story.

We might as well be dead. We might as well be miserable. But to a person. Who is trying to produce their own righteousness. That is sweeping. And trying to be good. You take the resurrection out of it. It doesn't change anything.

Because the power of the resurrection. That water. Has never come through. And given them forgiveness. Because they're not sinners. In need of a savior. They're just people. They're men. Trying to be moral. And so they don't understand it.

Which means we ought to talk about the resurrection. And the importance that it has. Upon our lives. What do you say. What is. What do you say concerning the resurrection. Some treated it as if it was impossible.

But you and I are in danger of treating it. As if it's an important. That the resurrection is important in our gospel presentation. In our lives. Because it tells us that we were sinners. And that we could not fix ourselves.

[28 : 54] That God left and came down. You know the saying is that all gods are the same. As if God's on top of the mountain. And you come from them. From different sides. But we say that Christianity is different.

Because in our faith. Our God left the top of the mountain. And he came down to where we were. Well in American Christianity. It says that God was on top of a mountain. We were at the bottom of the mountain.

And we hope to meet him somewhere in the middle. But we are dead in our sins. We are able unable to come to him. When you miss the mark. It doesn't matter. They say it doesn't matter if you miss it by a foot.

Or ten foot. A good illustration I heard growing up. But the fact of the matter is. You've never taken one step even close to the mark. You don't have that ability to do it. And you have to have your faith in him.

Do you recognize the necessity of the resurrection. For your dusty parlor. It's demonstrated that God accepted Jesus' sacrifice. On our behalf. That he took what we could not provide.

[29 : 51] And took it and received it from Jesus. Even in the midst of the way that Jesus has been treated. He extends the grand invitation. Not only to avoid the wrath of God. But to become his family.

Lastly here. And very quickly. They say Jesus your mom and your brother is out there. Why don't you go see them. And he says who is my mother. Who is my brother. But everybody that does the will.

Of my father. A Christian blogger named Jonathan Acuff. Has coined this term that says. The Jesus Duke. It's the person that can take any conversation. And make it very spiritual. Like hey will you pass me the salt.

Yes I can. But did you know that I'm the salt of the world. As a Christian. You get on the elevator with him. Or where are you going. Up or down. I'm going up. But someday I'm going all the way up. Takes every conversation. Spiritual.

Jesus is not just taking a conversation. That seems small. And just making it spiritual. Here for no reason. But what he is trying to do. And there's people listening. There's people listening right now.

[30 : 48] And he is saying. Not only are you going to avoid the wrath. But everybody that does the will of the father. They are my brother. That you're invited into it. As horrible as rejecting God is.

Because the wrath of God abides on you. Receiving it is so wonderful. Because you don't just get stamped. And says I approve of him. But I don't like him. You get to be invited. Into his family.

That Jesus is giving an invitation. To everybody that's listening. Right there. Into his family. Everyone in here today. You have an invitation. Into his family.

Whosoever doeth the will of the father. And that is your name in here today. If you've never put your faith in him. Whosoever will do the will of the father. What is the will of the father?

It tells us Matthew 7.21. Not everyone that saith unto me. Lord Lord shall enter the kingdom of heaven. But he that doeth the will of my father. Which is in heaven. Those that do the will of the father.

[31 : 43] Will go to heaven. Which is to repent of our sin. And trust in Jesus Christ. It's not a description. Just a description of Christians here. Not an imperative or command. But it describes every Christian in here.

That we have done the father's will. At the beginning of this story here. It says that his friends heard of it. And they went to lay hands on him. Because they thought Jesus was beside himself.

They thought Jesus was crazy. He was misunderstood. By the people in this story. But he is giving an invitation. Is he misunderstood by you in here today?

In the story. In the interviews that we saw. When asked what does it mean to be a Christian. There wasn't a clear answer. Maybe discipleship needs to take place. But if the camera was on you.

Or better yet. If the God of heaven looked down upon you. Would you be confused about what it takes to become righteous? Is it a mixture? Is it part God and part you? Is it the grace of God and part good works?

[32 : 41] Where do you stand here today? Could you imagine the thoughts of those listening? They're receiving an invitation. Not only to be a person. But to be part of his family. Today would be a good day for you.

To reevaluate your definition of family. If we say well I just love them so much. That I don't want to break the peace inside of the family. I don't want to talk to them.

About the power of the water. And they're just sweeping. And trying to be good. Would you reevaluate your definition of family. And say family is those that will be with me for all eternity. Would you be willing to rock the boat a little bit.

Maybe this Thanksgiving. For the sake that these people would become. The disciples of Jesus. And you would have them forever. Would you be willing to talk to that friend. Who that you don't believe understands the gospel.

Because he's such a good guy. And he's involved in religion. You don't want to breach the subject. Would you reevaluate what the definition of family is. Are you only concerned for the wild child of your family.

[33 : 38] But unburdened for those that are morally good. Look at your prayer list. Who is on it today. And I want you in here to think with me for a moment. As Kristen will come and play the piano.

That we have an opportunity to respond to what we've been taught today. From God's word. We have an opportunity to make a decision today. That could lead to a change in the future.

That on Easter. As this church family will gather together. And we will celebrate the resurrection. And we would say if it wasn't for Jesus Christ coming and dying for us. We would be most men miserable.

Because we cannot make our own form of righteousness. And we will sing with all of our heart as you've sung this morning. But this Easter Sunday that's coming up in the spring. That you might be standing by some people.

That right now know they don't deserve Jesus. That might be all messed up. But you might also stand side by side with somebody. Who thinks they deserve the kingdom of heaven. Because of what they have been done.

[34 : 37] And when they are in this room. And they sing about the resurrection. Their heart will go up in praise. Because they knew that they lived for years. Trying to make their own righteousness. But somebody had boldness.

Somebody came to them. And said sit down your broom. It's time for water. It is time for only the righteousness. That God can give. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia.

For more information. Log on to www.visionbaptist.com Where you can find our service times. Location. Contact information. And more audio and video recordings.