

What's Your Standard?

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Father, we thank You, Father, for this evening. Thank You, Lord, for Your goodness and Your mercy in our lives. Father, even now as we sit at Your feet, Father, we want to learn from You. Teach us, Lord. You are the Teacher. There is only one teacher and that is Your Spirit and it is Your Word empowered by Your Spirit. Lord, I pray that You would empower us this evening. Anoint us afresh, all of us, here in this sanctuary to hear Your voice. And, Lord, convict us, rebuke us, chastise us, reprove us, but, Lord, above all, Father, enable us to experience Your love through it all. Thank You, Father. You and You alone have the Words of life. No one else, Jesus. And therefore, we come to You this evening. Therefore, bless this time that we are together even as we meditate upon Your Word. Speak to our hearts. We thank You and praise You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

So, we've been learning about doctrine last Sunday. And one of the four pillars, if you know, upon which the Church is built is found in Acts 2:41-42. We know this verse. It's very familiar to all of us.

Acts 2:41-42

⁴¹ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. ⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine (that's the first pillar) and (second pillar is) fellowship, (third pillar is) in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³ Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

See that? You have teaching, you had fellowship, you had breaking of the bread and then, prayers. Fear came, godly fear of God, that is, came upon every soul and many signs and wonders were done in their midst. And we looked at this particular pillar, the pillar of the doctrine. If you were there on Sunday, the importance of doctrine, we will just reemphasize that and we will try to progress from that today.

What is the importance of doctrine? First importance; I mean, of the several things that we know about doctrine, the first importance is that there is a direct correlation between the standard of teaching. We need to understand that there is a standard of doctrine, there is a standard of teaching and you'll know that teaching is compared to walls. And walls are to guard people from error to know the boundaries. And it says in *Isaiah 59*, "When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of Lord will rise up, a what? A standard." That is a standard of the Word of God. That is exactly what we need. We need a real standard of what God intends for His people. And if you low the standards, people can jump over the wall and get into the sheep hold and Scripture says, in *John 10* "Whoever jumps over is a, what? Is a thief." And therefore, what we need to do is, as a Church, we always have to endeavor to know what is the standard of teaching that we are supposed to live by and that's very important for us. You know, God is holy and His standards are not like our standards. We have any standard but there is only one standard which is His standard and that is revealed through Scripture and therefore, there is a direct correlation between the standard of teaching we know and obey and our deliverance from sin. So important, you see. The standard of teaching we know and our deliverance from sin are directly related. How do I know this? Scripture says this in *Romans 6:17-18*,

Romans 6:17-18

¹⁷ But thanks be to God you who were once slave of sin (we were all slaves of sin) have become obedient from the heart (we didn't just obey but we became obedient from the heart to, what?) To the standard of teaching (you see that there is a standard of doctrine. Other translations will use the word 'doctrine'. To the standard of teaching to the to which you were committed) And having been set free from sin.

You see that? There is a direct relationship between the standard of teaching that we become obedient to and our deliverance from sin. Very important to understand this. Therefore, you need to always ask this question, "What is my standard in a particular situation that I face?" Every day, we are in situations involuntarily or right from the time we get up, we are making so many decisions. "What time to get up?" For example. And then, what is the verse that comes to your mind when you are trying to rotate on the bed, do some rotational dynamics on bed. You turn this side. Right from the time you are waking up, you are making decisions. You know, it's like the Word, "Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways

What's Your Standard?

and be wise. A little sleep, a little slumber.” You see? Do you get those words in your mind? You are making those decisions whether to get up or whether to stay in bed for a few more minutes. All these decisions right from the time you are waking up, you are making decisions and those decisions are directly related to the standard of teaching that you subscribe to. “What time to sleep? What time to get up?” So many decisions and therefore, it is important for us to understand what is the standard of our own doctrine that we subscribe to. You see? Okay.

Second observation is that there is a direct correlation between the standard of teaching that we know and obey and our deliverance from demonic oppression. Do you know that? A direct correlation. How do I know it? *Mark 1:21-27*

Mark 1:21-27

²¹ ***Then they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath*** (you will see the word ‘immediately’ coming in *Mark’s* Gospel over and over again) ***He entered the synagogue*** (And was what?) ***and taught.*** ²² ***And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.***

Let me tell you something – it does not matter what your background is, one of the things we have to keep asking for is authority over your life. And Jesus said, “*All authority in heaven and in earth and over heaven, everything has been given to Me and go into the world and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey all of the things that I have commanded you.*” So, you see, this is how He taught. He taught them. No boring sermons. When they came Jesus; teaching, boy, He made the whole class interesting. No boring lectures. Nothing boring when you have Jesus as your Teacher. So, what did He do? He taught them as one who having authority. And what happened? The moment He started teaching them, something happened.

²³ ***Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit.***

Who came to synagogue every Sunday or every Saturday? He was listening to scribes and the demons were also happily listening to the scribes. Nothing was happening. And suddenly Jesus came, and He started teaching and there was, this guy was suddenly becoming very restless and what did he say?

...And he cried out, ²⁴ saying, “Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!” ²⁵ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!” ²⁶ And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him.

Why did the unclean spirit come out? You see, when people saw that miracle, immediately, they observed something interesting. Look at what they observed.

²⁷ ***Then they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, “What is this?”***

Who were the first people who said, “What is this?” Manna. The first time when the Israelites came and they started having manna, they said, “What is this?” This is exactly what they said, when authority of the Word of God was established in their life. They said, “What is this?” This is a strange thing. This is manna. And they said, “What is this?” New teaching. They did not say the miracle was new. They said, “There’s a new teaching with authority,”

...For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.”

You see, there is a direct correlation between the doctrine that you know and your deliverance from demonic operations. You see that? So many people in Christendom are still under demonic oppression. They are not demon-possessed; they are oppressed by demons because they don’t have the right kind of doctrine in their minds to fight back with the enemy. Therefore, there is a direct correlation between the doctrine you that subscribe to and your deliverance from demonic oppression. Doctrines that you subscribe to and the deliverance from sin. Both these things are so important. Therefore, the emphasis on doctrine, as we heard last Sunday, it’s like bones; it’s like a skeleton. You see. It’s what gives you stability in life. And therefore, when Jesus taught, whenever He taught He emphasized something very interesting. Look at what He emphasized. *This is in Matthew 5:17-19.* This is what they heard, the teaching. They were amazed at the Sermon on the Mount. They said, “This is incredible teaching with authority.” This is what they said,

Matthews 5:17-19

¹⁷ "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸ For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹ Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least..."

You see, did you understand? Obedience in the small things. That is what Jesus's doctrine will emphasize. "Therefore, whoever relaxes one of the least." 'Relaxed' meaning? Lower the standard. Okay?

...least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does (What? The least of the commandments) and teaches them will be called (what?) great in the kingdom of heaven.

Every teaching, by the way, if you see, there will be every time you come to hear a sermon, there will be little, little things Jesus will ask you to do. And the obedience in those little things will determine how much you understood what has been taught.

Charles Spurgeon, you know, made a fantastic statement. "The best of men has always been afraid of little sins." Okay. That's amazing thing, right? The best of men has always been afraid of little sins. For example, Daniel, right? Little, "I don't want to defile myself." And then, every day, he used to go and pray three times a day. He opened his windows towards Jerusalem and pray three times a day. Every day, consistently, he used to that little thing. And one day, they asked him to stop. "Sir, how can I stop?" You know what I believe? The Holy Spirit gave this revelation in his heart, "Don't be afraid of those who kill your body and have no power over your soul. But be afraid of Him who will kill not only your body but also has power to throw your soul also in hell." And he trembled. He said, "I am not going to compromise on these little sins. These little sins have the capacity to destroy me." They all understood. Every spiritual man, if you see, the progress of any spiritual man, you will see that they are all people who obeyed God in little things. Therefore, Jesus says, "He who is faithful in what is least, will also be faithful in much." It is not big commandment He is looking at; He is looking at how consistent we are in little, little commandments that we are taught.

See, you need to understand the making of a compromiser, right? Look at the concept in the New Testament. When we go back to the Old Covenant and see an example. Look at the making of a compromiser and his name is Mr. Lot. We'll look at his life. He came along with his uncle and went along with him to Egypt, came back, came out of Egypt along with his uncle but his heart was still in Egypt. And after a while, there was a fight between Lot's servants and Abraham's servants. And this is what happens in *Genesis 13:8*.

Genesis 13:8-13

⁸ Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen. ⁹ Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left." (And Mr. Lot makes a choice.) ¹⁰ And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of (what? Keep this 'Zoar' in your mind) Zoar.

This was before Lot destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. So, he looked at it he looked at the land of Sodom and Gomorrah. And it's attractive. You know, as they say, grass is always greener on the other side. And he got attracted toward it and went. *Verse 11 onwards*.

¹¹ So, Lot chose himself whole plain of the Jordan and set toward East. The two men parted company. ¹² Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tent

Where? Near Sodom. We know this, right? He first went near Sodom and he said, "I don't want to get into Sodom. I know the people are," what is it?

¹³ Now the people of Sodom were wicked, and sinning (what?) greatly...

The sin was very great. So, he said, "I don't want to do big sins. I will be away from Sodom. I'll not touch the world but I'll be away from the world slightly." Then, what happened? Over a period of time, you know, if you make little compromises like this, it is not going to happen. Over a period of time, compromise sets in and this gets multiplying. So, what happened?

Genesis 14:12

¹² They also carried off Abram's nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom.

He was near Sodom. Then, he went in Sodom. How did it start? Near Sodom. Into Sodom. Observe the steps that he has taken. First, near; then, in and finally, *Genesis 19:1*

Genesis 19:1

¹ "The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening and Lot was sitting at the gateway of the city.

He was an elder in Sodom. So, he started near Sodom; he went into Sodom and now, he became a big man, the mayor of Sodom. But how did it start? You need to understand the heart of Mr. Lot. He did not sin a lot. But something about Mr. Lot which the latter part of *Genesis 19* will show us. Then, what happened? The angels warned him, "Flee." This is what happens. *Genesis 19:15* onwards,

Genesis 19:15-20

¹⁵ When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, "Up, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city." ¹⁶ But he lingered (Became indecisive) So the men seized him and his wife and his two daughters by the hand, and the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city. (Then, what happened?) ¹⁷ And as they brought them out, one said, "Escape for your life. Do not look back or stop anywhere in the valley. Escape to the hills, lest you be swept away." ¹⁸ And Lot said to them, "Oh, no, my lords. ¹⁹ Behold, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have shown me great kindness in saving my life. But I cannot escape to the hills, lest the disaster overtake me, and I die. (Now, you will see his heart being revealed. Next verse.) ²⁰ Behold, this city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one. Let me escape there—is it not a little one? —and my life will be saved!"

See? Little compromises. And slowly, in near Sodom, in Sodom, elder of Sodom and then, he ends up creating an Ammon and a Moab. Little compromises. Therefore, you need to understand – with every small obedience, there is always great deliverance. What did I say? In every small obedience, there is great deliverance. And God tests us how consistent we are in little commands because it tests our own heart our humility. I will give you an example. Small obedience, great deliverance. This is found in *2 Kings 5:9* onwards. So, Naaman. now, this man was a leper, great general, leper from Syria. An Israeli girl is there in the house as a servant and she tells him, "If you are a leper, there is a prophet called Elisha. Go there. He will pray for you and you will be healed."

2 Kings 5:9-15

⁹ So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha. ¹⁰ And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored, and you shall be clean."

Simple command? How difficult is it? How difficult is it to go wash yourself in Jordan seven times? Not very difficult. General is now very upset. Look at what he says,

¹¹ But Naaman went away angry and said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. ¹² Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed?" So, he turned and went off in a rage.

You know what is happening? His pride is showing off. You know, God knows how to humble people. So, He knows. And then, look at these wise servants who are there, wise servants who love their masters. Thank God for wise servants who love their masters. Look at what the wise servants says,

¹³ Naaman's servants went to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing,

Like, "Give me 25 million dollars, I will heal you," would you have not given? Absolutely, you would have given. It's amazing, isn't it? How much more then when he tells you, "Wash and be cleansed?" It's a simple command. But you know, in that simple command, his heart is revealed. Because now, he has to strip himself and everybody is going to watch him, and they know this man is absolutely leprous from head to toe. So, what did he do?

¹⁴ So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child

What? I love that. *"Unless you humble yourself as a little child, you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven."* You know, that is little, least command. How many times? Seven times. Seven times is a sign of humbling yourselves. How many times did Jacob bow before Esau? Seven times. Not once, not twice, not thrice, not four times, not five times, not six times; seven times, obey until you are converted like a little child. You see, that is what he is saying. God never asks great things from us. He asks us to do little things like the way He asked the servant, "You want a miracle, right? You want water to be turned into wine? Simple. Pour it with water." "Arrey, what is this? I thought You will say, 'let there be wine and there will be wine.'" "No. I want to test you whether you will obey in the little commands." And He didn't even tell His disciples because His disciples would not obey. They wanted to do great things. They wanted to be on His right hand and one, on His left hand. And often, Jesus will tell us to do some things which have no connection with the deliverance. What does water have to do with wine? The need is wine, You are asking me to fill it with water. There is nothing; there is no correlation between the two. But you know what God is saying? "Your deliverance is directly connected with your obedience in little things. You see. Ask yourself this question: is it difficult to obey little things? We will look at some little things today. How many of us have missed the bus in little things?

Look at another guy. He is not going to take care of the little areas, little covetousness. Small obedience great deliverance. So, what happened?

¹⁵ And he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, "Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel; now therefore, please take a gift from your servant."...

And you know what Elisha said? He refused. "Please go home. I don't need anything." But then, there is another guy. What did he say?

...*"As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing."*...

Small obedience, great deliverance. And then, in the same passage, small covetousness great bondage. You will see what happened.

2 King 5:19-26

¹⁹...But when Naaman had gone from him a short distance, ²⁰Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, "See, my master has spared this Naaman the Syrian, in not accepting from his hand what he brought. As the Lord lives...

Ah but he doesn't stand before him, by the way. Okay? Elisha says, "As the Lord Lives, before whom I stand." This fellow says, "As the Lord lives."

***...I will run after him and get something from him."* (So, he goes.) ²¹So Gehazi followed Naaman. And when Naaman saw someone running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him and said, "Is all well?" ²²And he said, "All is well. My master has sent me to say, 'There have just now come to me from the hill country of Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothing.'**

It's like you know, many Christian organizations send reports to, one man of God said, when they have like five people in the meeting, they will say, "Fifty people came to the meeting." They just fudge. Little. "How many people you have in your

organization?" "We support 250 Pastors." "How many people come to your meeting?" "Two people come." This is how they fudge. This is exactly what he is doing. A little covetousness. "Two people came. They asked for some silver and some gold because they have to support their ministry. They have a huge school of prophets, several schools of prophets are there. They have to support their ministry and my master asked for funding." See? I mean, this is happening. You should understand, this is happening in Christendom – so many people writing false report to get funding from the United States of America. So many people. And you know, you need to understand. how they get surprised when we go to auditing for our Church accounts. They asked us, "Where are you getting the money?" "Do you get foreign money?" "No." And they are absolutely surprised when they see our accounts that there is no foreign money. "How can you run organizations like without any foreign money?" Because every other Christian organization has fudged their accounts with foreign money. And it is a shame when you go to the chartered accounts when Christians have compromised, absolutely fudging their accounts. It didn't start here; it started from Gehazi. They all are sons of Gehazi. You see. So, he said, "Oh little. Just give me, what? *One talent of silver. Just give me one talent of silver and two changes of clothing.*" Arrey, what is that going to do? You want to support a big ministry? You see little covetousness. "I'll just get little bit for myself. I am going into ministry to get little bit for myself." Little honor, little. Everything starts with little. Everything starts with that little thing. But the analysis of the man of God is incredible. You know, a man of God has the ability to see hell in little sins. He has the ability to see, what? Hell in little sins. And what God has to teach all of us is the ability to see hell in little small disobediences. Look at what happens.

²³ And Naaman said, "Be pleased to accept two talents." (Arrey, one talent kya baba? (why?) Take two talents) And he urged him and tied up two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of clothing, and laid them on two of his servants. And they carried them before Gehazi. ²⁴ And when he came to the hill, he took them from their hand and put them in the house, and he sent the men away, and they departed.

Quietly. You know what it says in *Isaiah*? "*Woe to those who try to hide their counsel from the Lord.*" They think God does not see. God is watching everything. And the men of God also watch everything. You can't fool men of God. You can't fool. If there is an anointed man of God, you should tremble before him because he will see through your compromise and your disobedience. Then, what happens?

²⁵ He went in and stood before his master, and Elisha said to him, "Where have you been, Gehazi?" And he said, "Your servant went nowhere."

You see, a little lie. Little covetousness. Little lie – it's starting a chain reaction now. And he sees the little covetousness and sees the little lie and he tells Gehazi's future. You know what he says?

²⁶ But he said to him, "Did not my heart go when the man turned from his chariot to meet you? (look at this) Was it a time to accept money and garments, olive orchards and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male servants and female servants?"

Arrey, what did he ask? One talent of silver and two changes of clothing but the man of God sees his heart and tells his end, "See, I know what your heart is. You want, what? Lots of female servants; you want lots of male servants, you want money and garments and olive orchards and vine yards. I see where your heart is going. I see hell there in that little covetousness." Think about it when we speak a small lie, what we call as a white lie, do we see hell? That is the reason why the tongue is called 'a little member' which boasts of great things. How great a fire a little fire will kindle! You see that?

Another example *John 12:4*.

John 12:4-6

⁴ But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, (when Mary Magdalene broke this jar of alabaster flask of oil) One of His disciples Judas Iscariot. Who was later to betray Him (objected.) said, ⁵ "Why was this fragrant oil not sold and given to the poor?" (He was very upset that the money didn't go into his pocket, basically. That's exactly what it means,) It was worth a year's wages." ⁶ He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

What's Your Standard?

I like that. Little, he used to steal from the money bag. For example, it started with Rs. 25 was the weekly offering. First, he started stealing of Rs. 1, "Who will see?" Rs. 25, 50 Paisa. Let's say, 50 Paisa, he put in his pocket, "Who will see? Round it off, Jesus, to the nearest decimal 25.5 equal to 25." So, every time, he used to round off, 50 Paisa. Next day, he rounded off, it was Rs. 78 40 Paisa. He said, "78 Rs kaiko (why)? Rs. 8, 40 Paisa pocket mein (in the), Rs. 70, round off. Again, next week, it becomes Rs. 150. "Arey, how can you predict this?" Rs. 100 round off; Rs. 50 in his pocket. He had round figures. He was changing it every time. And then, one day, he finally sold Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. It started off with that small 50 Paisa in his pocket.

It is the little sin, saints. It is the little, little lies. See, when you don't have to lie, you lie. That's the reason why, let's all read it together, "The best of men have always been afraid of little sins." Little, little compromise; here a little, there a little and eventually, you are gone. Therefore, God also, before promoting us, He tests us in little things. I'll show you this passage in *Exodus 16*. This is after the waters of Marah. Remember the waters of Marah? They come from a three-days' journey, waters of Marah; there's no water; they all cry out, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us of thirst? And the water here is bitter." And God instructs Moses to cut off the tree, put it into the water; water turns from bitter into sweet. Bitty brought butter, the butter was bitter. So, very similar thing happens. Better, butter to make the bitter butter. So, something similar happens, and then? They all satisfied and they go to Palms of Elim. 12,70 and they enjoy their life over there. Very comfortable. God says, "Let us pack up now. You enjoyed the palm trees enough. Let's go on a journey," and they are travelling now. They all are hungry and then, they start complaining. God says: 'I am going to do something – I am going to rain bread, I am going to rain quail. I am going to give you bread and protein – both things. Bread in the night and quail in the morning.' Okay, this what He says and tests them. Look at how He tests them.

Exodus 16:4

⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day..."

Okay, everybody, how many? A day's portion, every day. Now, exactly what he does. Every day, go to Bible and get a day's portion according to your timings. I mean you don't have to spend 6-7 hours if you have to work. No, no. That is for me. Okay, I have to spend more than 6-7 hours. I need to spend almost 24 hours, sometimes. It depends. According to your background, you have to spend every day. And then, look at what it says,

...In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions.

And then, He gives them a very simple law. What is that? Very, very simple law.

Exodus 16:4

²² On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much—two omers for each person—and the leaders of the community came and reported this to Moses.

In other words, "Every day, gather so much. On the sixth day, I will give you twice as much," okay? And then, again,

Exodus 16:13-18

¹³ That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp.¹⁴ When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor.¹⁵ When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, "What is it?" (The same thing? That is what Manna means, 'Yeh kya hai.' (what is this?)) For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat. (Okay, "Every day, I am going to give you a portion." And then, He gives them the command. What is the command? Look at what He says) ¹⁶ This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Everyone is to gather as much as they need. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent.'" ¹⁷ The Israelites did as they were told; some gathered much, some little.¹⁸ And when they measured it by the omer, the one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little. Everyone had gathered just as much as they needed.

What's Your Standard?

In other words, people who gathered much, God said, "Reduce." It went down. And, some people who gathered little, "Arey, aaj ke lea kafi hai (enough for today)." It went up.' Some interesting miracle happened. Each of them gathered as much as they could for each day and then, what happened?

Exodus 16:19-20

¹⁹ **Then Moses said to them, "No one is to keep any of it until morning."** (Simple command, okay? Please don't leave it till morning) ²⁰ **However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell. So Moses was angry with them.**

It's amazing. Now, think about it. What did he say? "Don't leave it till morning." Simple command, "Finish it off for that day." But what did they do? They left it till morning. Simple command. Did they obey? Moses was angry with them. What did Moses do? It didn't stop there. So, what did He say? "On the sixth day, how much will I give you?" Double. That means you can keep some for the sixth day and some for the seventh day. What will happen to it? Will it sink? No, it will not sink. This is miracle. This is miraculous. Okay, amazing things happenings in the wilderness. I'm telling you something – miracles are not a sign that your heart is right with God. Just because God is showing you miracles after miracles, it doesn't mean that He is pleased with you. He might be very angry with you in spite of the miracles that He is showing in your life. But look at what He says.

Exodus 16:20, 22-27

²⁰ **...So Moses was angry with them.**

²² **On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much—two omers for each person—and the leaders of the community came and reported this to Moses.** ²³ **He said to them, "This is what the LORD commanded: 'Tomorrow is to be a day of sabbath rest, a holy sabbath to the LORD. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning.'"** (nothing will happen to it. But on the seventh day, please don't go out. It is the Sabbath day.)

²⁴ **So they saved it until morning, as Moses commanded, and it did not stink or get maggots in it.** (they were all amazed)

²⁵ **"Eat it today," Moses said, "because today is a sabbath to the LORD. You will not find any of it on the ground today.** ²⁶ **Six days you are to gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any."** (Please don't go onto the vineyard. What happened?) ²⁷ **Nevertheless, some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather it, but they found none.**

See, little command. This is concerning every day – today, don't store it till tomorrow; it will stink. What did they do? They didn't obey. It stank. Sixth day, "I will give you twice as much. Enjoy on the seventh day. Don't go out. You will not find any bread." He was teaching them the law of rest that, "I am your provision, you don't have to worry about provision. You don't have to work 24/7, in other words. One day, you just keep it for the Lord. Enjoy your fellowship with Him. I will you twice as much on sixth day so that you can enjoy the sixth day as well as the seventh. Don't go out." Did they obey? No, they didn't obey.

Then came another law, what we call as the Sabbatical year. This is *Exodus 16*.

Exodus 16:29-30

²⁹ **Bear in mind that the LORD has given you the Sabbath; that is why on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Everyone is to stay where they are on the seventh day; no one is to go out."** ³⁰ **So the people rested on the seventh day.**

Some people did not obey. *Levitical 25*, this is the Sabbatical year.

Levitical 25:1-3

¹ **The LORD said to Moses at Mount Sinai,** ² **"Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'When you enter the land I am going to give you, the land itself must observe a sabbath to the LORD.** ³ **For six years sow your fields, and for six years prune your vineyards and gather their crops.** ⁴ **But in the seventh year the land is to have a year of sabbath rest, a sabbath to the LORD. Do not sow your fields or prune your vineyards.**

"What am I going to do on the sixth year? I will give you double. Don't work on the seventh year." From where did it start? It started with a day; it extended to a year and then, what did these fellows do? See, when you don't obey God in the little

What's Your Standard?

commands, will you obey God in the big commands? No! What did they do? They worked for six years; they got double for the sixth year; seventh year also, they went and worked. Simple command and then what happens?

2 Chronicles 36:20

²⁰He carried into exile to Babylon the remnant, who escaped from the sword and they became servants to him and his successors until the kingdom of Persia came to power.

What happened? The land enjoyed the Sabbath rest for seventy years. You know why? Because for 490 years, they did not keep the Sabbath rest. It started with small day and became big till year. If you cannot honor God in the little things, you will never honor God in the big things. That's how He tested them and they all fail. Think about it, for us in our context. I was telling the people in yesterday's Bible study, "Of all the Ten Commandments, there is one Commandment. For example, if you commit adultery, you should be put to death. If you do not honor your father and mother, if you curse your father and mother, you should be put to death. If you do not honor the Sabbath day and if you are found working on a Sabbath, what should you do? You should be put to death." If you think about it, which is the greater commandment? To honor your father and mother and not to curse them, is it a greater commandment or to honor the Sabbath? Which is the greater commandment or rather, which is the simpler commandment? To honor the Sabbath is a simpler commandment rather than the other. How many of you come on every Sunday and say, "Pastor, I did not steal, I did not commit murder, I did not commit adultery, I was very fine, I kept all the commandments but you know, I had to work, my salary is not sufficient and I had to do over time"? According to the law, if you are found working on the seventh day, they were supposed to take you and put you to death. It's very serious – small commandment or big commandment. There is a saying in Telugu, "*Chinna paamu kooda pedha karra thoney champali*" meaning – "Even it is a small snake, we should use a big stick to kill it." Otherwise, it will just breed and become just bigger and bigger and it will destroy your lives. Little commandments.

I showed you the problem; what is the remedy? If I just give you the diagnosis and don't give you a prescription, there is no point in giving you the diagnosis. So, what is the prescription to this? One of the prescriptions is this – always keep a sensitive and a clear conscious with God. Train your conscious and say, "Lord, when I disobey in the little commands, Lord, convict me, when I am doing little things." For example, in the context of your companies, I say; let's say, for example, if you are supposed to take a break of five minutes and you take a break for more or beyond than five minutes, ask the Lord to convict you. If you say, "Arrey, ten minutes." It starts with ten minutes and then, you will steal software. I'm telling you honestly. It will start with five minutes or ten minutes and you will steal the software. Little books! One of the things that I had to do, I had to return all the books to my institute. You wouldn't believe, that day, there was one book which I have borrowed, a seven thousand rupees book and then, I was not able to find it. And I went and said, "Sorry, I am not able to find it." And I asked my professor, "Please, can you help me here? Sorry." Etc. He said, "Okay, fine. I will pay you from the lab." And I was feeling so disturbed, "Lord, how could I be so careless?" Little things. Then, thankfully, I found it and the company didn't lose when I left.

Keep a sensitive clear conscious with the Lord when you even disobey in the little things. Ask God to convict you. If your conscience doesn't bother you in little things, let me tell you something, over a period of time, your conscience will not bother you in the big things. I will show you an example. This is from Scripture. Look at what it says in *1 Samuel 24*; this is when Saul is running after David's life and he is in one of the caves and David goes with a bunch of his men and he goes and finds Saul relieving himself and then,

1 Samuel 24: 4-5

⁴The men said, this is the day the Lord spoke of when he said to you, I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish. ⁵Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul's robe.

What did he do? Slowly he went, he didn't want to kill. Somehow, he was getting scared to even raise the hand against the God's anointed. So, what did he do? Slowly cut off a small robe. In other words, Saul was not watching, nobody was watching but only God was watching. It happens. Little things you speak against eldership for example, "Ah, I know Pastor James." Just one off comment comes out of your mouth. You know what you have done? You have done a small scissor. "Ah, he is like this." And I'm telling honestly, this has happened and I have seen it with my own eyes how people compromise in little things and cutting off robes out of men of God's garment and they have not even been convicted after

What's Your Standard?

they have stripped them naked. It is amazing. That was the sin of Ham. Therefore, ham is not kosher. He stripped his father and he was not even convicted and some people like Japheth and Shem, they say, "I don't even want to know anything," and they go backwards and cover the nakedness of their father. And I'm telling you, I'm so surprised to see even among believers, matured believers, who can strip people's garments in their private conversations and their conscience will not bother them at all one bit. Cut off! What does he do? He goes and cuts off a small part of the garment. Then, what happens? We goes home.

1 Samuel 24:5

⁵***Afterward, David was conscience stricken (I love that, what did he do?) for having cut off a corner of the robe.***

And then, conscience started bothering him. Think about it, does it happen to all of you? When you do little compromises, do they bother your conscience? What did he do? He has cut off the corner of his robe. I don't know how many centimetres square it was. May be 2 cms² of the garment, he has chopped off. The 2 cms² of garment did not give him rest the whole night. Can you sleep?

1 Samuel 24:6

⁶***He said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the LORD's anointed..."***

Think about it; this guy wants to kill him and his conscience-stricken to cut a small portion of his robe and so many people, I have seen in the Christendom, the eldership have only blessed them and they don't even have a conscience when they strip them off. Where did it all happen? It started with little compromises in their lives and over a period of time, their conscience is being seared. It doesn't even bother them any more when they can just slander and gossip and call all kinds of names.

⁶ ***He said to his men, "The LORD forbid..."***

1 Samuel 24:7

⁷***With these words David sharply rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way.***

Think about it; when you do small sin and you get a sharp rebuke, how do you respond? It's a test of your heart. Do you see hell in small compromises? That's the question here. Little children, young people and my dear younger brothers and sisters, ask God to give you a sensitive conscience and keep it sensitive all the days of your life. Oh, when it bothers you, don't ever negotiate with it and say, "Lord, until my conscience is clear, I will not sleep; I will not rest." And look at this. David was consistent in his life. It doesn't matter if he stripped the robe or somebody else did it. 2 Samuel 1. This is after Saul commits suicide. He falls on his own knife and he dies. Then, what happens? This is an Amalekite who comes to David.

2 Samuel 1:8-10, 13-16

⁸***And he said to me, 'Who are you?' I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.'*** ⁹***And he said to me, 'Stand beside me and kill me, for anguish has seized me, and yet my life still lingers.'***

Meaning – This Amalekite was thinking that he can get some brownie points from David. He is lying. Saul committed suicide. He was thinking, "If I tell David that I killed Saul, he will be very happy. Sabhashi bo lega (He will say, "Well done.") He is going to make me his right hand."

¹⁰***So I stood beside him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the armlet that was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord."***

He is trying to flatter David but David is not going to get flattered.

¹³***And David said to the young man who told him, "Where do you come from?" And he answered, "I am the son of a sojourner, an Amalekite."*** ¹⁴***David said to him, "How is it you were not afraid to put out your hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?"*** ¹⁵***Then David called one of the young men and said, "Go, execute him."*** ***And he struck him down so that he***

died.¹⁶ And David said to him, "Your blood be on your head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the Lord's anointed.'"

That is the reason why Jesus said, "Every idle word, you have to give an account. By your words, you will be justified. By your words, you will be condemned." Therefore, be very careful how you speak. Strive, my dear brothers and sisters. Keep your conscience clear with God every day. You know what? Think about it; you would have done little things today for sure, right? Right from the time that you were awake, little compromises that you have done. Did it bother your conscience? Acts 24:16, this is Paul, the secret of his life.

Acts 24:16

¹⁶ This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.

Therefore, what I say to you and to all is this – train your conscience regularly by obeying the least of the commandments of God. Least.

The second thing – it does not take long to backslide. How long does it take me to backslide? You might ask. I will tell you how long. One year? Or maybe, one year is too much. Six months? Six months is also too much. Three months? Ah, slightly, too much. What about one month? It is still too much. One week? One week is okay. Look at what Scripture says,

Hebrews 3:12-13

¹² See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. ¹³ But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

So, how long does it take for you to backslide? 24 hours. It is enough. 24 hours mein, gone. You see how Scripture analyses? 24 hours. It means, within 24 hours, if you do not set things right with God, your heart will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 24 hours is sufficient for you to backslide. How many of you believe that with all of your heart? In 24 hours, you know it, right? Sometimes, you will say, "What 24 hours? 15 minutes, 5 minutes, 1 second is enough for me to backslide. One second and I'm on a slippery slope. We are all on the slippery slope. We are always one step away from jumping into hell, literally. One click away. One song away, involuntarily, sometimes. We have the car and suddenly, sometimes, we don't have the CD; the FM comes up. One song is enough. And you will say, "Stop. Don't switch it off." Keep your conscience clear. Keep short accounts with God. Exhort one another. Think about it; it says, "Even as you see the Day approaching, what should you do? You should gather as frequently as possible." Do you see? How many of you really take that commandment seriously? Do you think that you have not backslidden? You are fooling yourself. You are making a fool of yourself. You are deceiving yourself by thinking that by missing one meeting, nothing is going to happen. It will start with one meeting. It starts with that and I know it, even in our own Church. It starts with one meeting. Slowly, another meeting. And slowly, another meeting. They will taper off asymptotically. Taper off slowly.

Another thing – don't grieve the Holy Spirit. Keep your conscience clear. It doesn't take long to backslide. Don't grieve the Holy Spirit because He is the One who brings conviction. Look at what it says in *Ephesians 4:30* onwards,

Ephesians 4:30-31

³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.

Why should you not grieve the Holy Spirit? John 16 will say why you should not do it.

John 16:8

⁸ And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

Think about it – the more you walk with the Lord, should you become more sensitive to sin or less sensitive to sin? In fact, it should increase and it says in *Romans 14:23*,

Romans 14:23

²³ But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

Can you imagine Elisha? Whenever somebody talks about eating, I only think about Elisha and the Shunammite woman. What was he doing? Every day, he was passing by the Shunammite woman's home and she used to invite him for a meal. Did he do one miracle? No. No miracle. No blessing. No Bible study. He went and ate with them and one day, she said, "This man is a man of God." Think about it – when people see you eating, the way you eat, as if there is no tomorrow. I've seen that. It's an incredible sign of your heart and the way people eat and this guy is not even saying anything; he is just eating and she says, "This guy is a man of God."

Another thing; you go and do a miracle in somebody's home and this guy and the guy called Elijah goes to this woman's home and he does a miracle and one day, the baby dies. You know what she says? "Did you come here to bring my sin to remembrance?" How did he behave in that woman's house for so many days? The very presence of the man of God. I'll tell you something – one man is sufficient to restrain sin in an entire mob. One man is sufficient. Think about it; just one man, Moses, goes to the top of the mountain. For 40 days, he doesn't come back and the entire clan sins. Think about it. The restraining power of, how many men? One man who strives to live with a clear conscience with God. One man. That's what Paul says, "After I go, certain ravenous wolves will come. When I was there, I would never allow anything to be corrupted from this pulpit but after I come, ravenous wolves will come. From your own flock, people will start deceiving others and drawing them after themselves." One man can change. One man. Be that man. Be that woman. One man in your office can convict the entire office. One woman can convict the entire office. So, that is what we say, "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit." Guard Him. He is so sensitive. He is like a dove. You know, pigeons, right? We have pigeons. They come and put their nests in our AC, fan. The moment I go and click, what does it do? It flies away. That's exactly what the Holy Spirit is. He is so sensitive. You do one sin, he just flies away. He doesn't want to be there. Very sensitive. If you lose that touch, God help us.

Another thing – cultivate a healthy fear of God. O, my dear brothers and sisters, I can go on and on about this topic. There are two kinds of fear of God – one is the fear that God will punish. "Amo, chesthey, (if I do) He will." That is all the pagans, that's how they do. You are no better than a pagan if you fear God that He will punish you. It's good to have that kind of a fear but you are equal to a Gentile. No difference between a Gentile and you as far as that fear is concerned. But there is another fear. You know what that healthy fear of God is? It is not that God will punish me and hurt me but that I will hurt God. It is not that He will hurt me but that I will hurt Him. That is a healthy fear of God. How do I know?

1 Peter 1:17-18

¹⁷ And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, ¹⁸ knowing that you were ransomed (Why? Why should you conduct yourself with fear? Because you were ransomed,) from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ,

He died for you. Even a small sin, Christ had to die. Therefore, create and cultivate a healthy fear of God – "I don't want to hurt God. I don't want to hurt Him. I don't want to spit on His face. No, I don't want to do that."

Hebrews 6:4-6

⁴ For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit,

What is it? It is impossible. I was telling in the Bible study, "Who wrote *Hebrews*?" Nobody knows. Otherwise, you would have called that fellow a false prophet. God knew. So, He kept that man anonymous. Who wrote *Hebrews*? Nobody knows. So, you will all agree that God wrote it because it is in the Bible. So, you will not say, "Paul is a false prophet," or "Barnabas." No, I think, deliberately, God hid the author of the *Book of Hebrews*.

⁴ For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, (why?) since they are crucifying once again the

Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.

Or open shame. Be afraid of hurting God. That is what is a healthy fear of God. "I don't want to hurt Him. I don't want to grieve Him." You need to understand, when you raise up children in your own home, whenever they go against you, they should say, "Lord, I don't want to hurt my dad. My Dad is going to be very hurt." So many people. I know, some children, "Mama, if Dad knows, he is going to kill me." That is Gentile fear of God. "Oh, if my Dad comes to know, he will be so broken." I don't have my wife's permission but I can share her testimony. Her father, till date, doesn't know that she watched a movie in a theatre. Without his knowledge, they all went. "I don't want to tell my Dad. He will be hurt. Let him, at least, have the assumption he brought up good children." You know, that's a good fear of God. I don't want to hurt Him. Do you have that kind of a reverence for God, that you are so afraid that you would hurt Him? You are so afraid that you would hurt your parents or your spiritual parents. You don't want them to hear anything bad about you so that when they hear it, they will be hurt. That is about the fear of God. That is a good fear of eldership.

Finally, cultivate a healthy devotion life with Jesus. It's called the 'Song of Songs'. The Song of all Songs. You take every song; love songs ka baap hain (the father of songs). That's what it means – Song of Songs. Song of all Songs, chapter 2, this is what it says,

Song of Solomon 2:14-17

¹⁴ O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the crannies of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.

That's what He does. He hides us in the cleft of the rock so that He can come and have a relationship with us and He wants to commune with us and hear His voice. It's a love song that He is singing to His Bride.

¹⁴ O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the crannies of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely. (And then, you know what He says?) ***¹⁵ Catch the foxes for us,*** (What kind of foxes?) ***the little foxes that spoil the vineyards, for our vineyards are in blossom."***

It is those little sins that are there in your garden. Do you know what Jesus is saying? "Catch those fellows. Those little foxes because this is a vineyard. Our relationship is being compared to a vineyard." It's a vineyard. The vineyard has to be tender. Otherwise, all kinds of things will grow up and in no time, you will have grass growing all over the place and it will be a complete total mess. The little foxes will come and spoil that devotion. Catch those little foxes. Catch them. Don't neglect them. I want to ask you this question: how many of us have that kind of a sweet time of Jesus every day of our lives, that we have a sweet time? I'm beginning to cultivate now. I'm going for a walk regularly. I just keep listening and I'm praying and I say, "Lord, this is awesome." I want to cultivate that garden of God, where He is going to speak to me in those clefts and He is going to give me the grace to catch those little foxes. Very difficult to catch those little foxes. Those fellows will be running here and there. They are very elusive. So, little sins are like that. They are so elusive. They don't seem to be great. But you know what He is saying? "Catch those little foxes. Catch them. Kill them. Don't ever compromise with them." And that's for today. Catch those little foxes, saints. Time's up. Even the presentation said, "Bahut baat karliya (you've spoken a lot). Stop now." Catch. Think about it. How is your standard today? Have you compromised? You say, "Lord, raise the standard. Raise the bar." Or do you try to bring God down to your level where He is always trying to bring you to His level. "Be holy as I am holy," is a suggestion? It is not a suggestion; it is a command. "Be holy as I am holy." And He wants us to be there. He enjoys us. He wants us to cultivate that relationship with Him so that He will show us all those little foxes in our lives so that you can destroy them. Amen? Let's pray.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we thank You. We praise You. You are a good God, Lord. Your mercies endure forever, Lord. You said in Your Word, "It is good that I was afflicted. Then, I learnt Your judgments and Your ways, I've learnt Your fear." And I pray, Father, every one over here, O Lord, will not compromise on little, little things. Little, little commandments that You taught us, that You showed us over the years, O Lord. Little commandments to be regular to Church on Sunday morning, to be on time, O Lord, so many of us still struggle there. I pray, Lord Jesus, that we will begin there, Lord, in those little areas so that we become strong pillars in Your Kingdom so that we can kill those big giants in our lives, O Lord Father. Thank You, Father, for this time that You have blessed us with. Thank You, Father. Once again, we commit our shepherd into Your hands, Pastor James, Lord,

What's Your Standard?

even as He ministers to so many people through these comings days, O Lord. I pray You would anoint him and keep him, Father, under the covering, O Lord, of Your wings, O Lord. Hide him from the secret counsel of the wicked, from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity. O Father, I pray, Lord Jesus, that You would guide him, O Lord, and take him into different places that You have ordained even before the foundation of the world. All the Pastors whom You have ordained, Father, I pray that You would bring them all there, Father, and I pray that You would bless the time, O Lord Father. Thank You, Father, for this time. Even as we go back home, take us home safely. Thank You, Father, for this time that You have blessed us with. In Jesus' Mighty Name, Amen.