

Father, we just come to You. We just surrender ourselves to Thee, Lord. We need You, Lord. We need You, Father. Once again, touch us. Cleanse our ears with the Blood of Your Son. Your Son is the Balm of Gilead. Anoint our eyes, O' God, that we may see. Cleanse our tongues with fire, O' Lord, that we may speak Your pure, holy Word, O' Master. Above all, Lord, cleanse our hearts that with meekness we may receive Your Word today, that Your life may become our portion. We have come for life; You came to give us life. You said You are our life. You said Your Words are life. Holy Spirit, we commit this time into Your hands. Take the Words of Your Son and make it life for us that we may go from this place a little more changed, in the image of Your Son Jesus Christ. Speak, Father. We take authority in the Name of Jesus and I bind every spirit of distraction, every spirit that is not of God, we bind you in Jesus' Name. We command you to leave this place in Jesus' Name and I speak Your peace in every heart. Speak to us, Lord. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.

We are here on the 10th of February. Ten is a good number in the Word of God, only if you are prepared. Ten is the number of judgment; that also means today is the forty-first day of this year. We are here primarily as servants of God. Others are also welcome but we gather primarily as servants of God to meditate on the Word of God. Times are getting more and more difficult; Churches are being burned, Bibles are being burned, God's servants are being attacked but we don't get scared and all is meant to stop us from preaching the Word. Our God allows it; all things are allowed by God. It is a test for us. He's testing us, allowing us to see how we react. So, do not be discouraged, do not be afraid. Amen.

This morning, I want to look at, in terms of life, the most important event in our life. We have many, many important events in our life, exciting events in our life. The birth of a baby in the family is an exciting event. Baptism of somebody in our Churches is an exciting event. Wedding is an exciting event. When somebody in our Church or family gets a good job, it's an exciting event. When somebody in our Church buys a house, it's a very exciting event. This is not a small thing because in my entire Church, I think there may be only two or three people who actually own their house in the city; only two or three. So, house warming is a big thing. People get a vehicle; it's a big thing. So, we have many, many exciting important events in our life but none of these is the most important event in our life. The Bible talks about the most important event that will happen in every life. It's one of the most serious, sobering verses. In *Hebrews 9:27*, Scripture says,

Hebrews 9:27

²⁷ And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

This is the most important event in our life. Nobody ever looks at it as the most important event but this is the most important event in our life. ***It is appointed unto men to die once*** and after that it is judgment. It is one appointment, nobody can escape. If you are born, you have to die. You can escape a Baptism, you can escape a wedding, you can escape without working; many events in life, you can escape; there is no escaping disappointment. No one can avoid it, nobody can go around it, everybody has to face it; one day, it will come. So, there is no point worrying about it; no point getting anxious about it. Only thing we can do is prepare for that event. See, we prepare when the baby is to come, we prepare for Baptism, we prepare for wedding, we prepare for jobs; we prepare for everything. Most people don't prepare for this. Yet, this is the most important event every one of us will face. And those who prepare for this often prepare in a wrong manner. Many people, when they are living, they buy a plot and in a cemetery. Many put away money for their coffin also but that is not preparing for death; that is preparing for those who are living. So, when I die, I don't want my children to have a problem; so, I am buying a plot and giving him money. But you are not preparing for yourself, you are preparing for somebody. Others commit body parts for other people. Some people go beyond that, they give their whole body to the medical college for the students to practise. None of this is preparing for death and this is not what the Bible says.

Jesus was absolutely sure of His death and He also knew the exact day of His death, but He bought no plot or any coffin. He did not prepare in any way, the way we prepare. Yet, He was one man who was absolutely prepared to face death. So, how do we prepare for the most important appointment or event in our life? It is there;

...it is appointed for men to die once (Then it is written,) ***after this is the judgment.***

So, we prepare for death by not preparing for death but preparing for judgment. Any man, woman, child, young man who is preparing for the judgment is not afraid of death. Some people are prepared for death but their preparation is in ignorance because they have no clue what comes after death. Lot of people say, “No, no. I have done enough good deeds. So, if I die, I will come back as something better.” It’s based on ignorance because if you need to know about what happens after death. We need to hear from somebody who has risen from the dead. Only one has risen from the dead; therefore, only His words are authentic. There a lot of people in the world of every religion who are a kind of prepared for death but it is a preparation based on ignorance and even good Christians are sometimes totally ill prepared for death because it is not based on the judgments of God. In *Amos 4:12*,

Amos 4:12

¹² “Therefore thus will I do to you, O Israel; Because I will do this to you, Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!”

Through Amos, God tells people,

...Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!”

What people don’t realise is; if we are prepared for this, then, automatically, we are prepared for everything else in life. We are not prepared for this; so, we are worried for everything else. The Bible begins with the words, “*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*” And then, when the Bible is almost ending, it says in *Revelation 22:12*,

Revelation 22:12

¹² “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to everyone according to his work.

See, the Bible is very clear. In the beginning, God created everything but at the end, God will judge everybody’s work; everybody will stand before God; every human being, irrespective of what religion they belong. And there is only one way to prepare for death – to be found in Jesus for He alone has triumphed over death. But that alone is not enough. We need to be prepared for the judgment that follows. One of the primary functions of the Church is to prepare the people for that day. No one can escape that day; from Adam to the last man will stand before God. We learn of Him, we remain in Him and we continue in Him. Scripture actually says, “When that day comes,” we can be confident, we can be unashamed; not only that, we can receive a rich welcome. Look to what Scripture says in *1 John 2:27-28*,

1 John 2:27-28

²⁷ But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him. ²⁸ And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

First is – learn of Him. Second phase – abide in Him; and then, it says, “When He appears, we will have confidence in Him and we won’t be ashamed at His coming.” Scripture says, “You can be confident, totally unashamed at His coming.” Peter will say this in *2 Peter 1:10-11*, he gives a whole list of things we are called to do and he says, “If you do these things,”

2 Peter 1:10-11

¹⁰ Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; ¹¹ for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Rich welcome! That’s why Paul is able to see his crown before he dies. There is no escape in this day. Everything else may be or may be not; if you are unmarried, there is no guarantee you will get married. If you are married, there is no guarantee you will have a child. Even if you have studied much, there is no guarantee you will get a good job. Even if you have a job, there is no guarantee you will get a house. There are no guarantees in this life but God offers us one guarantee. He says, “You can be prepared for death and the judgment that comes after.” When that day comes, you can be confident, unashamed and receive a rich welcome and the entire life of a believer should be tuned towards this. Often, we say it in our

prayers, “Every knee shall bow, every tongue shall confess, Jesus is Lord,” but we forget what the next verse says. In *Romans 14:11-12*,

Romans 14:11-12

¹¹ *For it is written: “As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God.”*¹² *So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.*

Every knee shall bow, every tongue shall confess, every one shall give account of himself to God.

We won’t give account of somebody else. Everyone will have to give an account to God. In *2 Corinthians 5:10*, Scripture says,

2 Corinthians 5:10

¹⁰ *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

So, we are looking in terms of judgment so that we prepare for that day. If any child has to prepare for his or her exam, he needs to know what the portion is, what the subject is. First thing, God says, “Everyone will give an account of only himself.” Your wife will not stand beside you. She can’t pray for you that day. Your parents won’t support you. Each one stands alone. One by one, everyone will give an account of the deeds that were done in the body whether good or bad.

Second – *Matthew 12:36*,

Matthew 12:36

³⁶ *But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.*

‘*Every idle word*’; that’s why as we grow older, we shall be very, very careful and ask, “Lord, give me the ability to control what I say.” Our deeds will go for judgment. Words will go for judgment. *Romans 14:9*,

Romans 14:9

⁹ *For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.*

He’s going to judge both the dead and the living. The living and the dead, He will judge. We have to look at how Scripture uses words. The Bible says, “There are many Christians who are dead while they are living.” They are living but they are dead. Why? Because they loved this world; they loved the pleasures of this world. Paul tells Timothy concerning how to handle widows in the Church. “Orphans and widows are people, the Church,” God says, “should take care of.” But then, talking about the widows, this is what he says to Timothy,

1 Timothy 5:5

⁵ *Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day.*

⁶ *But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives.*

Why will it say, “Dead while living”? God says, “Don’t just go by outer eyes.” “O, we are a Church; we have to help the widows in the Church.” God is saying, “Don’t waste your time and money on dead widows; concentrate on the living ones because there are those who are dead while living.” This is not just talking about widows; it is talking about all of us. God says, “If you are living solely for pleasure, you are dead while living.” That’s why Scripture records about a lady called Anna when Jesus was brought to the temple as a Baby. She was a widow for many, many years. Husband had died but she didn’t even leave the temple. She is a woman, she can go nowhere. She is not allowed to serve in the temple; yet, Scripture says, “All the days of her life, she spent in fasting, supplications and prayers.” Though she was dead to the world, she was living to God. Therefore, God could speak to her and say, “My Son has come.” The Lord suddenly came into His temple. Remember, the Lord suddenly came to the temple. Nobody knew; she knew, Simeon knew, Anna knew. Actually, it was a day of judgment for that temple. The Lord came; nobody recognized. Only two people recognized. That’s what the Bible is talking about. Don’t be dead while you are living. He says, “Many like that will just come through the fire,” because the final

judgment is through fire. When we stand before and we have to give an account of our deeds, Scripture says, “Everybody’s works will be put through fire,” and *1 Corinthians 3:15* says,

1 Corinthians 3:15

¹⁵ If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

He will be saved just through the fire. Just imagine – you are living in a house; it’s not a concrete house, it’s a wooden or a thatched house and you are sleeping at night and your house catches fire. Suddenly, you wake up. The whole house is on fire. You just opened the door and ran out. Many people will say, “I ran out with my life, I lost everything in that fire. My house is burnt, my possessions are gone, my certificates are gone; everything is gone. With my life alone, I ran out.” God says, “That will be the situation with many, many Christians.” That’s why Jesus talks about Lot and says, “Remember Lot’s wife.” That was the family that was brought through the fire; yet, the wife perished in the fire. If we look at Lot and his wife, they were separated by fire and the only difference between the two of them was where they were looking – one looked at the front and one looked to the back and the fire separated. That was the only difference. So, always remember these things; every little thing matters in life. One looked to the front, one looked back and it was the hour of judgment. Fire separated them. Those who come through the fire; whole house burned up, the only reason they came through, because the foundation stone was right. In *1 Corinthians 3:11*,

1 Corinthians 3:11

¹¹ For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Old days, we could still be sure; these days, it is very confusing because the Gospel that is being preached, you don’t even know whether it is Christ. People are not even sure what do they believe in. Imagine living, thinking you are a Christian all your life and doing everything else but the foundation itself was wrong. Jesus knew this. That’s why His entire three and a half years of His life, He spoke more about hell than any other preacher in the Bible. He spoke three or four times more about hell than He spoke about heaven and so were the apostles. Apostles were very sure because they knew the doctrine of Christ. So, you will see their reaction because they know everybody is appointed to death and after that it is judgment. So, Paul will say in *2 Corinthians 5:11*,

2 Corinthians 5:11

¹¹ Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

He says, “**Knowing the terror**”. ‘Bhay’ (fear) is a very simple word in Telugu; in English, it is not fear, it is terror. Terror of the Lord! “Knowing the terror of the Lord.” What is this terror of the Lord connected with? There is an appointment, everyone will die and after that is judgment. So, they warned their congregations always saying, “Be prepared for that day.” The writer of Hebrews will say this in *Hebrews 12:28-29*,

Hebrews 12:28-29

²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. ²⁹ For our God is a consuming fire.

You are receiving a Kingdom that cannot be shaken. We are born again of the Spirit, we have entered the Kingdom and the Kingdom has entered into us and one day, we will receive the Kingdom. This is very difficult to understand in the physical but this is a reality in the spiritual. We enter into a Kingdom; the Kingdom enters into us and we will receive a Kingdom but the Kingdom that we will receive, it’s a Kingdom that cannot be shaken. That’s why God allows all these things to see whether we are shaken. So, you will see, Jesus was never shaken and you will see, after the Pentecost, as they grew in the Lord, they were not shaken because they had received a Kingdom. So, they were warning saying, “Knowing that we are receiving a Kingdom

...serve God acceptably with reverence and godly. ²⁹ For our God is a consuming fire.

Many Pastors won't preach these things because we have a false love for our congregation. "What will they feel?" "If I say these things, they won't come back." "Offering will cease." One question I ask in the Church is this: when you go to a doctor when you are ill, do you want the truth or do you want him to flatter you? You want the truth. When we go to God, do you want flattery or do you want the truth? So, the terror of the Lord, Paul says. Scripture says, writer of *Hebrews* says, "Our God is a consuming fire." Bible begins by saying, "*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth,*" because on the Day of Judgment, the terror of that day is revealed even in creation. Even creation is terrified. Scripture says in *Revelation 20:11*,

Revelation 20:11

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

How did they flee? Read *Peter* carefully, Scripture says, "They were all consumed by fire." Everything has been consumed by fire; only thing left – God of Christ on His throne; everyone standing before Him and the angels of God. Judgment has begun. It's a terrible day; it's the most terrible day in the lives of most people. Yet, Scripture says, "It can be the most exciting and rejoicing day in your life;" it can become our most exciting day. That's why Pastors, as God's servants, we are duty-bound to teach our people to prepare for that day and we ourselves are prepared for that day. No one can escape that day. Everyone will stand before Christ that day. We will give an account for our deeds. We'll give an account for our words; not that alone, *Hebrews 4:12-13*,

Hebrews 4:12-13

¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

We have to give an account. Everything is open before Him; deeds, words; not only that; thoughts and intentions, everything. Nothing hidden; we have to know when we are going for an exam, what are the questions going to be about. This is what you thought. This was but your intention. This is what you said. This is what you did. We will only say, "Look Lord, what I did." Lord says, "Wait a minute. This is what you did. This was your intention. These were your words. This was your thought. This was your attitude." See, everything will be opened before God. God will judge everything. When we understand the standards of God's judgment, then we will realize, "I cannot live this life. I cannot think these thoughts. I need His thoughts and I need His Spirit. Without His Spirit and without His words, I cannot face His judgments." See, a lot of children, when they are studying, because they think they know, they take exams very casually, but when the exams come, they realize, "I don't know the answers." But do we really understand how God judges and how the standards of His judgments are? God is not scaring us. God did not tell him, "Do this all on your own." He says, "You cannot do this." That's what Jesus said, "Without Me, you can do nothing." And even after teaching them for three and a half years – theory and practical, He said, "Do not leave Jerusalem until you have received power." He says, "You need My Word, you need My Spirit and you rely on both. Little by little, I will change you so that they will not catch you unaware and you will not be afraid, you will actually be excited."

That's one of the reasons we preach so much on faith. We keep telling people, "***My righteous shall live by faith.***" "***Faith comes from hearing, hearing from the word of God.***" "My righteous shall walk by faith and not by sight." And then, God caps it up by saying, "***It is impossible to please God without faith.***" Because on the Day of Judgment, God should be pleased with our works, God should be pleased with our lives. See ,all of us sitting here, primarily, has two lives – one has a private life which we live at home and there is a public life which we live outside. God says, "Both have to tally. Both will be judged; God should be pleased with both." Jesus pleased His Father with His hidden life and His public life. About His life at home for the first thirty years, this is what the Father said in *Matthew 3:17*,

Matthew 3:17

¹⁷ And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

God was pleased with His Son's life at home. We don't know anything about His life, except His father was a carpenter. Nothing about Jesus was hidden from the Father's eyes. He knew His thoughts, He knew His intentions, He knew His attitude, He knew His words and He knew His actions. His Father said,

"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Then, after that, He is in the public. About the public again, God will say this, in *Matthew 17:5*,

Matthew 17:5

⁵ While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"

That is why He Himself submitted to the Father's judgment and He came through the judgment and was exalted to the highest place. He pleased His Father to the utmost. And then about the work He does, this is what He says in *John 17:4*,

John 17:4

⁴ I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.

"I have finished Your work; not only I have finished Your work, I have glorified Your Name." Do you see when our works are judged, we should have finished our works. Everyone has been commissioned by God to do a certain work. We should have finished our work and we should have glorified His Name. Many who finish their work, glorify their own name or glorify their denomination's name. That's not what Scripture says. We have to finish the work which He gave us to do. He has to give us a work. That work we have to finish. I cannot finish my work and say, "Lord, I have finished." I have to hear from Him, continuously hear from Him, do that work; the way I do that work, I have to glorify His name and I have to finish that work. And all our thoughts, our intentions, our attitudes everything has to be in one line. It must agree to the very nature of who God is. That is what growing in salvation means. That's why we are called to ***work out our salvation with fear and trembling***. Why fear and trembling? Because suddenly, we are conscious, "I haven't done what I am supposed to do. My words did not tally with what He told me to say. My attitude was wrong. My intention was wrong. My thoughts didn't tally." Therefore, there is continuous repentance in our life.

Scripture says, "Jesus was tempted in all points, yet He never sinned." His work was right, His attitude was right, His intention was right, His words were right and His thoughts were right. That is why the greatest gift God has given us is the gift of repentance because we can repent and He will forgive and we can start over again and it doesn't matter how old you are. That's where the promises of the Bible come. Imagine you are eighty years old and at eighty, you understood this truth and you've got only two years left. You say, "*Aiyya*, Lord, eighty years are gone." You know what God says, "I will give you back all the years the locusts have taken. "In two years," He says, "You still can finish," but that will demand incredible consecration and surrender from us. Because we have in our Churches, in other places, people came to the Lord in their eighties and their nineties. Their surrender was unbelievable. They understood the truth and they ran their race well at the end and they finished.

It's like Jacob. He started at Peniel. How old is this man? He realizes, "This was my purpose. When I was in my mother's womb, God had destined, I am to be Israel." And did he realize? What age? But he ran well at the end and he finished well. So, remember these five things – our thought, our intention, our attitude, our words and our deeds. See, two are inside; two are outside – our words and our deeds. One is in between; our attitude. Two are inside; nobody can see my thoughts, nobody can know my intention. Only God knows. Attitude is sometimes not very clear; sometimes hidden, sometimes shown. But words you can hear, deeds can be seen but God says, "Understand these are the terms of judgment. These have to become one line," because that is what God is. When we understand this, we will cry out in our prayer closet, "Lord, make me whole!" We will confess, we will cry out, we will forgive, we will ask for cleansing and we will start afresh each day. That's David's cry. David has a cry in the *Book of Psalms. Psalm 19:12-13*,

Psalm 19:12-13

¹² Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults. ¹³ Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, And I shall be innocent of great transgression. ¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.

See, this is the key. If you look at *verse 12*, this is what happens to a man who actually gets close to God. See, unless we have light, we won't see the dirt. The more light, the more dirt is visible. This is a man who gets closer and closer to God and he realizes, he says in *verse 12*, "My secret faults, who can understand his errors?"

Many years ago, when I began my career, I taught English. After the exam time, when I give the marks, children will bring the answer paper. According to the student, "My answer paper is perfect; why no marks?" So, teachers have two pens – one is red, the other is blue. So, I show him, "Mark: red, red, red; did you see this?" That's what he is saying, "Who can understand his errors?" We can't; unless we go to God asking, "Lord, show me my errors," He's not going to show. "Cleanse me from secret faults, cleanse me, Lord. Keep your servant from presumptuous sin." See, if we don't understand who God is, if we don't grow in the knowledge of God, we will presume God is like this and we will sin against God based on presumptions. It's like a student whose question is there – option A, B, C. He doesn't know, he thinks B could be the answer and puts B and it is wrong. Why? Because he didn't understand the question.

Often, Christians are like that. They don't seek the knowledge of God; they don't seek the ways of God and it says, "You'll be guilty of presumptuous sin." That's the struggle you will face in the world. That is what Jesus said, "In the last days, many will come. They will say, 'Here is Christ.'" Many Christs will be preached; only one Christ will be true that agrees with the Word and with the Spirit and we move into presumptuous sins. He says, "Let them not have dominion over me, then I will be blameless, then I will be innocent and then the meditation of my heart and the words of my mouth will be acceptable before You." He's a man who understood God's terms of judgment, he's not the same. After death, it's judgment. Many people when they are in trouble, they say, "Lord, take me!" Without realizing, after death is what? If they understood what judgment is, they will say, "Lord, give some more time. Let me put a few things right." After that is judgment and actual thing is, the Bible teaches it as one of the primary, elementary teachings of the Church. There are six fundamental teachings every Church has to be founded on *Hebrews 6:1-2* says, calls it the elementary principles of Christ,

Hebrews 6:1-2

¹ Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, ² of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

First is foundation of repentance from dead works. Faith towards God is second. Doctrine of Baptism is third. Laying on of hands is fourth. Resurrection is five. Eternal judgment is sixth. These are the six foundational teachings of the Church. And what is this called? It is not even called final judgment; it is called eternal judgment. Meaning – there is no turning after that. You cannot change the result. After death, there is no second chance. All the chances are when you are alive. That's why God says, "It's appointed unto man to die once and after that there is judgment." What is the judgment? Eternal judgment; fixed forever. So, God says, "Don't take it lightly." Believers don't take it lightly. Yet you can run your race. Therefore, God uses Paul to write about how he finished. In *2 Timothy 4:7-8*,

2 Timothy 4:7-8

⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

You have to fight the good fight. We have to finish the course. We have to keep the fundamentals of faith. We have to be very sure about this. We have to fight the good fight, we have to finish our course and we have to keep the faith. We cannot fight every fight we want. Believers get involved in every fight unnecessarily. There are fights which God has chosen for us; that is a good fight because God has chosen and God has already promised, "If you fight this fight according to My Word, in the power of My Spirit, you are more than a conqueror, you will overcome. It's a good fight; it's not a bad fight." So, we should fight the fights God has chosen for us. The fight against flesh; it's a fight God has chosen for us. The fight against worldliness, it's the fight God has chosen for us. The fight against the devil and the powers of darkness is the fight God has chosen for us and the fight against self; worst deception is the deception of the self.

So, God says, “I have chosen you and I have appointed a day for you, these are the rules,” and all the Pastors, God has said, “We are called to preach, prepare our people,” as Apostle Paul prepared his Church. But when it comes to Pastors, unlike the others sitting here, Pastors, not Evangelists, not others, Pastors, God adds one more because we can get a crown which others won’t get. Therefore, in our race, in our judgment one more subject is added, It’s a compulsory subject for Pastors, it’s not optional. When God commissions Peter into ministry, He asked him a question three times, “Peter, do you love Me?” He said, “Yes, Lord.” “Feed My lambs.” “Peter, do you love Me?” “Feed my sheep.” We’ll be judged for what we fed and how we fed our sheep. It’s not for others. Jesus talks about the last days and He talks about servants of God who are called to feed. He says, “When the day is not so near, Pastors also will forget the Word in watching T20.” God says, “Remember Matthew 24.”

Matthew 24:45-46

⁴⁵ “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? ⁴⁶ Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.

When the master comes, He should find us either preparing the food or feeding the food. Don’t take this lightly. When the master comes; nobody knows when He comes. God says, “Be serious about what you feed your sheep.” Don’t bite from the Bunty outside. Pastors do it. They bite from the Bunty called television. Tomorrow’s breakfast, tonight, they will take. Suddenly, the Lord will come. So, Pastors are called to something, “Feed My lambs, feed My sheep.” It will be demanded of us. That is why James warns in *James 3:1*,

James 3:1

¹ My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

“Be careful,” he says, “be very careful.” I have to be careful that what I teach you agrees with the Word of God because we will receive a stricter judgment. Our sheep won’t get the same level of judgment which the shepherd gets. No, if we are faithful, the sheep will not also get the glory which the shepherds get because teaching is a very serious business, because we are taking the very Word of God and through the Spirit of God, explaining it to people. This is the Kingdom of God, this is the nature of the Kingdom, this who the King is, this is what He is like and we are being prepared for the Kingdom. That is the Gospel; it is not about this world. It is the Gospel of the Kingdom of God; preparing a people for that Kingdom. So, honour is there. Where there is strict judgment, there is great honour also. So, Paul will write to Timothy, he will tell him in *1 Timothy 5:17*,

1 Timothy 5:17

¹⁷ Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.

Especially those who labour in Word and in doctrine. They are labouring and God says, “They are worthy of double honour.” They are also worthy of double the judgment. So, there is the good side of this; there is this terrible side of this because the Lord’s Day is, “Ah! It’s not going to come now!” Listen to what in the same portion Jesus says in *Matthew 24:48-51*, this is good servant and the evil servant;

Matthew 24:48-51

⁴⁸ But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ ⁴⁹ and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, ⁵⁰ the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, ⁵¹ and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

It’s strict judgment. What is the evil servant doing? He is playing politics in the Church. He’s fighting with everybody, with his assistant Pastor, with his associate Pastor and worship leader; fighting, fighting, fighting. There are many Pastors who will be excellent politicians. They are more politicians than pastors. They’ve forgotten what their call is. What they are supposed to do with their sheep and how they are supposed to labour and feed their sheep. Always be aware; the Lord can come anytime. So, there is great reward, there can be great judgment. So, it is our job to feed the sheep. How to walk in faith? How to live by faith? How to handle relationships? What is your attitude towards money? What is your attitude

towards the world? How to be prepared to handle persecution? We just don't teach; we also ultimately become what we teach.

You know when persecution is begun, why are people struggling? Because they were never taught how to handle persecution. Yet, that is the foundational principles in Jesus' sermons on the mount. There are foundational things which we continuously teach our Churches, to the point I tell my next Pastor that if I go on one of my trips, I never come back, you don't see me, just start off and continue where I left. We are always prepared because we know this is what we are called to do. But when we don't prepare people, like the Chinese Christian said many years ago, "Pastors from America came and taught us: rapture is coming, rapture is coming. Rapture did not come, Mao Zedong came." And most of the Christians were arrested and all the others fell off. They were not prepared. Anybody who was a Christian; they lost their jobs, their possessions were ceased, Pastors were killed, the Church was shaken and they were sent to the lowest jobs; cleaning the dirt, sent into the country side, they became garbage collectors; God turned it around for their good because everybody needs the garbage collector. Every house needs a maid. Suddenly, all the people going into the house to clean or to get the garbage were Christians and then, the Church grew. Today, people talk about the most powerful, largest Church in China but how did it become? What the devil meant for harm, God turned it around for good.

Our job is not to sit together in Church and say, "Hallelujah!" and have a fellowship. Means we are prepared to face what is coming. That's what happened to the Jerusalem Church. Everything is going nicely. Everybody is singing, meeting every day but nobody is going further and Scripture says, "Great persecution arose in Jerusalem." The believers were scattered but they were prepared. All the believers took the Word with them and Christianity spread. We have to prepare our people. Everyone has to be prepared. Day and hour comes, every one of you should be able to handle a house Church and I can promise before God, anybody in my Church, who is been for two years can run a Church – man or woman. They can run; like in China, most of the Church leaders are women. That's all that is available. That's why this is important. "Feed My lambs. Feed My sheep." How to prepare for this Kingdom? How to fight this good fight? How to be prepared for the Day of Judgment? We prepare for the Day of Judgment. On that day, our works will be judged and our works will have to tally with the Gospel. It's no point saying, "I have such a big Church," and if persecution hits, everybody is scattered and they go away from the faith, our mission has failed. That's why we have to teach people how to walk by faith. Yet, Scripture notes; now I'm going to take shift connected with judgment. We teach, we teach about faith. Yet, *1 Corinthians 13* has something to say;

1 Corinthians 13:13

¹³ And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Three things abide – faith, hope and love. Scripture says, "Greatest of these is love." So, it's not only our faith that will be tested, even more than that our love will be tested. In *Galatians 5:6*, this is what Scripture says,

Galatians 5:6

⁶ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

Only one thing matters; not faith alone; our faith has to work through love. One of the most powerful standards of judgment God puts for His children in the Bible is *1 Corinthians 13:1-3*,

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

¹³ Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. ² And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³ And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

Even if I speak in many languages; some people can speak seven languages, eight languages, ten languages, all speak in tongues all the time, He says, "If you do not have love, you are an empty vessel." Second, if gifts, *verse 2*,

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing."

Did you see? These are the things we long for; gift of knowledge, gift of wisdom, gift of miracles, moving mountains; all these things we have, but Scripture says, “If you do not have love, you are nothing.” You could have all the gifts of the Holy Spirit but God says, “If you do not have love you are nothing.” Stunning! Remember when we stand before God, many will say, “Lord, I did this in your name. Lord, I did this in your name,” Lord will say, “I do not know you at all because you never loved your sheep.” Level of sacrifice, *verse 3*,

“And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.”

You gave everything you owned, you sold it, for the Kingdom you gave. You surrendered your body for the Kingdom. You fast regularly, eat only one meal a day, live a very simple life; all for the Gospel. But if God says, “You do not have love,” it profits you nothing. Did you see how the judgment is taking place? Judgment is taking place; that is why God tests His disciples as they grow. Jesus has to be tested, Moses has to be tested; not just for your works, “Yes, Moses, you are doing an incredible work!” “Jesus, You are doing an incredible work.” Do you love? Moses’ brother opposed him, Miriam opposed him, entire eldership opposed him, entire congregation opposed him; still he loved. He interceded for his sister, he begged God, “Don’t destroy these people.” Jesus’ family opposed Him, disciples left Him, the people crucified Him; yet, His first cry is, “Father, they don’t know what they are doing.” Why is He allowing this? To test if our love is genuine; know that. God will test us; it’s a part of His judgment process. That’s why Jesus said, “You’ll know them by their fruit.”

You know on last Monday, we had another Pastors’ Conference in Malkajigiri and we shared the parable of the wheat and the tares. God says, “The world is the soil, God is the farmer, Word of God is the seed and then the wheat.” And when men slept, the enemy came and sowed tares. Suddenly, wheat and tares are growing together, the servants of the master came and said, “Sir, you sowed wheat, there are tares also!” Expect that in your Church, expect that here too. Wheat and tares come together. There works said, “Shall we pull the weeds?” He said, “No, wait till harvest because if you pull them now, you may harm the wheat too.” Why? Because all our lives are intertwined. If God were to start pulling only the wicked, some righteous also will get hurt. “There is a day set for that,” He said. “But how will we know the difference?” God said, “When the harvest comes, you will know.”

Now, there is something interesting. When the harvest time comes, the wheat is also grown, tare is also grown. The wheat harvest is heavy. The tares are very light. As the harvest is maturing, the wheat starts bending in the field. Tares are standing like this. Jesus said, “You will know the difference.” Real child of God, real man of God; as he grows, will become more and more meek, more and more humble. About Moses He says, “He was the meekest man on earth.” Ask that question. People will say, “I am thirty years in the ministry, forty years in the ministry,” that’s not the point. Have you become more meek? Because that’s the first condition God looks. Jesus said, “Come learn of Me. I am meek and lowly.” James will say in *James 1:18*, just look at that. Even if we have to receive the Word of God, how can we receive?

James 1:21

²¹ Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

How?

...Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls,

That’s the first thing. It doesn’t matter whether we are fifty years, seventy years, eighty years, even if it is a child who speaks the Word of God, we should have the meekness to receive it. If it is the Word of God and I said on Monday, there is a priest in the *Book of Samuel*. Everything was wrong about him but one thing you cannot take from him. God in the night spoke to a little boy. He was only a little boy but he called the boy and said, “I know God has spoken to you. Don’t hide it from me; whether it is good or bad, speak to me what the Lord has spoken.” If you are the Jewish high priest of the nation, will you receive the Word of God that comes from a little boy? And every word the boy is speaking is the judgment of God over Eli and his family. Yet, he received it. That’s what God is talking about. “You will know them by their fruit.” That’s why He told the Pharisee, “Listen to them. They teach well, don’t be like them.” I will tell you the same thing. Listen to some of

them on the TV. Some of their teachings are good; never be like them for they take glory for themselves. There's no meekness in their lives.

See, I don't get excited by all those people who come to the Parade Ground and all because I know what happens at the back. For a meeting, why are you collecting twenty crores, thirty crores, forty crores; for what? I'm telling it to Pastors openly, why? It's because you have already decided to get permission for that place, we have to pay from the top to the bottom and then, you get permission and you invite Jesus to that meeting. Jesus will come because He loves the people but the organizers and the speakers will be judged on that day. Understand what happens; understand what the Kingdom of God is. I'm not saying you shouldn't have meeting but to get permission, you fast and pray. You will hear from God. If God has said, "This is the place you will have," He will open the door. I'm telling you, Pastors, be very, very careful.

One more thing I will tell Pastors. The Scripture talks about the cries of the widows and all reaching heaven. There is one practice in Telangana and Andhra; that is getting a marriage license; not marrying people, it's a source of income and rates are fixed. "Where is your wedding? Church?" "I want ten here, I want ten from here." "If it's in a 'shamyana' (tent), big place; twenty-five, twenty-five." You don't need to study, no? Your license is enough. I'm telling you what happens. These Pastors have no clue, one day, they will stand before God. He says, "You've made a merchandise of My people. You sold My name." So, if you have a license, use it. If anybody gives you an offering, take it; otherwise, never ask. How many weddings we have conducted? When we had a license, we never took offering. When we called another Pastor, we gave from our pockets because people did not have the money. Once, on a phone, I was bargaining with a Pastor, "Pastor, please, Pastor. That girl is a widow, no money." "Where is it? Is it in a hall?" I said, "Pastor, please. I will put from my hand. This much only we have to give." Then, he agreed. After much bargaining, he agreed on an amount. What a shame! We are talking about God's Kingdom. Remember all these things will come to haunt us one day. Scripture is very clear, "You will know the harvest. When harvest comes, you will know." You will grow in meekness because the fruit of the Spirit; where does it begin with? Love. God says, "You have all these things but you don't have love, you are worth nothing!" That's why when that lawyer asked Jesus, "How do You read the law and the prophets?" He was good. He said, "Love your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your strength, love your neighbor as yourself." Love your neighbor as?

Now, let me ask you this question: If you are a Pastor and you have a daughter, you want your daughter married off, do you want to pay fifty thousand rupees to the Pastor? "No, Pastor! Please, only daughter. No money. Five thousand, please!" But when you have to marry somebody else, you stand and say, "This is my rate." That's why He said, "Love your neighbors as yourself." Why Pastors don't preach judgment is because neither do they love themselves nor do they love their congregation. Sometime back, there was a crusade in Parade Ground; many years ago. One of my kids was at the back as a volunteer. Do you know free-will offering, we call; these buckets go? At the back, organizers are running with the buckets saying, "We know where we are going, we don't care; we have come for the money." They already know they are going to hell; it doesn't bother them anymore. They are organizing stuff so that they can take the money. That's why the authorities have so much contempt for Christians because we are supposed to be different because our God is different. Our God is not like other gods. God knew us; that is why He said in the law, "Our God does not take a bribe." What? Our God doesn't take a? Every other god takes a bribe. You can't get any God to do anything until you have given a coconut or a *laddo* (Indian sweet) or something you have to give. See, you have to understand why corruption will never go from India. Because the man who goes to the office first has bribed his god and he is going to his office and he is thinking, "My god has taken a bribe, why can't I take bribe?" It will not go until Christ comes. You can't blame them; that is the way it is functioning and in the midst of all this God says, "I will have My people." And that people, even the Pastors take bribes, then we are finished. That's why we said, we are not preparing for judgment because already we judged it ourselves. Therefore, we are afraid to teach judgment; we are afraid to prepare our people. We are not perfect people; we are a people who go before God and confess and prepare ourselves daily so that we can prepare our people. That's why Jesus said, "The greatest commandment is this – love God with all your heart, all your mind, all your strength; love your neighbor as yourself." Let me tell you something – they are not the same, how we love God, how we love a neighbor. Manifested not in the same way; it's completely different. It is not the same. Love towards God, love towards a neighbor is not the same. You have to look into the Word – how do I love God? How do I love my neighbor? Look at Scripture what it says about God. *John 14:15*,

John 14:15

¹⁵ ***"If you love Me, keep My commandments.***

It's not a feeling. He said, "***If you love Me, keep My commandments.***" Now, come to *verse 21-24*,

John 14:21-24

²¹ He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. ²² ***Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?"*** ²³ ***Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.*** ²⁴ ***He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.***

God says, "It doesn't matter how many times on Sunday morning you say, 'Lord, preminchi,'" and He says, "If you don't obey My commands, it's all words." He said, "If you love Me, you will obey Me and if you don't obey Me, you don't obey My words, you don't love Me," and *verse 31*, how did Jesus prove His love to His Father?

John 14:31

³¹ But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

How did Jesus prove His love to His Father? By obeying all His commandments. That's how the Father knows the Son loves Him; and the Son knows He loves the Father. In *John 15:10*, Jesus says,

John 15:10

¹⁰ If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

That's I have said it's absolutely different – our love for God and our love for our neighbor; it is not same. Not only our works, our love will be judged. *1 John 4:16-17*, this is what Scripture says,

1 John 4:16-17

¹⁶ And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. ¹⁷ ***Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.***

God says, "You will have boldness on the Day of Judgment." How did Jesus have boldness on the Cross? "Unto Your hands, I commit My Spirit, Father." Where did the boldness come from? Where did Paul's boldness come from? "I see the crown." Because they knew they loved God and they knew they loved their neighbor. There's an incredible difference between these two. Your and my love towards God is manifested in obedience. And obedience itself towards God is not the same; it has three primary parts in the Bible. "If you love Me, you will obey Me." How do we obey Him? In *Psalms 119:60*,

Psalms 119:60

⁶⁰ I made haste, and did not delay To keep Your commandments.

"*Made haste, I did not delay.*" You don't go before God and say, "I came at eleven, ten fifty-five, only five minutes late." It doesn't work with God. How do you obey God? "I made haste and did not delay to keep Your commands," because in the Bible, delayed obedience is disobedience. One real sign of growing in the Lord is – how fast are we to obey God? But understand one thing – our God is a living God. That means He speaks today. That's what *Hebrews 3:7-8* says. What does it say?

Hebrews 3:7-8

⁷ Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you will hear His voice, ⁸ Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness,

What is that? Our God is a living God. He speaks today. You may sit here for four hours, you may sit here for five hours but God may tell you only one thing. And your entire things depend upon obey or not to obey. It could be the same thing you

have been hearing for a long time but we have been hardening our hearts. David says, “I did not delay. I made haste.” Because if we delay our response, our heart will only get more and more hardened. Moses went to Pharaoh, “The God of Hebrews has appeared to us, ‘Let My people go, let them make a three days’ journey and sacrifice. Let My people go.’” How different it would have been if Pharaoh had said, “Oh! Your God said. Okay, you can go.” No, he hardened his heart, kept on hardening his heart and after sometime, Scripture says, “God hardened his heart.” Read it carefully – first, Pharaoh hardened his heart; again, Pharaoh hardened his heart, again, Pharaoh hardened his heart; later, Scripture says, “Now, God hardened his heart that he is not able to change.” Final – first born is dead, “Go! Go! Take your people and go. Bless me also.” Moses blessed, Israel left. Little later, “Get the chariots! Get the army! Let’s go after them.” Why? He’s unable to change.

That’s what God is saying, “Listen to the Holy Spirit; there is a day called today.” As long as God is still speaking the same thing to you over and over again, it is still today. That’s what the Bible says, “*Don’t grieve the Holy Spirit. Don’t quench the Holy Spirit,*” because if the Spirit goes, we don’t have the power to change. We know in our heads, “I need to change. This is right, this is wrong, I need to turn,” but we have no power to turn. That’s the power given by God, by His Spirit. Judas knows, “I have shed innocent blood, I don’t need your money. Take your money,” but he doesn’t have the power to change and he goes and kills himself. Ahithophel knows, “I have done wrong,” but he doesn’t have the power to change. He is a disciplined man. He goes home; sets everything in order, then he hangs himself. He has lost the power to change because repentance is not from the head, it is from the heart. He says, “Out of our hearts, we receive all things.” He talks about Esau too; he could not bring about a change. In *verse 16 and 17,*

Hebrews 12:16-17

¹⁶lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. ¹⁷For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

He cried with tears but he didn’t change his heart; heart is set. That’s why God says, “Do not delay,” because our hearts will get hardened. The only way we can keep our hearts tender before God is by being quick in our response. In obeying, in repentance; keep growing.

Look at the history of this man – father of faith. Look at what is written first about him in *Genesis 11,*

Genesis 11:31-32

³¹And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram’s wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. ³²So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.

How old is Abraham? We don’t know. Sixty, sixty-two, nobody knows how old is he. Did he obey God? “Leave your father, leave your household, Go to the land I am showing you.” Obeyed; came to Haran. He stayed there. He didn’t enter the land. Look at this man many, many years later. *Genesis 22:1-3,*

Genesis 22:1-3

¹Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” ²Then He said, “Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.” ³So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.

Early in the morning! Did you see how he has changed? He was told to leave his father’s house, he was very slow but he has grown. Now, when he’s told to take his only son and offer him as a sacrifice, Scripture says, “He goes early in the morning.” God says, “We should be growing like that.” We have disobeyed today. Today is the day to repent; not tomorrow, not day after; today. That’s a sign of meekness; that’s a sign you have grown. Your quickness, your response to how you obey God in doing something or in turning back from something bad shows whether you have grown or not. That’s what David is

saying, “I made haste and I did not delay,” because suddenly, we value our relationship with God more than anything. Not delayed obedience, something which we train ourselves and ask God.

Second thing – not just obey God. How did he obey God? When we obey God, obey God completely, not in parts; wholly. That’s why Saul lost his kingdom. He said, “I obeyed.” God said, “You didn’t.” He said, “I killed most of the Amalekites.” God did not say, “Kill most of the Amalekites,” God said, “Kill all the Amalekites.” You know our obedience should be complete. Jesus’ first miracle – wedding at Cana. Mary told the servants, “Go to Him and do what He says.” What did He say? Fill the jars. And do you know what they did? They obeyed. They filled; they didn’t ask any questions. “What are we filling for?” “This jar is outside.” “This water is for washing the feet.” “Everybody has washed and gone inside. There’s nobody coming anymore.” “Why do You want us to fill this?” Nothing; they obeyed simply. The entire miracle of that night was based on their full obedience itself. That’s what God is saying, “Obey in haste. Obey fully.”

Don’t be like Ananias and Sapphira. They must have told the apostles, they must have told Peter, “We have a plot. We want to sell it and give it to the Church.” Peter said, “Okay, if that’s what God is telling you.” They sold it. After they sold, they got so much money. “Aiyya! How can I give all this?” They put it in a bag and they came to Church. Peter looked at them, “It was yours. You could have kept the whole thing. Nobody asked for this. You said something. You have lied to the Holy Spirit. You didn’t obey the Lord wholly.” This is a process. That’s why we constantly encourage the youngsters in our Church, “Constantly keep on surrendering until one day, you know you know you have surrendered,” because surrender is a process. Keep on surrendering. God willing, one day, each one will reach where Paul reached where he says, “I no longer live but Christ lives in me.” God says, “Keep surrendering.” Don’t surrender something in public and keep something away in private. Over and over, this happens. We give something in public but we keep lot our life back in private. Give it wholly. Your whole body, your complete mind and this is what Scripture says in *Romans 12:1-2*,

Romans 12:1-2

¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

You will know what is the good, acceptable and perfect will of God. There is something called the perfect will of God for everybody; everyone here. For us to know that, we have to come to the point when we have surrendered completely. So, God says, “Obey in haste. Obey completely because of you love Me, you will obey My commands.” That alone is not enough.

Now, the third part of obedience, *Deuteronomy 28:45-47*,

Deuteronomy 28:45-47

⁴⁵ “Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you. ⁴⁶ And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever. ⁴⁷ “Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything,

You did not obey your God with joy and gladness. Obey God immediately, obey God completely and obey God cheerfully because **God loves a cheerful giver**. Don’t complain and grumble through life. God doesn’t like complainers. God doesn’t like grumblers. In *1 Corinthians 10:10-11*, Paul will quote the example of Israel,

1 Corinthians 10:10-11

¹⁰ nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹ Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

Pastors, who called us? Who sent us? Then, why are we complaining? We didn’t like the one who called? We didn’t like the place He sent us? God says, “You didn’t serve Me cheerfully. You didn’t serve Me joyfully.” That’s what God is looking for. People will obey Him fast and faster and faster in life as you grow older in the Lord, completely, joyfully. That’s what God is looking for. God says, “The more you do it, more you are proving that you love Me,” and He says, “You’ll abide in My love.”

You will in return experience the love of the Father and the Son because God is raising a set of true worshippers. In 2 *Corinthians 3:6*, what does Scripture say?

2 Corinthians 3:6

⁶who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

God is not looking for ministers of the letter. God is looking for those who are ministers of the Spirit because the letter kills but the Spirit brings life. Our obedience to God must bring us joy and life. People in the Old Testament were a set of grumbling grumpy believers. You will see that in Church also. Everybody is walking as if they are carrying their cross. Paul and Silas are singing in the prison, here we are walking as if we are in prison. God says, "Walk." *1 John 5:3*,

1 John 5:3

³For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

He did not say that His commandments are not difficult. He said, "It's not burdensome." Maybe "*kasht*" (difficult) but it's not heavy on your mind. Why? Because you love God. What makes His commandments light? Because you love God. Isn't that what talks about Jacob and Rachel? How many years did he work for Rachel? What does the Bible say for him? Fourteen years were like two days. Why? Because for his love for Rachel. Jesus says, "This is the love of God." If we love God, we'll keep His commandments and His commandments are not burdensome because we love God. For so many people, simple commands are also burden. "What time is meeting starting?" "Ten o'clock." "I'll come by eleven, please keep my token." Everything is a burden. Tomorrow, you will tell your Church, "Come whenever you want because there are no tokens here." Will you say? Simple thing; I'm not telling you about this meeting, I'm telling you about tomorrow. First step – Come to Church on time. In my Church, those who don't come on time, I don't give them anything to do in the Church. How can you give responsibility to somebody who doesn't come to Church on time? Simple things – all these are burdens for us. Fasting and prayer – three quarters of the Church won't come. Why? It's a burden. We are asking ourselves: are these things a burden? We'll really love God. See we don't have this. We cannot generate this on our own. For everything, we have to go to Him first and say, "Lord, keep filling me with more love." Isn't that a promise in *Deuteronomy 30:6*?

Deuteronomy 30:6

⁶And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

Who will do it? God will do it so that you will ***love the Lord your God with your heart and with all your mind, all your soul, that you may live.*** He's our hope. So, we don't pray, "Lord, I can't love." "Lord, circumcise my heart. Everything that is of flesh, remove it. Everything that is of the world, remove it." It's not an easy prayer; it's a very difficult prayer. Terrible things will start happening in your life because we think we pray these prayers to God and suddenly, you are lying with your mouth open and a tablet comes from heaven and you wake up and you love. Things don't happen like that. You pray this prayer one day, two days, six days, one week; your wife has changed. Now, she is fighting with you daily. "Aiyya! What happened?" "But you choose between your wife and Me." Your children are all going crazy, "Lord, what is happening?" "Teaching whether you can love Me above all these things." Because if you give them all what they want, they will love you, when you turn towards God, they all get mad. God says, "Everything will turn around," suddenly, you will realize, "All I have left is God alone." Circumcise my heart God that I might love with all my heart, all my soul and with all my strength. Obey God hastily, completely and joyfully.

Now, we will pray, break for lunch, come back. Practice it; go fast, eat completely and come back cheerfully. Let's pray.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we just come to You, Lord. We just thank You for today. We thank You for Your servants. Thank You for the brothers and sisters who are here. Thank You for everyone. Thank You for the provision of food. I pray it will be blessed and sufficient for every one of us for every perfect and good thing comes from above. Fill us, Lord. For in Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.