

## Relentless Love Of God!

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*Father, we just thank You, once again, for this day, the second day of the fourth month of this year. Thank You, Father, for Your goodness and Your mercy and Your kindness that we enjoy. Every day of our lives, O Lord, we just enjoy. You truly, O Lord, have been faithful to us. So many people haven't seen the light of dawn, Father, but, Lord, You, in Your mercy, extended to all of us one more day in the land of the living. And therefore, we just want to thank You. We want to praise You. We want to give You glory. We want to honor You this morning. Lord, even as, now, we meditate upon Your Word, speak to our hearts. You are a good God. Continue to work in our hearts and through our lives. Bless us this morning with hearing and bless us with a fresh anointing. Fresh anointing over the speaking and over the hearing of this Word. You said, O Lord, in Psalm 133, "How good and pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity for it is oil from Aaron's head to his beard and unto his garments." For is there, You have pronounced a blessing, even life forevermore. And therefore, this morning, we come to You because You and You alone have the words of eternal life. Not man's words, O Lord. Where can we go unless You, Lord, quicken whatever is in this book? Lord, where can we go? Father, therefore, speak to us. Yes, Lord. Even as Peter prayed this morning, breathe, O Lord, Your Spirit over our lives. Breathe, O Lord. Anoint us and quicken us. For You promised that You will quicken our mortal bodies in these last days. Quicken us by Your Spirit. Thank You, Father. Thank You, Jesus. Anoint us and speak to our hearts this morning. For in Jesus' Name, Amen.*

We will continue our study. When I was listening to last night's teaching, Pastor James' preaching a Sermon or message; whatever you want to call it. I think it had all the elements. I was speaking to Sammy and I said, "It's impossible to be this, to have the wisdom and the ability to properly represent God." Because all of us have the ability to go to one extreme or the other. We profane the name of God. To be able to have a holistic approach, every time you represent God, it is absolutely impossible and that is the reason why we need Him; we need His Spirit; we need His anointing.

If you have the NIV Bible, if you turn with me to *Ecclesiastes 7:18*, when Pastor was talking about it, this word just came to my mind. Of course, the context is different but just this word.

### **Ecclesiastes 7:18**

***<sup>18</sup> It is good to grasp the one and not let go of the other. Whoever fears God will avoid all extremes.***

I thought that was like the quintessence for me, at least, of yesterday's Sermon. Because I really have to hang my head in shame because so many times, I misrepresent God. Through my life, through my teaching, maybe. I don't know. I might exalt His wrath and not balance it with His mercy or sometimes, I just exalt His mercy and not balance it with wrath. And the man who fears God will avoid all extremes, he says.

***It is good to grasp the one and not let go of the other...***

And both of these, together are something which is a mystery, which Paul says, "Holding fast the mysteries of God, being good stewards of it."

2 Corinthians 2:15, if you will. Let's go back to NKJV.

### **2 Corinthians 2:15-16**

***<sup>15</sup> For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. <sup>16</sup> To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life...***

And then, he makes a fantastic statement. He says,

***...And who is sufficient for these things?***

The answer? None of us. And he also gives an answer in 2 Corinthians 3:4-6. Look at what he says,

## **2 Corinthians 3:4-6**

***<sup>4</sup>And we have such trust through Christ toward God.***

We don't trust ourselves. We are presenting God with absolute balance and not holding on to extremes. Like for example, when Abraham goes to God and he intercedes for Sodom, he says, "Will not the Judge of all flesh be righteous?" And then, he starts interceding. He keeps on interceding up till a point; after that, Abraham leaves; God leaves. Till the point where He says, "If there are ten righteous, I will not let the righteous perish with the unrighteous." So, that is the extreme, right? Abraham is appealing to the mercy of God while not compromising His justice. So, that is an amazing attribute to have and that is something which only God can give us because we do not have the ability in ourselves to holistically represent God.

And then, he says,

***<sup>5</sup>Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency (or our competency) is from God, <sup>6</sup>who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter (brings death) kills, but the Spirit gives life.***

The flesh profits nothing. That means if you speak anything which is of the flesh, it is of the letter. "The words that I speak," says Jesus, "are Spirit and life." So, an incredible challenge for all ministers of the Word of God or teachers and preachers and what have you; of the Word of God, to be channels of Jesus' mouth that what they speak is coming, literally, from the heart of God and the heart of Jesus.

We looked at it last night. It says, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to us." But isn't it interesting that even though God says that, He always makes the first move? Adam sins against God and God makes the first move. He goes in search of Adam. Adam is not searching and he is actually running away from God. It was God who made the first move even in the Garden of Eden. In every relationship, in fact, who is the humble guy? The one who makes the first move. I'm not talking about people who... Like yesterday, we looked at that. The example of Joseph's brothers and Joseph. Joseph is not going to reveal himself to his brothers before time. But that does not mean that he does not have an attitude to reconcile. He wants to reconcile but based on truth. For that, he is going to wait on God's timing because redemption is primary and they will not be redeemed, excepted in the proper time. But there is an attitude. If you go back to the NIV, I want to look at this beautiful passage that we know. Very often, we quote it. It's found in *Philippians 2*, of course. We know this very well. This is Paul, talking about,

## **Philippians 2:5-6**

***<sup>5</sup>In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup>Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be...***

grasped. He did not hold on to his own rights. Pastor Sundhar Krishnan explains it so beautifully. He says, "He held on to His rights very loosely." The first thing when the baby comes out of the mother's wombs, how are its hands? Closed. You put a finger, closed. Everything? Closed. We all come with this nature of grasping. We don't want to let go. "It is mine." We don't want to share. When we had Emmanuella, we took Abigail to the hospital. She came to the hospital just a few hours later after Emmanuella was born. Her grandmother came and she was the grandmother's jaan (dear one), the cat's whiskers at home, if you will. Because she was the first grandchild, everybody was pouring their attention unto her. Especially her grandmother, her ammamma. That is Jacinth's mother. She just had this relationship with Abigail. They just loved each other. And for the first time, when the grandmother came into the hospital room, she just took the baby into her hands like this and you should have seen Abigail's face. "Who is this sister who is taking my place." She was just slightly one month past two years. She didn't want to share that attention with her sister. It's impossible but she wanted to hold on to her position as firstborn. We are like Jacob. How did Jacob come? "I'm the firstborn," grasping the heel of his brother. He didn't want to share the position of the firstborn with anybody. Grasping so that people will say, "He didn't come second. They came together." That's what he was expecting people to say but you know what? The midwives said, "This fellow came first. This fellow came second." And from that time onwards, he wanted that position. Grasped. "By hook or crook, I want the position of the firstborn." But how different our Firstborn, Jesus, is! He says, "I'm the Firstborn. You also can be the firstborn." We are heirs, joint-heirs with Christ. Kya bhaat hain! See, that is the nature. It says,

<sup>6</sup> ***Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be...***

Grasped. That's how He died on the Cross, right? (Hands stretched out). Not like this – grasped hands. That is God. And what are we? We are all graspers. That is how Jesus loved us. The elder brother is a real bad elder brother. He's a grasper. In fact, when his brother would have left his home, he would have felt very happy. "Thank God! Now, I'm going to work on this. I'm going to make a lot of profit and this is all going to be mine. I'm not going to share it with anybody else." I'm just speculating. I could be wrong. Think about it. And he says,

<sup>6</sup> ***Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be...***

Grasped.

***...used to his own advantage; <sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself (this is beautiful –) nothing...***

Your translation would say, "Made Himself of no reputation." Just imagine nothing. It's exactly what it is.

***...by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!***

So, this is the attitude. This is how He came when we didn't want Him. It was God who came in search for Adam. We love Him because He first loved us. We don't have the ability to love Him, to search for Him. We were not searching for Him. See, we thought that we repented, right? "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand!" Who gave us repentance? It's the sorrow of God. How can we have the sorrow of God unless God gives us His sorrow? It grieved His heart, it says in *Genesis 6*. Unless God gives us His grief, how can He give us His grief? Turn with me to *Acts 11:17-18*.

### **Acts 11:17-18**

***<sup>17</sup> If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?"***

These Jewish believers, they were all people who grasped. They didn't want to share anything of their spiritual inheritance with anybody, much as the Gentiles. They wanted to be among themselves only. Peter, of course, had to learn the lesson.

***<sup>18</sup> When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."***

Who granted repentance? God granted. So, what is the primary characteristic or symptom if you can use that word, that you have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit? There is a spirit of repentance that comes upon you. We only think about speaking in tongues or having power. No, there is a gift of repentance. There is a change of mind that comes. And what happens? God is a Person who grants us repentance and the whole purpose of the ministry is with that Spirit – "Lord, anoint me with Your Holy Spirit and with the truth of the Word." Because the Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth, so that your spirit, "When I speak the truth in love, that is holding not to both extremes, that God would give me the heart for whom I am ministering so that God will grant them repentance." That's exactly what Paul tells Timothy and exhorts Timothy.

### **2 Timothy 2:25**

***<sup>25</sup> in humility...***

In other words, when you are being given a revelation, don't take a position that you are better than the others. No. Don't ever think that you are better than the others. Don't even think that God has called you into the ministry because you are better than the others. No. In fact, a genuine minister will never exalt himself above his brothers. Turn with me to *Deuteronomy 17:14* and we will come back to this point.

### **Deuteronomy 17:14-20**

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**<sup>14</sup> “When you come to the land which the Lord your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, ‘I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,’ <sup>15</sup> you shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. <sup>16</sup> But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the Lord has said to you, ‘You shall not return that way again.’ <sup>17</sup> Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. <sup>18</sup> “Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. <sup>19</sup> And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, <sup>20</sup> that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren...”**

He will bless you. You will never take a position that you think that you are better than the brothers, that God has given you a position in the Church or a position. Wherever God has given us a position. It could be even in your office. You see, that is the reason why Paul tells, “Why are you boasting as if what you have, you did not receive from God.” The world is like that. The world always exalts talent. And when you don’t have talent, it just uses you and it throws you. After you don’t have talent, nobody even sees you. One of the reasons why many people don’t want to retire from professional sport. You know why? Because they’ve been used to that attention. Roger Federer is apparently going to retire from all forms of professional tennis. One of the most difficult decisions for him to do. Why is it difficult? What have you not got? 20 Grand Slams. So much of money. For the rest of your life, your generations can be happily satisfied with whatever you have earned but why do you hold on to that? You know why? Because you don’t want people to forget you and you know it very well. We all live in that moment. When you disappear from the scene, people forget you very easily. “Who is Roger?” We don’t know. How many of you remember Michael Stich? Anybody remembers? Nobody remembers Michael Stich. Nobody remembers. How many of you remember Michael Chang? We know John McEnroe because he comes to the commentary box. We know Jim Courier because he comes to the commentary box. How many of you know Marat Safin? Forgotten. He was the only guy who beat Federer in an Australian Open. He won his Grand Slam. Nobody remembers. People know that the glory of this world is fading away. Therefore, they want to hold on to it. So, that’s how the world is because world exalts talent and after that, they know it’s fading away. But He says, “When you have been called into the ministry or any position, don’t ever exalt yourself.” And therefore, he tells Timothy,

### **2 Timothy 2:25-26**

**<sup>25</sup> in humility, correcting those who are in opposition...**

That’s a position. That’s an attitude. Let this attitude be in you which is also in Christ Jesus.

***...if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,***

So, you are speaking the truth but how are you speaking? With humility. There’s an appeal. Yes, there is authority but there is humility. See, humility is not weakness. No. Jesus was the most humble Man on planet earth who ever walked but He had authority. Even the servants of the Pharisees came back and said, “No man spoke like this Man.” They said, “What kind of a teaching is this, with authority, that even the demons tremble?” He was speaking with authority but He was humble. He was pleading. He was beseeching. There was something of Him which was appealing to people and they resisted and detested that, especially the Pharisees. So,

**<sup>25</sup> in humility, correcting those...**

Why? This is important.

***...if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,<sup>26</sup> and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.***

Everybody in this world have been taken captive by the devil to do his will. In other words, they have submitted their will to the devil. That’s what it means, essentially. God has to grant them repentance. So, speaking the truth in love is absolutely impossible. It’s not just difficult unless God gives us grace to properly represent Him. Grace comes only to the humble and to be humble, God has to humble us. Not humiliate us. Of course, sometimes, He does that too. Actually, He doesn’t do that.

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We get humiliated because our pride and our ego is hurt. See, the guy who takes the lowest position, what's it for him? Nobody says, "Ant, why are you proud?" Nobody says that, right? But Scripture says, "*Go to the ant, you sluggard and consider her ways and be wise.*" Nobody says that the ant is powerful. No. But ant has got power. If become as small as an ant. It's very interesting. It says, "It's very difficult for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. It is easy for a camel to go through the eye of the needle." What a comparison! So, how does the camel go through the eye of the needle? The needle is not going to become big. The camel has to become small. But the logic here is – the camel can become as small as a needle but not a rich man. Wow! In other words, it takes a lot of breaking for a rich man, who is rich in all his achievements, to really humble himself and God has to do that. That's exactly what happened to even Naaman. Naaman, with all his credentials, the king was very pleased with him. He was a general of the army. God gave him a lot of success but he was a leper. And he had to hide. So, this is important to us. So, speaking the truth in love is impossible unless God gives us grace. So, God had to humble Moses. He came to a point in his life where he said, "Lord, please send somebody else. I'm not fit." It actually happens. When God calls you, you know He called you because you say, "Lord, I'm not fit for this." When you say, "Yes, Lord. I'm the one who is deserving this. I've got all the credentials." First thing He does is, He just throws you out. He had a plan on Moses' life. So, he was learned in all the ways of the Egyptians and you know what God said? "Go to the wilderness. Be quarantined for 40 years under your father-in-law's rod." It's remarkable how God humbles. It's actually very humbling to be under a father-in-law for a man of Moses' stature and with Zipporah. Because Zipporah was leading her home. He didn't even have the authority to circumcise his sons. God had to almost kill him and then, she said, "Okay! You are a husband of bloodshed to me." She throws that thing at the feet of God and God relents. It's remarkable. Remarkable things happen. So, we have to understand that God has a process and we don't escape that process. God does it for all of us in different ways. It's incredible how God can humble people. You will be surprised. You just go back into your own life where He has humbled you. You know it very clearly.

So, this is how He does it. It's impossible for us to properly represent God unless He gives us grace and only when we have received the grace of God, we also have the heart of God; we go in search for others. That is, essentially, evangelism or ministry. It's that we are sent by God. It's not that people are looking for us. No. Look at *Romans 10:13-15*. In one sense, it is that way.

### ***Romans 10:13-15***

***<sup>13</sup> For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." <sup>14</sup> How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? (Question number 1. Answer? No, they cannot call.) And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? <sup>15</sup> And how shall they preach unless they are sent?...***

The essence of evangelism or salvation begins by God sending a preacher to a set of people who are not looking for Him. That is how all evangelism has started, even in our country. Were we, Indians, looking for God? Yes, in some sense, we were looking for God but we didn't want Thomas. We killed him. He was a messenger.

***...As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"***

So, that is the essence of evangelism. People were not looking for Him but God still sends in search of the people who were not looking for Him. Because left to themselves, will they even search for God? No. It's the sovereignty of God. He has to sovereignly move in their lives, so that to even create a desire in them to seek Him. Some people say, "I was searching for God." No, you were not searching for God. God put that desire in you. None of us were searching for God. He was the One who was searching for you. And He put that desire in you so that you can seek Him. That's what I believe. Nobody in their right mind would want to serve this God because this God is absolutely holy and absolutely loving. And we don't like this kind of a God in our right mind. So, there is an extreme. We have to have the grace of God to avoid both extremes.

There was one extreme prophet. Do you know who that extreme prophet was, who held on to only one side and he didn't want the other side? Jonah. Jonah, the extreme prophet. He only held on to the justice of God. "These fellows, the Ninevites, they deserve to be killed. And why is this God sending me there? I know. He is sending me there, hoping that they will repent after hearing this message. I ain't going. And those Ninevites, they deserve to die." And look at what happens to Jonah in *Jonah 4:9*, the extreme prophet,

**Jonah 4:9-11**

***<sup>9</sup> Then God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?" And he said, "It is right for me to be angry, even to death!"***

There are a lot of angry shepherds, angry prophets, angry evangelists. It's really true. I think once he was angry. Who was angry? It was Moses. Once. He got frustrated and he said, "You! Should we bring out water?" Finished. Over. "You will not enter." At that one point, he did not represent God properly. So, he was a man under the Old Covenant. We can excuse him but how much more, we, in the New Covenant?

***<sup>9</sup> Then God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?" And he said, "It is right for me to be angry, even to death!" <sup>10</sup> But the Lord said, "You have had pity on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night. <sup>11</sup> And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left—and much livestock?"***

And that's exactly what is happening in this world. Nobody has a clue as to what is right and what is wrong. It says, "Woe to those who call bitter 'sweet' and sweet 'bitter', who call darkness 'light' and light 'darkness'." That's exactly what the world is. Nobody even knows that homosexuality is a sin, for example. I remember talking to Eric some time back and he used to tell me, "Pastor Vijay, some people in my university don't even know that homosexuality is a sin. When I say that it is a sin according to God, they say, 'what? Sin? What do you mean?' They have no idea! Their conscience has been absolutely desensitized." And we are rising up in a generation who are absolutely insensitive to sin. Absolutely. They don't know what is right and what is wrong. We are the people who have to represent God to them. So, that is the reason why it says, "When they see the love that you have for one another," what is LTD? Love That Demonstrates, Love That Delivers. "In the love that they see in demonstration." When they see the love that you have for one another, how you love one another! At the same time, you are just not compromising on the truth. No. You see that? People who cannot discern between the right and wrong. So, it's very important for us not to be on the two extremes but properly represent God. We have to be extreme towards God so that we can be balanced towards others. That is original. You can write it. You can put in your spiritual pipes and smoke it, if you want. If you want to use Art Kat's words. You have to be really extreme. You have to love God with all of your heart, all of your soul, with all of your heart so that you can truly represent people. See, only those people who have a close relationship with God will know how to represent Him to others. How do you know? That means you have to have that absolutely uncompromising relationship with God. In the sense, "Lord, there should be nothing between You and me, Lord. Absolutely nothing." That is how we will actually love others, by loving Him. Then, we will know when we have to be hard and when we have to be soft; when we have to uphold His righteousness and when we have to uphold His mercy. Both. We need the wisdom of God. Some people, you need to uphold the righteousness before you extend mercy first. Some people are already, they are grilling under the wrath of God. For them, you extend mercy. That's exactly what Paul says, "You handed that fellow over to satan now. Now, bring him back." The whole purpose of handing him over to satan is so that you can restore him. Otherwise, you will lose him also. Let that not happen. Seriously. This extreme love for God, we need to have so that we will be balanced towards others. Therefore, Jesus was extreme in His love towards His Father. And therefore, He knew how to extend love towards others, His own Blood. He would never compromise. "Who is My brother? Who is My sister? These are My brothers and My sisters." It did not mean that He did not love His mother. No. In fact, He was loving His mother by speaking that. Otherwise, He would have compromised. He would have actually not loved her. You cannot love without speaking the truth. You cannot truth without loving. It's a total balance that we need to have but only when we have this extreme love towards God, we will be able to have extreme love towards others. How do we have extreme love towards God? When we have a genuine encounter with Him and primarily, when we encounter His holiness first and then, His mercy. That's exactly what happened to Isaiah. "Woe is me." He was a man who was speaking woe to the people who are putting house to house; woe to the people who call darkness light and light darkness. Woe to those people who call bitter sweet and sweet bitter. Woe to those who mix strong drink and drink beer. Woe to those who pull sin with cords. Woe, woe, woe, woe, woe! Several woes, he pronounced. And then, he went to the temple. He had his extreme view towards those people. He is bringing out and calling out woes towards them and then, he went to the temple and then, he said, "Woe is me! I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips. I dwell among the people with unclean lips. I am just like them, Lord. I am not any better." And then comes the Seraph with the tong, with the fire from the altar. And then, he purges the iniquity. And then, He says, "Who will go for Us?" "Lord, I will go." You will keep on speaking but they will not hear. Isaiah, your ministry. How many converts will you have by the end of the ministry?" "Zero." "How long, Lord?" "Until." You see, but he has an encounter with God. And

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after he has an encounter with God, he has extreme love towards God and because he has extreme love towards God, he is able to speak the truth and properly represent God to His people. You see? Why was Paul all things to all men? “To the weak, I became like the weak so that I can win the weak. To those who are under the law, without the law. Not without the law of Christ, of course. I became all things to all people so that...” Turn to *Galatians 4:12-13*. It’s a beautiful verse.

### Galatians 4:12

***<sup>12</sup> Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I became like you. You have not injured me at all.***

That’s exactly what God became. He became like us so that we could become like Him. You need to understand, my dear brothers and sisters. So, be extreme towards God and then, you will be balanced towards others.

So, how did God demonstrate His love towards us? How did He do it? What were the steps that He took in order to win us back? Only one step – He died for us. But how did that happen? And we will look at a particular passage, a very familiar passage. We looked at it so many times and it’s found in *Romans 5:6-11*. We know this. It’s famous. Everybody knows it. We will read the whole thing and then, read a few verses at a time. Very famous. We know it. But I’m becoming a good householder, bringing out the old and the new. So, sometimes, you get the new; sometimes, you get old but hopefully, everything fresh from God.

### Romans 5:6-11

***<sup>6</sup> For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. <sup>10</sup> For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. <sup>11</sup> And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.***

So, let us look at one verse at a time. Let us look, first, at verse 6 alone. It says,

***<sup>6</sup> For when we were still without strength, in due time...***

You see, very important. Like Pastor was telling yesterday, it’s in the proper time that Joseph would reveal himself to his brothers. Not before that, not after that. Because their redemption depends upon the timing. It’s only in God’s time that He makes all things beautiful. If you try to rush before God or behind God, nothing is going to happen. “Lord, convert this fellow.” It’s not going to happen. Because actually, God is not working on that fellow; He is working on you. You don’t understand that. You are more important to God. If you are a believer, nothing will come easy. Even God’s ordained job for you will not come easy. And if God has given you a God-ordained job, to keep that job also, it’s not going to be easy. You know why? People think, “If God has promised me something, it’s going to come easily and when I get into that position, everything is going to easy – promotion 1, promotion 2, promotion 3.” No. Aiyo! It is not that God cannot give. God is more interested in you. 13 years, it took for Him to give what was promised to Joseph. 13 years. Joseph was the cat’s whiskers in his home, zealous for his father’s name. For him, it took 13 years to possess the position that God has ordained for him. How much more you and me? Don’t be in a rush for anything. Don’t rush into a position where you are not prepared for, even if God said, “One day, I’m going to use you there. I’ve called you.” No, don’t rush into it. Don’t go and show off, like Joseph, “Guys, you know, I had a dream, guys. You know what was the dream? All these big, big heaps of sheave, they were bowing. What do you think?” He was not asking for information. He went to his father also. To his father, “Papa, 12 stars and you also. What do you think?” “Hello!” God had to break that. Because as I said, a king should never exalt himself above his brothers. A prophet, like Isaiah, who was speaking on woes on anybody should not become a prophet of doom all the time. If he has to represent God, he better have encountered God. He better know what God’s heart is. So, God is after character. So, that is only the exposition of ‘in due time’. God is never going to do anything before time. He is going to wait till that point where they know that it’s time. For Jonah, it was sending a storm. Making him realize that it is God. Would he relent? “Okay, God. Let the storm stop. I will go to Nineveh.” No, no. “Throw me out. I’ll die.” God is not going to kill him. No, no, no. Death is in the hands of God. God is not going to even kill him. He is going to send a whale to follow him and the whale follows him. Three days and three nights, with all those acids and whatever, the juices that thing is secreting; he thought he was going to die. God did not allow him to die. Third night, he said, “Okay, baba. Those who run after worthless idols, forsake their own

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mercy. Lord, from the depths, I cried out.” That is when he realized. God had to wait till that point to break him. Because God knows all of us, how stiff-necked we are. 40 years for Moses. 3 and a half years for Paul. But the process is important. See, age is not a big deal for God. It took for 40 years for Moses but his strength never abated. His vision was absolutely 20-20. 6/6 and 20/20. His vision. Now, I’m 40+. I’m finding it a little difficult to read small print. I’m like, “O Lord, don’t make me realize my age.” It took him that much time. That’s just besides the point.

### ***<sup>6</sup> For when we were still without strength...***

The point is this – we have to realize that we don’t have strength. It is not that we have strength. No, we think we have strength. We have to realize that.

### ***<sup>6</sup> For when we were still without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly.***

So that He can make us strong in Him. What is this? What does it mean? ‘Without strength’ means absolutely incapable of producing in and of ourselves anything that would be acceptable and pleasing to God. That is the point. So, God has to make us realize our weakness. God has chosen the foolish things and the base and the weak things of the world to confound the strong. So, we have to become weak or rather, we should realize our weakness. That is when we really are weak. “I can do it.” Not like that, right? That is what we say, “You can do it, ra. Have confidence in yourself.” Haven’t we heard that so many times? And we came back with a zero again in the exam. You see, a classic example of this is found in Acts 3:1. We will read this particular passage. One of my favorite passages in the Bible now. It’s become one of my favorite passages in the Bible now. I should be lying otherwise. I read it several times but I was like, “Oh, it’s beautiful.”

### **Acts 3:1-3**

#### ***<sup>1</sup> Now Peter and John went up together to the temple...***

Never happened. Peter and John, going together. One fellow wanted to sit on the right and the other fellow wanted to sit on the left and one fellow got angry. Peter got angry. John wanted to sit on the left and James wanted to sit on the right. Now, they are going together. That only happens when God has really visited you.

#### ***<sup>1</sup> Now Peter and John went up together...***

It’s beautiful. They were all in one accord and then, who stood up? Peter stood up. Nobody was jostling for positions anymore. In fact, I mean, I’m amazed with John. John did not write even a single letter until the end of his life. The Gospel of John, what theologians say, “It is one of the last Gospels.” At least, 30-40 years after the first synoptic Gospels were written. He was a very senior man by the time he was writing the Gospels and when he was writing the epistles and when he was given the *Book of Revelation*. He was really a senior man in terms of age. That’s remarkable how God humbles, right? These people were jostling for positions. “God, I want to be used.” God says, “Okay, hold on. I will use you but I’ll wait.” “I’m the one who was closest to Your bosom.” “I know. I know why you were close. You were close just in case somebody would put the handkerchief. You did not want anybody to put the handkerchief there.” “That is mine.” “That is the reason why you are close to My bosom.” Any way, that’s just besides the point. Let’s move on.

#### ***<sup>1</sup> Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. <sup>2</sup> And a certain man lame...***

Who is this man? A man without strength.

#### ***...from his mother’s womb...***

That’s the representation of all of us – right from our mothers’ womb, what were we? We were birthed in sin, shaped in iniquity. So, whenever these details are given, we have to understand it properly. Holistic approach to understanding the Word of God. Don’t just look at one passage and run with it. No. Compare it Scripture with Scripture. Whenever somebody says, “Right from the mother’s womb,” this guy was born blind. Ah! Question. You have to stop there. Why is that detail given? That means it’s representing all of us. Because how does John 9 end? It says, “Do you think that we are all blind?” Who says that? The Pharisees say that. “If you would have said that you were blind, you wouldn’t have had sin. Now that you say



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that you see, your sin remains.” You see the connection between sin and blindness in one line? So, here, what is he saying? A man who is lame from his mother’s womb. A guy without strength from his mother’s womb. Unless and until somebody carries him... that is what ‘without strength’ means. He is totally dependent upon somebody outside of himself to achieve something for himself, to have anything of value in his life.

**<sup>2</sup> And a certain man lame from his mother’s womb...**

Birthered in sin, shaped in iniquity. That’s the essential idea here.

***...was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful...***

Now, this word ‘Beautiful’ is very interesting. There is some connotation to it. I didn’t want to go into the details of it but it’s very interesting. It’s, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the Gospel of peace!” The same word is used for beauty here. I just want to bring that to your attention. Maybe you can meditate upon it and make a study later on.

So, what did he do?

***...to ask alms from those who entered the temple;***

Those guys were big. And if you see, even if you see in the Muslim nations or even when you go close to the mosques, a lot of beggars and you will see that everybody who comes out of the mosque, they do a lot of alms. That is one of their righteous deeds which they think that is going to bring them proper karma and take them to the other side. The Hindus will do that and even the Muslims do that because it’s a part of their religion. Even the Jewish people also used to do it because it was considered one of the righteous deeds.

Let’s move on.

**<sup>3</sup> who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. <sup>4</sup> And fixing his eyes on him...**

Who fixed his eyes on him? Peter.

***...with John...***

What a tremendous detail over there! How are two brothers working together! It’s two by two. Two, fixing his eyes on him. When I read this, I was reminded of this; like Pastor was saying, “Whenever you go on the road, ask God for those eyes so that you can see who is in need and who is not in need.” And in the witness of two or three, everything gets established. And you had two people, filled with the Holy Spirit, fixing their eyes – John and Peter. You know what he said?

***...Peter said, “Look at us.”***

Have you ever seen anybody in Paradise Intersection, stopping the car and calling the beggar, “Come here, look at us”? Generally, what happens? The beggars are saying, “Aiyagaru, look at us and have mercy.” It’s amazing. You should see, this is an essence of Christianity.

Turn with me to *Isaiah 45:20-22*,

### **Isaiah 45:20-22**

**<sup>20</sup> “Assemble yourselves and come; Draw near together, You who have escaped from the nations. They have no knowledge, Who carry the wood of their carved image, And pray to a god that cannot save.**

I’ll tell about who that ‘God’ is, in this context.

**<sup>21</sup> Tell and bring forth your case; Yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that time? Have not I, the Lord? And there is no other God besides Me, A just God and a Savior; There is none besides Me. <sup>22</sup> “Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.**

You know it, when Peter and John are saying, “Look at us,” what are they saying? “Look at Him.” Because, “Look at us.” Spurgeon was saved when he heard this particular text and who was preaching? A layman. It was absolutely a cold day. It was a snow storm. Everybody was stayed at their home. He was going to Church. Church was very far away and he was walking and he was feeling so cold. He found some local Church somewhere and he got into the Church. And that day, the person who was supposed to preach, didn’t come. They were all praying and singing hymns and they were waiting for the guy to come. It was a snow storm. He also didn’t come. A layman, he got up and he started reading this text. After he read this text, “Look unto me,” he kept on reading several times and after that, he finished. Layman, right? He can’t preach more. But then, look at what he says. He looks at Spurgeon and this is what he says, “Young man, you look very miserable and you will always be miserable – miserable in life, miserable in death, if you don’t obey My text. But if you do obey My text, this moment you will be saved.” Then, raising his hands, he literally shouted, “Young man, look to Jesus Christ. Look, look, look. You have nothing to do but to look.” Now, the question is: when people look at us, do they see Jesus in us? What are they looking? “Look at us.” That’s the spirit of the Apostles, the Spirit of Jesus. Often, beggars look for our attention. They say, “Look at us and have mercy on us.” Here, there is an absolute reversal. Peter says, “Look at us.” Someone suddenly gave the beggar the ultimate attention because this attention would change his life. No one came to him, called him and looked at him and said, “Look at us.” That itself should have stunned that guy. And what does he do? Let’s go back.

### **Acts 3:5-6**

**<sup>5</sup> So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.**

This is exactly the problem with a lot of people. They do not know why they have what they have. The problem is just not the problem because of the situations they are in; it’s because of who they are as people. Like Pastor saying, “Naaman expected cosmetic surgery, plastic surgery but God wanted to do an open-heart surgery.” And what was this guy looking for? He was looking for silver and gold. That’s what he was looking for – money. He says, “The solution to my problem is money.” Think about it – how foolish people are! It’s a parable here. The question here that Peter is asking, “How is money going to be a solution to your problem? Is it going to make you walk?” He will say, “Oh, I don’t have to walk if I have the money.” That’s the deception of money. Look at what it says,

**<sup>6</sup> Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have...**

Because silver and gold, I do not need. That’s what it means. You see, the Apostles in the first century Church, they didn’t want silver and gold. Whenever people came with silver and gold, they said, “Put it at our feet, please.” And if anybody brought silver and gold, he said, “Why did you bring that money like this now?” They judged people, also, for giving. That is the kind of discernment that they had. That was the kind of attitude that they had towards money. This guy said, “Silver and gold, I do not have because silver and gold, I do not need.” Does our attitude show that? You may have a lot of silver and gold. That’s the reason why it tells in *1 Timothy*, “Those who are rich in this world, command them.” It’s a specific commandment. They should not put their trust in uncertain riches. It will have wings, they say. The money has wings and it will just fly off. It is true. One disease is enough for you to empty your entire bank account. And sometimes, even if you empty your entire bank account, your problem will not be solved. “It doesn’t matter how much it costs! Can you bring my so-and-so back to life?” No. What it means is that your money cannot buy you Bios – life. If your money cannot buy your Bios, how can it buy you eternal life? If your money cannot give you life on earth, how can you be so foolish to think that money can give you eternal life? And how can you be so foolish to think that you can serve mammon and also, God? “Silver and gold, I do not have because silver and gold, I do not need.” Ultimately, everything in this world is based on the equivalence to silver and gold. Even the hundred-rupee note or the thousand-rupee note that you have, what is written? “I promise to pay the bearer a sum of Rs. 2000.” That means if you go the Reserve Bank and you give the Rs. 2000 note, he has to give you Rs. 2000 worth of gold. It’s ultimately silver and gold. That’s, essentially, the value system of this world. And he says, “Look at us! We are not earthly people. We are not of this earth. We may be living on this earth but we are seated together in Christ Jesus in the Heavenly places.” Christ Jesus has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places. In heavenly places, I’m blessed. I do not even want money. And young man, you don’t need money. You know what you need? You need Him. “In the Name of Jesus Christ.”

*...but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth...*

Isn't it interesting? What a deja-vu moment for Peter! Why am I saying it is a deja-vu moment?

**Matthew 26:71-74**

***<sup>71</sup> And when he had gone out to the gateway, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth."***

And what did Peter say? "No, no, no."

***<sup>72</sup> But again he denied with an oath, "I do not know the Man!" <sup>73</sup> And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, "Surely you also are one of them, for your speech betrays you."***

And you know what Peter did?

***<sup>74</sup> Then he began to curse and swear, saying, "I do not know the Man!" Immediately a rooster crowed.***

"And you know what? I was ashamed of that Name but now, that is the Name that I need; that all I need is that Name. In that Name, I have everything."

***<sup>75</sup> And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So he went out and wept bitterly.***

**Acts 3:7-8**

***<sup>7</sup> And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.***

So, what did he do? Immediately, what does he do?

***<sup>8</sup> So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God.***

So, what do you need? When God says, "You shall worship the Lord your God with all of your strength," you know what you are saying? "Lord, I don't have that strength. I don't have it unless You give it. I don't have the strength to serve You. I don't have the strength to praise You. I don't have the strength to walk with You unless You give it." So, he jumped. So, how did this happen? In the Name of Jesus Christ, right? Look at what it says. Now, turn to,

**Acts 3:11-**

***<sup>11</sup> Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John...***

I like that. I love that. This is so important. I can just go on and on with that but I'm just going to stop. I'm going to control myself.

***...all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed.***

Then, what happens?

***<sup>12</sup> So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people...***

Now comes the moment of truth. You see the balance now. He showed mercy and he is not going to show mercy at the expense of compromising with the truth. Look at what it says,

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**...“Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?”**

And then, he says. The first thing he says,

**<sup>13</sup> The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus...**

You know what it says? The first thing, “This is because of Jesus.” Who is this God? “The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, your God exalted and glorified Jesus Christ of Nazareth.” What does it mean? In other words, he is telling, “This God that you serve exalted Jesus Christ of Nazareth.” Means, “He gave Him the same position as God.” That’s what he told, right? The entire *Book of Hebrews* is based upon that premise – Jesus was greater than the angels, first. Jesus was greater than Moses, second. Jesus was greater than Joshua, third. Jesus was greater than Aaron, fourth. Jesus is equivalent to Melchizedek, the eternal priesthood of the order of Melchizedek – without father, without mother, without beginning, without end. That is the Jesus whom God has glorified. That is the Jesus who said, “Before Abraham was, I am.” You see, one of the most difficult things for people to accept is the fact that Jesus is God.

### **Romans 9:5**

**<sup>5</sup> of whom are the fathers...**

This is talking about the Jewish people.

**...and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.**

He says. He is God. Turn with me to *John 1:17-18* (ESV). Look at this.

### **John 1:17-18**

**<sup>17</sup> For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.**

What an amazing truth! Actually, KJV says, “The only begotten Son.” ESV has a different rendering which is interesting,

**...the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.**

You know what he is saying? Remember *Daniel 7* where there was one like the Ancient of Days and there was one like the Son of Man, who came and sat next to the Ancient of Days and to Him was given Kingdom and dominion and power and for His Kingdom, there was no end? Who is that? The same God who was next to God. When we go to Heaven, it will be like an incredible thing. Ultimately, our destination is who? The Father. “No one comes to the Father except through Me.” That when we go, at least, a few people saw Jesus on earth. At least, in that generation. They all saw Jesus as Man. We will also see Jesus as the glorified Man. John, the Apostle, saw Jesus as the glorified Man on the island of Patmos but did he see the Father? Ultimately, one day, I don’t know what’s going to happen. I’m just speculating. The mystery of Trinity will, possibly, be revealed to us in some sense. I think that is the time when we will go crazy. We will not have the capacity to handle. Our brains will just be blown away to different bits (expanded, I mean) to comprehend what God is going to reveal to us; because we will not have the capacity to grasp that – the eternal God.

**<sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side...**

Who is this God? Jesus. So, Jesus Christ is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, exalted Jesus of Nazareth. Meaning, what? He has given Him the position of God. You know why? Because He humbled Himself to the point of death, God has exalted Him and given Him a Name above every other Name. The first thing He says is that, “This Jesus is God. Not just an ordinary man.”

Second. Go back to *Acts 3:13*,

**Acts 3:13**

***<sup>13</sup>The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus whom you delivered up...***

To what? To death. "You killed. You handed Him over to be killed."

***...and denied (or disowned) in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go.***

"Why? First, He is God and you handed Him over to Pilate to be killed. Why did you deny Him?"

**Matthew 27:17-18**

***<sup>17</sup>Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" <sup>18</sup>For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy.***

Why did they hand over Jesus to them? Because of envy. Why did Cain kill Abel? Because of envy. Why do we slander our brothers? Because of envy. Why do we accept bad about others? Because of envy. Let's say, for example, a guy is very talented and good and he is being used by God mightily. Suddenly, somebody will say, "You know, this person is being used by God mightily." "That person? I know him." "What about him?" "I know this, this, this about him." "Oh, is it?" Suddenly, your attitude towards that person changes. You know why? God is revealing your envy. But if you are truly happy with that brother, you know what you will do? "I don't want to hear anything bad." How easily we can be swayed! You know why? I'll tell you, my dear brothers and sisters. It's an honest confession about my heart. I don't know about your heart. If it's better than mine, it's great. I receive bad about others because I'm envious of what God has given them. This is the truth about me. Because I cannot handle it. Because of envy. "He is God and you were envious."

Third. Let's go back to Acts 3:14.

**Acts 3:14**

***<sup>14</sup>But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer...***

In other words, in your sight, a murderer was better than God. My favorite Psalm. You know what my favorite Psalm is? *Psalm 50*. One of my favorite Psalms also. *Psalm 16*, of course, is great also. *Psalm 50* is another one because it's so close to my heart, when I read it for the first time.

**Psalm 50:16**

***<sup>16</sup>But to the wicked God says: "What right have you to declare My statutes, Or take My covenant in your mouth, <sup>17</sup>Seeing you hate instruction And cast My words behind you? <sup>18</sup>When you saw a thief, you consented with him, And have been a partaker with adulterers.***

"So, when you looked at Barabbas, you said, 'he is like us. we want him; we don't want him'." It's a revealer of our heart. You know, remember James or John comes to Him (Jesus) and He says, "Master, somebody was casting out demons in Your Name and we asked him to stop." "Don't stop him. For who is not with Me is against Me and who is not with Me is against Me." "Why? You disowned Him and you asked for a murderer. Why? Why did you ask for him? Because it was a revealer of your own heart. You thought it was better to have him." Let's go back and read it further. Acts 13,

**Acts 13:15**

***<sup>15</sup>and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.***

Let's read from Matthew 27:19-26 to understand this. What did they do by killing?

**Matthew 27:19-25**

***<sup>19</sup>While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him." <sup>20</sup>But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. <sup>21</sup>The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" They said, "Barabbas!" <sup>22</sup>Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called***

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*Christ?" They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!"<sup>23</sup> Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!"<sup>24</sup> When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it."*

And you know what they said?

*<sup>25</sup> And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children."*

How hard-hearted you can be that you are ready to risk the life of the next generation because of your hard-heartedness! I remember one sister; she's a Brahmin convert; comes from a Hindu background. She got a converted and her brother was a vagabond, drunkard. She went to her mother and said, "Send Anna to Church. Send him to Church. Jesus can help him to get out of this habit." You know what she said? "Let him die a drunkard but he will never come to Christ." In other words, "Let his blood be upon me." That's the hard-heartedness.

Let's go back. Then, it says, "God raised Him from the dead for which we are witnesses." "How did we become the witness, Peter?" "Oh, we saw the resurrected Christ." That's just not the point. "We just not only saw the resurrected Christ. This resurrected Christ restored me. I, who ran away from Him and denied Him." That is a witness. "And He did not just restore me; He commissioned me. We are witnesses." See, they show an act of mercy. They display an act of mercy but at the same time, they said, "The Jesus whom you crucified." They also speak the truth but they don't speak the truth without love so that, turn to *Acts 3:16*, finally,

### **Acts 3:16**

*<sup>16</sup> And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know...*

In other words, you also do not have the strength to praise God. By faith, through Jesus Christ, you also can be made strong. Let me tell you something, my dear brothers and sisters. This is a very simple truth. Many of us don't have the strength to please God. There is only One Person who can provide us strength. You know who it is? It is God. It is impossible for us to show mercy. I'll tell you something – people who are involved in mercy ministry, they need a lot of strength. I'll show you. *1 Peter 4:10-11*. I didn't say that. Let God say it.

### **1 Peter 4:10-11**

*<sup>10</sup> As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. <sup>11</sup> If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God...*

Does he say, "With the strength that God provides?" No.

*...If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies...*

Isn't it amazing? In order to show mercy, we need strength. In order to show mercy consistently continuously, we need strength. In other words, in order to show continuous consistent mercy, we need to enjoy His mercy every day so that we can extend mercy to others. Strength in His Name. It's a very simple truth. If you are feeling powerless to please Him... we are, without God, powerless. We are impotent without God. It says, "His body was as good as dead." Who's body? Abraham's body. And the deadness of Sarah's womb. Both were dead, impotent, absolutely insufficient to produce anything of eternal consequence. God visited them. "By this time next year, I will visit you and Sarah will have a baby." Through whom? Through Abraham. They were made strong so they could have children. Bearing children, you need to have strength. Mothers need strength. That is the reason why they say, "Have babies when you are young." When you grow old, it's not easy. She's 90 years old. How can they have a baby unless and until God has visited them with strength? That is grace, the power of God.

Let's go back, now, to *Romans 5:6*. See, God visited us, right? When we were first without strength. Second,

### **Romans 5:6**

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<sup>6</sup> *For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

All those people without strength, they were all, what? Ungodly. How ungodly were we? I'll tell you how ungodly we were. Turn to *Jude 1:14-19*. It's a very interesting thing.

### *Jude 1:14-19*

<sup>14</sup> *Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, <sup>15</sup> to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."*

What is this? *Ungodly among them; about their ungodly deeds which were being done in an ungodly way; where the ungodly sins have spoken against Him.*

<sup>16</sup> *These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage. <sup>17</sup> But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: <sup>18</sup> how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.*

So, you have ungodly lusts; you have ungodly men; committing ungodly deeds in an ungodly way; they're ungodly sinners having ungodly lusts. This is how ungodly we were. It is not only that our deeds were ungodly, we were doing those deeds in ungodly ways. Boy! "How is that possible?" you will say. And we didn't just have lusts; we had ungodly lusts. And what are we? We are just not sinners; we are ungodly sinners. Meaning – are there godly sinners? Oh, yeah! See, people who are in the Kingdom are godly sinners. Ungodly sinners. Ungodly ways. That means every aspect of your life stinks of ungodliness. That's what it means. "Your lusts" actually come from the word 'desire'. You know, desire is not wrong but desires, when they go out of control, are wrong. That means if they are not godly desires... there are godly lusts for sure. The Spirit inside of you lusteth. KJV uses that word – lusteth with envy. That means there are desires which have to be godly. They have to be under the control of the Holy Spirit. And what are these desires? They have gone haywire now. You know why? Because they are ungodly sinners, committing ungodly deeds in ungodly ways. Ungodly. Everything about their life is ungodly. They stink. That's the point. And you know what God says? "I died for you when you were this. This is what I did for you on the Cross, when everything about you stank." By this time, he stinketh. That's what we were – corrupt. After some time, what happens to a corrupt person? Anything which is corrupt, if you open the fridge, it starts stinking. We became a stench in God's nostrils. That's exactly what happens. "The whole earth was corrupt," it says, "before God." Corrupt. What are we? Ungodly. And God still died for us.

Let's go back now.

### *Romans 5:7-8*

<sup>7</sup> *For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

We were just not people who were sinning; we were saved from sin. *John 8:34*,

### *John 8:34*

<sup>34</sup> *Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.*

Go to KJV.

### *1 John 5:17*

<sup>17</sup> *All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.*

You got that, right? What is the definition of sin? Anything which is unrighteous. It doesn't have the character of God. It's sin.

**1 John 3:4**

***<sup>4</sup> Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.***

**James 4:17**

***<sup>17</sup> Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.***

So, what is sin? If you do something which you are not supposed to do, it is sin. And if you do not do things which you are supposed to do, it is sin. And for believers,

**Romans 14:23**

***<sup>23</sup> But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.***

In other words, you could be sinning by eating. It is not how much you eat; it is with the attitude with which you eat. Now, think about it – I gave this example so many times. Elisha goes past the Shunammite woman's home. She says, "This man is a man of God." And often, he would go to her house and eat and drink. Not one miracle or not one Bible study. But you know what she perceives? "This man is a man of God." Just by looking at his behavior – how he eats and how he conducts himself. Can you imagine? Just you sitting there, your very presence there. I gave this example some time back. Just an example to show you how people can see who is a godly man or not. This is not to flatter anybody. I'm just giving you an example. A few years back, we had to register our trust. So, Pastor James and I, we had to go to the Registrar's Office, to get the Trust Deed registered with the Sub-Registrar. So, there is a lady over there who was to help us with the whole process. So, I went. I told Pastor James, "Pastor, you just sit. I will get the lady to do all the stuff." So, I went there and she was telling me to do. I was filling up all the forms. She got me all the forms that I needed. Everything was done. She put everything into a file like that. She says, "My fees is Rs. 500." She is an employee in the office and she says, "My fee is Rs. 500." I looked at her and obviously, I know that she's asking for a paisa. Then, I said, "Okay, my boss is here. I'll just go and ask him and come." She said, "No, no, no. Don't ask him. You give." I thought – he didn't open his mouth. He didn't do anything. How come, without saying anything, that person, she says, "Don't ask him"? And how do I look like? Not even a word!

Like yesterday, we were discussing about Art Katz. He would just sit in his cafeteria, lunch room with his colleagues. A woman came up to him and he didn't even open his mouth. She came to him and she said, "Your very presence accuses me of sin." Means – the guy is there in the cafeteria by faith. Can you stay in a position by faith like that? If you do not go to the cafeteria by faith, you are sinning. Can you imagine? If you extend that definition of sin to every state in our life, and unbelief is sin. "I am going to convict the world of sin because they do not believe in Me." That means every aspect of our lives, if it is not propelled from the Throne of God or inspired from the Throne of God, it is not an act of faith. Therefore, it is sin. Unbelief is sin. Just think about it – we do not have that. It's even our repentance, sometimes. Even our repentance, so-called repentance is not genuine. What I mean by that is this – I know a man, whether in the body or in the spirit. I don't know. He flunked his math exam and he rushed to his uncle's home and he started weeping there. That uncle looked at him, "What happened, Vijay?" Sorry, that man is Vijay. "No, Pedanaana. I got 2," and I started crying. Now, my uncle is looking at me and he says, "Aiyoo, Vijay. It's okay. Don't feel bad." "No, I flunked my exam." I'm crying. Now, I didn't reach home. So, my Pedanaana called my parents and said, "Vijay is feeling very bad. Poor fellow. He got very low marks in Math." My father asked, "What is he doing?" "He's crying." My father said, "I know why he is crying. He is not sorry because he's got very less marks in Math. He is sorry because he is going to get something else from me." See, often, even our repentance is like that. It's not from faith. Our repentance itself is sin. You know why? Because we don't repent from faith. It's not godly sorrow. It's worldly sorrow which produces grief. Judas regretted but did not have faith. His regret was a worldly regret. His repentance was a worldly repentance. It's because he did not believe in the Son of God. His repentance itself was sin. And when we were that, grace died for us. Did He look at our repentance before He died for us? No. Did He look at our godliness when He died for us? Did He look at our potential when He died for us? No. He died for us because He had to take the lack of our repentance, also, upon Himself. Because when we repent, how many of us really genuine repent? We trust in our repentance. Not in God. That is the reason why so many people, they don't have repentance; they have regret. They don't have repentance.

Let's look at the last point. Let's go to *Romans 5:9*.

**Romans 5:9-10**



## Relentless Love Of God!

***<sup>9</sup> Much more than, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. <sup>10</sup> For if when we were enemies...***

First, we were without strength. Second – we were ungodly. Third – we were sinners. And finally, I think this is the most painful thing for God – we were His enemies. Now, whether God was our enemy or we were the enemy of God, I think it was mutual here in this case. I don't know. I don't want to read too much into the text but I just want to look at one place. I think God was our enemy. Why was He our enemy?

### ***James 4:3-4***

***<sup>3</sup> You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. <sup>4</sup> Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?...***

Like Pastor was saying yesterday, we are all harlots, adulterers and adulteresses. And because we were adulterers and adulteresses, we were enemies and yet, Christ died for us. And how did He reconcile us to Himself? Do you want to see the picture of it? *Hosea 3*. This is the Gospel according to Hosea.

### ***Hosea 3:1-4***

***<sup>1</sup> Then the Lord said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery..."***

Can you imagine this? So graphic! God is telling Hosea. 'Hosea' also comes from the Hebrew word 'Hoshe', where it means – Yahweh is my salvation. Hoshea, all these have equivalent roots. 'Yahweh is my salvation' – this is a picture of Jesus Christ.

***... "Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery..."***

In other words, this lady is not interested in her God. She is literally sleeping with somebody else. And God calls who? Hosea, a type of Christ.

***...who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery...***

Let me tell you something – many lovers. You know, it says in *Jeremiah*, "A lot of people are harlots. They get paid for their harlotry but you, you pay your lovers to sleep with you. Under every green tree, under every stone, you played the harlot. Every time people get raisin cakes for Christmas, now, I get scared. Cakes full of raisins. You know what raisin stands for? A person who makes a Nazirite vow. He is not supposed to drink wine. He is not even supposed to eat raisins. Why? He's saying, "I'm holy, consecrated to God." That's what you said, Israel. You said, Israel. You are saying that you are totally consecrated to Me. Now, you know what you are doing now? You love the raisin cakes of the pagans and you are not even interested in Me. And you would continue that unless I send a prophet like Hosea."

***<sup>2</sup> So I bought her for myself...***

That means she's being sold now. She is being sold. That means nobody wants her anymore.

***<sup>2</sup> So I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver, and one and one-half homers of barley.***

You know what it means? It means, "Literally, I emptied everything for you from My pockets to buy her back." Completely. "How much?" "She's 15 shekels." "How much do I have?" Like Doctor Richard was saying, "I have money in all the different places." Yeah. That's exactly what Hosea did. "How many shekels? 15 shekels? Let me see. Oh, I've got only 5 shekels. Let me just go back home. 5 shekels is there. Maybe, 2 shekels over here; 2 shekels over here." He searched his entire home and he sold everything that he had, he went and he brought her back to himself.

***<sup>3</sup> And I said to her, "You shall stay with me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man—so, too, will I be toward you."***

But what did she do?

***<sup>4</sup> For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim.***

Stop there. We were fooling around with many lovers. We were adulterers and adulteresses. We were enemies of God. We were finding satisfaction is something else other than God. And God said, "When you were My enemy..." It says, "Jealousy is a husband's jury."

**Proverbs 6:34-35**

***<sup>34</sup> For jealousy is a husband's fury; Therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance. <sup>35</sup> He will accept no recompense, Nor will he be appeased though you give many gifts.***

No way. Sorry. But on the other hand, "I have brought you to myself and I said, 'Don't be a harlot. Love me just as I'm going to love you'." Therefore, in *Jeremiah 2:2-8*,

**Jeremiah 2:2-4**

***<sup>2</sup> "Go and cry in the hearing of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the Lord: "I remember you, The kindness of your youth, The love of your betrothal, When you went after Me in the wilderness, In a land not sown. <sup>3</sup> Israel was holiness to the Lord..."***

Meaning, "You belong to Me."

***...The firstfruits of His increase. All that devour him will offend; Disaster will come upon them," says the Lord.'***"

Meaning – "You touch her. She is My girl. You are gone."

***<sup>4</sup> Hear the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob and all the families of the house of Israel. <sup>5</sup> Thus says the Lord: "What injustice have your fathers found in Me, That they have gone far from Me, Have followed idols, And have become idolaters?"***

That's the heart of God. He is crying out to all of those people and He says, "You were an enemy like this to me. You were not only without strength; you were not only ungodly; you were not only a sinner; you were absolutely unfaithful to Me and still, I died for you. That is how much mercy I showed you. I showed you mercy not because I was unjust in not showing My wrath on you; I took that wrath upon Myself."

Let's go back to *Romans 5:9*,

**Romans 5:9-11**

***<sup>9</sup> Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath...***

Whose wrath? Jealousy is a husband's fury.

***...through Him.***

*No one comes to the Father except through Him.* We always give thanks to God for you through Jesus Christ. Question is: we know all this, right? God has showed us this kind of demonstration of His love. Do we still have any inhibition about our devotion to God? You see, these are all truths which are objective but we have to experience in our own lives, subjectively. These are all objective truths but unless and unless we experience it in our own lives, we will not love God with all of our hearts. See, the ultimate result is this. Let's go the next verses,

***<sup>10</sup> For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. <sup>11</sup> And not only that, but we also rejoice in God...***

ESV says, "We joy in God,"

*...through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the (atonement, the redemption or the) reconciliation.*

Now that we were reconciled to God, you know what we begin to do? We begin to enjoy God. We enjoy Him. There is a powerful verse in *1 Peter* and I will end with that. *1 Peter 1*. Look at this. This is a beautiful verse. How do we enjoy God?

**1 Peter 1:5-9**

*<sup>5</sup>who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>6</sup>In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, <sup>7</sup>that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, <sup>8</sup>whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, <sup>9</sup>receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.*

He says, “You didn’t see Him but you still love Him.” You know what’s the picture that comes to my mind? Rebekah and Eliazer are having a conversation. Has Rebekah ever seen Isaac? No. And even as Eliazer is speaking about Isaac, she is longing to see him. She has never seen him and one day, she looks at him; he comes half-way down to which place? Beer-Lal-Rohi. That is where Hagar gets her drink. Isaac is there half the way and she looks, “Who is that man?” She has never seen him. But one day, she saw and therefore, you know what we do?

**1 John 3:2-3**

*<sup>2</sup>Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. <sup>3</sup>And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

You understand? What is he saying? He is saying, “Now that you know that God died for you...” who died for you? It was God who was crucified. It was just not Jesus. It was God who took the wrath of God upon Himself. We were saved from His wrath. Why? Because He took the wrath. God took the wrath of God upon Himself and therefore, He died for us when we were ungodly. Without strength, we were sinners and enemy. Therefore, what is that we have? We rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Now, you know what? Our entire purpose is – “Lord, You and You alone. You are my delight. I want to know You. I want to join You.” *Rejoice in the Lord always and again, I say, rejoice!* Nobody else can give me satisfaction other than You. I have tasted You. And all other things in this world, all the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to Your Blood. You know why? Because I saw Him – *see from His hands, head and feet; sorrow and love flow mingled down. Did e’er such love and sorrow meet nor thorns compose so rich a crown. So, were the whole realm of nature mine were an offering far too small? Love, so amazing, so divine demands my soul, my life, my all.*

Let’s pray.

**Closing Prayer:**

*Father, we don’t have an excuse for not giving You our everything and I pray, Lord Jesus that even as we spend time in Your presence in these days that You will minister sufficient of Your Spirit into our lives and begin to work Your love in us. if any man loves the world,” Your Word says, “the love of the Father is not in him.” We want that love, Lord. We cannot manufacture it in our own selves and therefore, I pray, Lord, in these coming days, Father, we want to know Your love. We want to experience Your love. We want to enjoy Your love. Father, enable us, therefore, to understand who You are truly in a more complete way in the days to come. We thank You, Father. We praise You. We give You glory. For in Jesus’ Name, Amen.*