

Father, we just come to You in the Name of Jesus. Yes, Lord, there is no other name, under heaven or in the heavens, on the earth, nowhere in all this world except the name of Jesus. No other name has salvation. No other name has deliverance. In no other name, there is healing. In no other name, there is satisfaction. Every other god will just deceive. There is only one God, who gave Himself for us. Thank You Father for Your Son. Thank You, Lord that when we were yet sinners, when we were without strength, ungodly and Your enemies, You sent Your Son to die for us. We just want to thank You. We praise You. We worship You. Even as we now meditate upon Your Word, speak to our hearts. For You are good. Your Word forever is established in the heavens. Your Word reveals how good You are, that even Your judgments, which might seem harsh to the natural man, it is an expression of Your goodness. For whatever You do is good. We just want to thank You, Father. Therefore, even as we now meditate upon Your Word, I pray Father that we will understand Your ways, we will know who You are. Anoint us even in the hearing and speaking of this Word. For in Jesus' Name, Amen.

I want to thank God once again for this opportunity. Thank you, all the brothers who are praying for all of us here. Even as we spend these days in the presence of the Lord that God will continue to speak to us; He will continue to anoint us, feed us with His Word, feed us with His manna. There is fatness and strength and pleasure only in His Word. This morning, once again we will look to His Word and we will look at first, *Colossians 3:1-4*.

Colossians 3:1-4

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

NIV will use the words, *set your hearts on things which are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.*

²Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.³For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

One of the reasons why we should set our hearts and minds on things above is because we no longer live; if indeed we have been dead and buried and raised with Christ Jesus, if indeed we are living in the reality of our baptism, we have this confession that my heart and my mind are not here on earth, it is set on things above. I will not gravitate to the things, which are on earth.

⁴When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

So this is what we have been trying to do to, all of us including me- to be able to change the way we think; be transformed in renewal of our mind that we will be transformed into the way Christ thinks (God thinks), that our hearts and minds will be focused on the things of God and the thoughts of God. He says, *"My ways are not your ways, my thoughts are not your thoughts. As the heaven is high above the earth so are my ways and my thoughts."* So, if you want to have those heavenly thoughts, that we will have our vantage point not from earth, not looking upwards but looking downwards, our vantage point will be from the heavenly vantage point. Therefore, we will be able to see things the way God sees things, even on earth.

Look at what Paul has to say, in *Philippians 3:18-19*. Superb verses, which have deep meaning! We have looked at these verses so many ways, but look at one more time.

Philippians 3:18-19

¹⁸For many walk, of whom I have told you often,

It is our walk, which is important. *Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall rise up on wings like eagles. They shall run and not grow weary. They shall walk and never faint.* First, we fly. That's exactly what salvation does; God brings us out of Egypt on eagle's wings. Then after a while we start running and slowly step-by-step, we start walking with God. It's our walk! Enoch walked with God. That means it's not as dynamic, as instantaneous as our deliverance from out of Egypt. We were brought out of Egypt in one day. When we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, we were brought out of

darkness into His light. Then we ran. We just started going to Church every day. We were like little babies, “Give me milk!” (For 6 months, I don’t know.) We drank up all the milk that we could.

But then began our walk. Every time we prayed, we got our answers, right? God was like, “Okay. You are small baby. Now every time you pray, I will give you answer. Not an issue!” I brought you out on eagle’s wings and I immediately gave you answers like that. You go there and testify and that guy gets converted and you say, “Hallelujah, Jesus!” You have a problem in your finances and you pray, “Lord, help me out” and God immediately answers. Then after a few days begins the walk. That is the reason why it says *Enoch walked with God*. It says- *Noah walked with God*. 120 years! He had to build the ark according to the specifications that God had shown him. That is a walk, the walk of faith, which is step by step.

God is not going to show us the next step before we take the first step. We know the old Chinese proverb – a journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. God is not going to show next step until we finish our first step, the first obedience. Christianity is not ‘seeing and then I will believe’. No! You believe and you will be shown. “What Lord, should I do?” says Saul of Tarsus. He says, “Go and it will be told what you should do.” So, radical conversion can happen. A tremendous walk with Jesus! The prayers that have been answered in your life and immediate deliverance is taking place but after a while begins a walk. Paul is coming to this point and he says, this walk is very important my dear brothers and sisters because it is a long obedience in one single direction. Most of the times, it’s in the little things, consistency in the little, little things in our lives. That is what ‘walk’ signifies.

In this walk, because we don’t have those instantaneous experiences when we first came to the Lord and we are looking for that, and we say, “Lord, those days, I used to pray and You would answer. Now what is going on, Lord? I have to fast and pray for 21 days to get a revelation!” First time when we said, “we will not defile ourselves with the food, which comes from the king’s table, immediately You granted us favor.” Immediately, right? Favor granted by the master of the eunuchs! “Immediately You answered. We were found ten times better. The first dream that you gave to Nebuchadnezzar, we just came together, prayed and you gave us the answer the next day. But now if I have to get a revelation, I have to fast 21 days?” That’s walk! In that walk, because it is not instantaneous, there is a temptation for us to get deceived.

I remember, some time back, somebody sent me an animation of a cross. This guy is bearing his cross and walking and finally he says, “Lord, it’s too much to bear!” And he says, “Okay. I have an idea. Maybe I should cut it off.” He cuts off the bottom of the cross. Now it becomes a little lighter and so he walks and walks and walks. He says, “Master, it is too heavy for me to bear. Can I just cut it off a little more?” And he cuts off the cross little more. He keeps doing that. At the end of the journey, there is a chasm and he sees all those believers, who have been carrying those big, big crosses coming and the moment they see the chasm, they put the cross and they walk on the cross and get onto the other side. This guy, his cross has become short. I thought it was fantastic.

That’s what happens. Sometimes, it could become heavy and you say, “Lord, where are You?” It’s a walk! 120 years, Noah had to consistently keep building and be at his post, be a preacher of righteousness. *He was moved by godly fear, warned of the things to come, things not yet seen, he built an ark for the saving of his family* and he was called a preacher of righteousness. 120 years, he didn’t see any results in his ministry but he, yet, walked and he finished his walk. In that process, he could have said, “Lord, what’s going on? Maybe, I should just change my doctrine a little bit.” It’s not going to work. It’s a walk!

So, he says,

Philippians 3:18-19

¹⁸ For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping...

Paul is looking at these so called ‘believers’ now,

...that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

They have become the enemies of cross of Christ. They are not the enemies of Christ. We looked at it so many times. Everybody loves Jesus. “Do you love Jesus?”

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“Of course!”

“What about the Cross?” That’s the problem! Now, he defines certain very interesting characteristics of these people who have become the enemies of the cross. He chose 4 things in verse 19.

¹⁹ whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things.

Four things are mentioned. First thing mentioned is – who their God is.

Second thing mentioned is – what their glory is.

Third thing mentioned is – what their mind-set is.

And fourth thing mentioned is – what their end is, their destination.

We need to understand. Always, we need to ask ourselves every moment when we are walking with the Lord, “Who is my God?” Second, “What or who is my glory?” Like David says,

‘My glory and the lifter of my head, My glory and the lifter of my head, For thou O Lord art a shield for me My glory and the lifter of my head.’

He says, he identifies his glory with his God. He says, “Apart from You, Lord, I don’t have any glory.” That’s what he says in *Psalms 16*.

Psalms 16:1-2

Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust. ² O my soul,

Soul is essentially your mind, your emotions, your will, etc.

² O my soul, you have said to the Lord, “You are my Lord, My goodness is nothing apart from You.”

“You are my glory; You are the lifter of my head.” Meaning, I will never lift up myself. That’s what we looked at, yesterday, in *Psalms 75*. It says, *“Promotion neither comes from the east or the west; promotion comes from God.”* He says, “I put one person down and I lift one person up.” Who is the person who is doing all these things? It is God who does it. So, he says, “Don’t try to ever lift yourself up because the temptation is to lift yourself up.” That is the reason why it says, *“Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and He will exalt you in due time.”*

So, who is your God? What is your glory? How is your mind-set and therefore, what is your destination? So, who your God is determines what your glory is. What your glory is determines what your mind-set is. What your mind-set is determines where you are ending up. For example, if your god is success in this world or a relationship or whatever it is, (I am just giving you an example, which is applicable across the planet to every person; especially men have this god called ‘career’ - that is your god), what is your glory? Success! “What will my peers think about me?” So, when we are studying in the university, “This is I want to do. This is where I want to go.” Ultimate destination is United States of America, generally for all! If you are not going there, your destination is not that, you are crazy.

So, your god, which is career and success is your glory. That means your peers will say, “You are very successful in what you are doing.” Then, your mind-set is – “I have to do whatever it takes to go to that destination.” For example, if you have to achieve that in your life, what do you do? You go through the grind, right? You already start thinking. Like Pastor keeps telling, your body is where your mind has taken you first. For example, if I have to reach movie theater, I should start thinking about the movie. I should plan accordingly. Ultimately, after having done all things, I will end up there. It’s a sum total of all the things that I have thought.

Therefore, your god determines your glory; your glory determines your mind-set; and your mind-set determines your destination. Therefore, what you are and where you are right now is a sum total of what your glory was, what your god was and what your mind-set was. Don’t be surprised why you are here today in whatever position you are in, spiritually speaking.

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You made a set of things. It's what we call as 'deterministic processes'. There is nothing random even in spiritual terms. It is a series of choices that you have made according to the god, according to the glory and according to the mind-set and therefore, you chose that trajectory and therefore, you are in this position right now. All of us, we need to constantly keep asking: the position I am in right now, is it the position where God would want me to be? Is He pleased with this position I am in? Spiritually speaking or whatever it is! So, these four things you need to keep in mind, my dear brothers and sisters. What we are doing in these days is hoping that God will be your God.

In this case, he says, "Their god is their belly." Stomach! What does 'stomach' mean? It means satisfaction, what satisfies you. I mean, food may not satisfy you. What does 'stomach' essentially mean? Anything which makes you satisfied! For example, let's say, two children are playing in the yard. Mother keeps telling, "Come on, guys. It's time for lunch." "Ma, we are not hungry." They are playing because they are so engrossed in their play. They are playing and playing and playing. Ma says, "Come on, guys. It's time for lunch." "No, Ma, we are not hungry now. We are playing." They keep on playing. After a while, Ma says, "No! You have to finish your lunch and then you can play." "Okay, Ma!" They have come to the dining table now and they just finish up the entire food, which is on the table. What has happened? They were satisfied with something else.

Stomach implies satisfaction. It was not that they were not hungry. They were hungry but they didn't know it because something else occupied their mind. Sunder Krishnan gave this interesting anecdote. This is what he said when he talked about 'expulsive power of competing affection'. It means the children were so engrossed in their play, they didn't realize they were hungry. Mama said, "Stop it there now. Come here. Have your lunch." So, the moment they come to the table, they just finish up whatever is on the table. They didn't realize how hungry they were. Do you know why? It's because something else was satisfying them. Their god is their belly. What is giving you ultimate satisfaction is your God! Do you understand? *Out of your belly shall flow rivers of living water.* Judas, when he hung himself, his entrails came out. What satisfied him was money. Money was his god. God is their belly. Even in the ministry, for that matter, our god could be - 'how many people are watching us online?' For example, we had a recent milestone on our GTC channel, 10,800 views already for a channel, which is like 10 or 15 days old! God is their belly. Satisfaction!

Philippians 3:19

whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—

They don't realize, in the sight of God, they are actually naked. Isn't it interesting? When Adam and Eve covered themselves with fig leaves, they were absolutely comfortable with one another. "You have got your fig leaves, I have got my fig leaves. We are so nice! What designer fig leaves!" But the moment the presence of God comes, what do they do? They hide and they say, "I was afraid because I was naked." How come you didn't realize, both of you? It's because you were interested in each other's opinion. Opinion means glory. 'Doxa' means opinion. For glory, Greek word is 'doxa'. So, you were happy and content in each other's opinion. That is the reason why Paul says, "If you compare yourself with yourself, you are a fool." The ultimate comparison is with that tried precious stone, the complete stone. Who is that complete stone? Jesus! The topper! He is the topper of the millennium!

I told you, right? Whenever a topper comes into your class, you look like a fool. I remember, so many times, it used to happen to me. We were in a research team and we were working really very hard and we were getting results. Four months of hard work and we got few results. We showed it to the professor. He was also happy and gave us a small hike in our salary. Then, suddenly, one guy from another country comes. He is a mathematics Olympiad, silver medalist. Do you know what he does? He comes and writes equation like that and every day, he is getting results. A topper has come! We were working for 3-4 months and getting small results and this fellow was getting results every day. How will we look in the sight of the professor? Like fools! A topper has come; we are fools there now.

That is exactly what happened when Jesus entered into the scene of the Pharisees. The topper of topper called Nicodemus was looking at Him and he says, "Boss! This guy! What is going on here? *We know You are a man sent from God. Unless God is with You, You can't do these miracles.*" An amazing thing is this. Jesus is the topper for sure. But no topper will say to the professor, "Professor, everybody should get 100 marks. Let My 100 marks go to them." Professor will say, "Those guys don't deserve it." He says, "I will do one thing. You first give them off 100 marks. What I will do is I will work along with them and by the end of the semester, they will also get 100 marks. Is that okay with you?" Any student will do that? No student will do that. But Jesus did that. He said, "Father, first give them 100. Declare them righteous, just as if they have never sinned. Then,

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I will do something. I will work with them and slowly, perfect them and make them grow in My righteousness.” Isn’t that amazing? That is the reason why our ultimate glory comes from God and God alone.

Their glory is their shame. Why? Because they were comparing themselves with themselves. The moment you compare yourselves with yourselves and you don’t compare yourselves with God, you are absolutely gone. What does Scripture say in *Romans 3*? It says, “*Let God be true and let every man a liar.*” It’s not that people are speaking lies but when you compare yourself with God, you are a lie. Do you understand what I am saying? When you compare yourself with God, you are an absolute lie. So, we don’t compare ourselves with others.

It says, “Their glory is their shame.” Where is their mind? Their mind is set on earthly things. It’s a fleshly mind! They are set on earthly things. “*Whoever lives according to flesh cannot please God.*” That means they are always constrained by senses. Sight means senses, anything which is sensual. That is the reason why James will say, “The wisdom, which is from above is different from the wisdom, which is from beneath.” The wisdom, which is from beneath, is first earthly. Why is it ‘earthly’? It’s because it is connected with the senses. Because it is connected with senses, it is also demonic. The ultimate source of that wisdom is from the demons.

Where is our mind-set, therefore? The question, therefore, today, we need to ask is: who is our God? What is our glory? How is our mind-set? Where are we heading? What happens is like yesterday, Pastor was talking about – we have so many people in the last days, who will try to take us away from that trajectory because it is a walk. It’s a long walk! It is not just one-day walk; you need to be consistent. You need to be doing same things over and over and over again. For example, we started off 12 days back. When we started off, we were so excited with camera and the telecast and everything but we have finished ten days. “Now, do we have to do this?”

¹⁹ whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things.

So, what we are doing again? To reiterate it over and over again, we are trying to change our mind-set. Our mind is set on certain things. When the mind is set, the body is set. The older you grow, the difficult it is to change the mind. When you are tender, it’s easy. So, may the Lord give us tender spirits and tender minds and tender hearts so that our affections and everything can be molded. Therefore, we need a tremendous anointing of the Holy Spirit over our lives. It’s not easy!

So, we talked about false prophets yesterday. What do false prophets do? They take us away from that path, path that God has ordained for us. Slowly bringing deceptive means, they entice us with fleshly and temporal things, which do not profit. Therefore, it says,

Deuteronomy 32:28-29

²⁸ “For they are a nation void of counsel,

What is counsel? *Blessed is the man, who walketh not in the counsel of ungodly.* There was a counsel of Ahithophel, which people thought was like an oracle of God but you know where it led Absalom to. The counsel which is full of bitterness and anger!

²⁸ “For they are a nation void of counsel,

Therefore, we need counsellors, at least two because ‘multitude of counsel’ meaning, minimum of two. You don’t need one counsellor; we need ‘counsellors’.

In multitude of counsellors, there is safety. It says, “Whenever you go to war, you need to have counsellors around you. The problem is there are so many counsellors in these last days. How do you know, which is the counsellor, who is from God and which is the counsellor, who is not from God? I will tell you something. Every counsellor, who confronts your flesh is a counsellor from God, who will challenge you to change and think on spiritual things is a counsellor from God. Because there are multitude of counsellors. We are a generation where we go to counsellors. There is marriage counsellor, there is career

counsellor, there is academic counsellor or sports trauma counsellor. If that fellow is going through failure, he goes to a psychiatrist. The world is full of counsel and counsellors. So, who is your counsellor?

²⁸ “For they are a nation void of counsel, Nor is there any understanding in them. ²⁹ Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, That they would consider their latter end!

I hope they have this understanding. This is the way that they are going, where will they end? Do they know it? I hope they know it. I hope they have the wisdom. I hope they have sufficient kind of counsellors, who will direct them and keep them on that straight and narrow way. That is the reason why the disciples asked Jesus, “Is it possible, Lord, that only a few will be saved?” Do you know what Jesus says? “*Strive to enter through the narrow path.*” Matthew 7 will say, “*Broad is the way to destruction and many will find it.*” Luke 13 will say, “*Strive to enter into the narrow path.*” What does ‘strive’ mean? Agonize to enter into the narrow path. It is an agony. It is an agony for the flesh, not for the spirit. *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.* We delight in the law of God after the inner man, but there is another law which is fighting the law of the Spirit – the law of sin and death.

So, that is what we are attempting all these days so that our minds will be focused on that straight and narrow path so that we know our latter end, like Paul. “*I fought the fight, I kept the faith, I finished my race.* Now, what is waiting for me? A crown of righteousness!” He knows certainly of his latter end. He knows where he is heading. Peter also says, “I am putting up this tent so that I can receive a tent from above.”

This morning, we need to ask ourselves – what are those paths? Who are those people who will take us on those paths? Who are those people who will keep us on those paths? All these things are important.

I am showing you few verses, then we will jump into today’s word. To set up the premise—

1 Timothy 6:20-21

²⁰ O Timothy!

This is Paul, like Pastor was saying, “I charge you!”

²⁰ O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust,

That means Paul was not a very expressive man; not very emotional guy. Whenever he says, “O Timothy!”, we have to really take heed. What’s going on? Do you know what ‘guard’ actually means? Fortify! Means, put barricades around your heart so that lies will not penetrate into you. Lot of people, they have a barricade of lies. Like Ravi Zacharias said, “Truth is often guarded with a barricade of lies.” The truth about your real condition is often guarded with so many lies. The real you, who you really are, you guard it. For example, you often go to Church or you put so much of money in the offering bag, you do a lot of religious activities, trying to guard what you really are, who you really are. But here, on the other hand, he is telling Timothy, “Timothy, now I know you are a true son in faith. I know your heart. I know your tears. I know your faith. Even when I am often reminded of your tears, I only praise God. (He tells in 2 Timothy), I know the faith that is in you was first found in your grandmother and your mother and it is now also found in you.” He says, “*O Timothy, guard what was committed to your trust.*” How do you do it?

...avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge—

Today morning, Pastor was praying for all of us. He said, “We don’t need knowledge, Lord. We need to hear from You.” There is so much around, which is falsely called knowledge. By the way, this word ‘knowledge’ is translated in original KJV as ‘science’. False science!

²¹ by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace be with you. Amen.

Guard what has been entrusted to you. Guard it. Fortify it. Don’t give any place to the devil so that he would penetrate and deceive you and you stray away from that path of faith. So, we need to know the original therefore. We need to know our

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Bible. I remember brother Zac Poonen saying, “Those who do not know the Bible deserve to be deceived.” It’s a very powerful statement. We are not talking about people who do not know the Bible or who cannot read the Bible, etc. But we, who know it and God has given us all the resources, especially we, who are here in our Church, we have no excuse not knowing the Word of God. We have to know the Word of God.

We just not know the Word of God, we need to know the God of the Word hoping that one day, if somebody will say something which is false, it will disturb in your spirit. Like yesterday, about Jehoshaphat! 400 people are prophesying but he knows. Jehoshaphat had a genuine relationship with the Lord and he said, “There is some tune or something that is going wrong here.” For example, in a musical concert, the guy who is conducting the music, he knows – his mind and his ears are tuned to the original. One fellow plays one note wrong and he just looks at him and gives him a look. That’s it! He immediately falls in line. This is what we need in these last days, Lord, that kind of sensitivity! We should know the original so well that if somebody says something out of line, we, like Jehoshaphat, should say, “Is there any other fellow who can bring the Word of God? Okay. All these people are saying so many things. Great! But somehow, something is wrong somewhere.” I pray that the Lord will give us grace to know what it is. So, how do we do this? Let’s move on.

Three levels, we will talk about it.

Deuteronomy 13:1-2

“If there arises among you a prophet...

Now, think about this. A prophet means a person, who says, “I stand in God’s place. I have the Word of God. I have the prophetic word.” That’s essentially what it means. We looked at false prophets.

...“If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder,

What does he do?

...He gives you a sign or a wonder.

For example, “Peter, the Lord says, in the next one month, your breakthrough that you are looking for is coming, whatever that breakthrough is.” One month! Specific date also! “By this time!” Let’s say, for example, by April 15, 12.30 in the afternoon, this is what is going to be coming, knocking at your door. I am trying to picturize this. Whenever I read this, I just want to picturize what is going on. Then, it says,

² and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying,

Look at this. This is unbelievable! What is the essence of the sign and wonder?

...‘Let us go after other gods’...

That is the essence of the sign and wonder. He is speaking so many things. The essence of the sign and wonder is, “*Let us go after other gods.*”

Now, turn with me to Acts 2. This is when Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:37-42

³⁷ Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” ³⁸ Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

It includes all of us. Ultimately, God called all of us here. Then, it says, “He spoke so many words,” but what is the essence of those so many words?

⁴⁰ And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.”

His message was not encrypted with a sign and a wonder to take you and go after other gods but to be saved from other gods.

⁴¹ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. ⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

First, they repented of their sins. They received the message that this generation that we are living in is an absolutely untoward generation. Third, they got baptized. They said, “We are going to die to this world and we will be alive to God.” Fourth, “We will not just repent; we will not just receive the Word that this generation is an untoward generation, we will also die to this world and we will continue in these three again.” What do we do? We continue in the Apostles’ doctrine. What does the doctrine teach you? To keep you on that straight and narrow path! Repent, save yourself from this untoward generation and live in the reality of your baptism. In order to do that, the Apostles’ doctrine is given. Second, fellowship is given, a bunch of believers are going on a same path. Their destination is also same, who will encourage you on that path, not discourage you.

...in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

So, seven things, they did. What is that? First, repent. Second, receive the Word. Third, get baptised. Continue receiving the Word and live in reality of these three things again. Have fellowship, break bread and continue in prayer.

But what was the essence of the false prophets? The encrypted verse was, “Let us go to this world.” They are taking you back to the gods of this world.

‘Let us go after other gods’—which you have not known—‘and let us serve them,’

See, what does it matter? Let me tell you something. The object of your worship will change. The word ‘serve’ here comes from the Hebrew word ‘abaad’ which means worship and service both. “Let us save ourselves from this untoward generation and serve our Lord Jesus Christ.” That is the reason why let us turn to *Matthew 4*. This is completely from the demonic realm. These kinds of doctrines which take you away from God are completely from satan. That is the reason why it says, “*The wisdom is earthly, sensual and demonic.*” It is coming right from the pits of hell and we have to recognize that, because that’s the reason why in *1 Peter 4* says, “In the last days, people will stray from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy and having their conscience seared.” Do you understand what I’m talking about, my dear brothers and sisters? This is so important! So, in *Matthew 4* what are they showing? What are the false prophets showing? This is exactly what is coming from the pits of hell.

Matthew 4:8-11

⁸ Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

You see that? What did I say? Who is your god? What is your glory? Where is your mind-set? See how dangerous this is, demonic doctrine right from the pits of hell? Who is your god? What is your glory? And he showed Him all the kingdoms of this world and its glory. This is the Son of God. One day, the kingdoms of this world are going to become the kingdoms of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and all the glory of this world is just going to be bashed into pieces and it’s going to burn. So, what are they leading us into? Like Pastor says, “There is one called as ‘law’ and there is another called as ‘license’.”

⁹ And he said to Him, “All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ ” ¹¹ Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

Galatians 4:8-11

⁸ But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods.

See, there is one God and there are gods. Let me tell you something – “Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God is one – and He is the God who can give you ultimate satisfaction.” If you try to find your satisfaction in any other thing, it’s like all in one. Who’s all in one? Jesus. We sing that song, right? “You’re my strength when I am weak, You are my all in all.” I hope we know what it means by all in all. For example, I want ultimate satisfaction in my work, “You work for Me and you’ll be ultimately satisfied.” Yesterday, we were looking at the life of Apostle Paul. It says, “Paul was involved in the Word of God.” That used to give him the ultimate satisfaction because he was working for God. God, was his god and he was serving Him. If you do not serve God, then you have to be having several other gods to satisfy you—god of pleasure, god of finances, god of education. So, when you send your children to Chai-Na (Chaitanya, Narayana) on Sunday instead of Church, you’re worshipping the goddess ‘dash’, and not God, whoever that dash is. Now, we cannot say anything since we’re online. That is your god. Beauty is your god and cosmetics? The word ‘cosmos’ means order out of chaos. There is only one person who can bring order out of chaos. Otherwise, you need cosmetics. I think the word ‘cosmetica’ is from the word ‘cosmos’, order out of chaos, order out of whatever chaos you’ve created for yourself. This surgery, plastic surgery, no surgery, my goodness! How much people spend on external looks! They’re not gods by nature. They’re not gods. Like Pastor was saying, “This glory is going to fade away.” But the ultimate industry is the cosmetic industry, you know that? So much of money people spend on cosmetics. By nature, they’re not god. How much money people spend on perfumes to get rid of their BO. See?

⁹ But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God

This is actual Christianity, where you not only know God, but you are also known by God. It’s not just that you know the Prime Minister Modi, but Prime Minister Modi knows you. See the difference between the two. Everybody knows Prime Minister Modi, but does he know you? That is the important thing. That is the game changer. I know IG. Does IG know you? Everybody on the road can claim that, right? You’re going on the road and the traffic police stops you. Nowadays, if you do that, they’ll give two more extra and later, they’ll tell you ‘sorry’ also. That is besides the point. The point here is this – you know God and you are also known by God. That is the reason why it says, “The Lord knows who are just.” “The Lord know those who are His.” It says in *2 Timothy 2:19*, “But let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.”

...how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements...

This word ‘elements’ has two other renderings in the Greek; it means principles. One man of God, in his study (I will tell you his name later) when he was studying the *Book of Galatians*, talks about those things. Elements mean principles. Some people have principles as their god. What is their principle? Green Peace or Blue Cross (dog is the god there) D-O-G is G-O-D there. Where has the municipality taken them? They’re all gone. Instead of that, we’ve been taken. It’s a fantastic thing! The Blue Cross! We talk about the Blue Cross in Hyderabad. You should see the west. In the west, they write their will to their dog. They write their will to their python, their pet. It’s unbelievable how things have changed! You’ve taken away your eyes from the real God. Now, you made every god into an image – “*creeping things, beasts and men, because you’ve exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator who is blessed forever,*” says Paul. What are you turning back to? You’re turning back to those weak and beggarly elements, principles. For example, feminism is a principle. For what? Okay, you liberate all the women and they end up in hell. So, what have you liberated them from? You’ve led them to bondage. We have to alleviate people from poverty. That’s fantastic. That’s the principle and people give their lives to principles which do not profit. And other translations, elements, means things with which all these things are made. And Peter talks about the same thing. When Jesus comes, the elements will burn with a fervent heat. Whatever you put your trust in this world will burn at His appearing, at the brightness of His coming. Movie theatres will burn. That’s it. Think about all the times you go and look at the malls, they’ll burn. That is the reason why it says, “Consider what their latter end will be.” Do you know where you’re going? Where you’re going is determined by these three things – who’s your god; what is your glory; what is your mind-set; and therefore, your destination? And what have they done? They’ve taken your mind off and religion could be a principle, albeit Christianity, but you do a lot of good works. This guy in *Ecclesiastes*, Solomon says, “I have given myself a righteous cause, but under the sun, what is the whole point of being righteous?” The fellow who is wicked is going to the grave. The fellow who is righteous is going to the grave. There is no meaning of righteousness under the sun and there’s no meaning of wisdom under the sun and there is no meaning of foolishness under the sun. There’s no meaning of riches under the sun. Everybody is ending up in the grave. So, what is the whole point? You know why? You have taken your eyes off God and you’ve put your eyes on temporal things and you’re only looking at right now. At the grave, your life stops.

Your God, Your Glory, Your Mind, Your End

God says, “At the grave, your actual life begins.” What have the false prophets done? They’ve taken you away and your focus away from the principles of the Kingdom of God and to the principles of beggarly elements. And look at these beggarly elements. He defines a few.

...to which you desire again to be in bondage? ¹⁰ You observe days and months and seasons and years.

Beggarly! Lent has no meaning if you do not have your focus on God. You practice abstinence during Lent but after Lent, you’ve gone back to your old ways. So, what’s the whole point of Lent? For me, Christmas is every day. Like Pastor says, “365 days is Christmas.” 365 days, Resurrection Sunday. I live in the eternity of both. So, there’s no one day for me – that is what our attitude should be. What are you doing?

¹¹ I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.

What’s the whole point? You’ve gone back to those beggarly elements. He calls law ‘the beggarly elements, because at the core of the law is that you know what? Their glory is, “What does my brother think about me?” That’s exactly what happened to Peter, right? When brethren came from Jerusalem Church to Antioch, slowly, he withdrew from the Gentile believers and Apostle Paul confronted him to his face, “You, being a Jew, are living like a gentile. Why are you forcing the gentiles to live like Jews? Don’t we know that both Jews and gentiles are justified by faith alone? You’re not walking according to the way of the Gospel. Your lines are going away from the light, Peter. You know why, Peter? Because you are being carried away by hypocrisy, by lies and by deception, because you’re looking for glory from your brothers in your Church in Antioch.” “What will they think about me?” Your God, your glory and your mind-set, three things.

So, let’s go back to,

Deuteronomy 13:2-3

² and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying...

It’s saying, “The sign of the wonder comes to pass, saying,” Boy!

...‘Let us go after other gods’—which you have not known...

The point is this – they don’t know you. You don’t know them. In our case, we have a relationship with our God. Every other god you try to worship, you cannot have a meaningful relationship with that person. Do you think we can have a meaningful relationship with our career? See, it’s very interesting. Character in their prime. After their prime, they’re all gone. They’ve faded away. Nobody even looks at them, except for Amitabh Bachchan. They’re all haggard and bulky now. I don’t know why people still watch you, I don’t know, Megastar. Now, it’s a torture for me to see him even acting. He’s all overacting only. Go and do something else, no? Still, they want to be in the limelight. They want to do character works. Because their eye is there.

—‘and let us serve them,’...

That is the quintessence of a false gospel. Other gods and whatever your god is. Principles, basic rudimentary principles of this world. What are the fundamental principles of this world system? What are they? Money. Pleasure. Unlimited money and unlimited pleasure. That is why a movie was called a foreman’s entertainment in those days. We work through the week for the movie. We are working for pleasure. That’s what it is in the west, right? “Thank God, it’s Friday. I worked so hard during the week. Nobody is going to disturb me during the weekend. It’s my life. Don’t care. Don’t ask me what is happening in my personal life, okay? You want your results? You’ll get your results. How I live is not your headache.” Companies are okay with it. “Give me the results. What you do is unimportant for us.

³ you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you...

Every time you listen to a sermon, it is a test for you. You listen to any person on the internet, it is a test for you. Whom you listen to consistently over a period of time is a test of your heart. You understand? Because you will ultimately go and search for *teachers after your own heart who will titillate your ears. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound*

doctrine. Why should you endure sound doctrine? Simply because sound doctrine continues to challenge you to change. That's what sound doctrine does. If I'm telling you something and if it's confronting you, then it's convicting you; not condemning you. *You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free.* The more you obey, the more free you are. And what does doctrine do? It constantly changes who you are. This is not right in your life. This is your value system. You love money too much. You love your wife more than you love God. You love your elders more than you love God. You love your Church, maybe, more than you love God. You love Isaac more than you love God. God is checking constantly. What is He checking? Look at what it says.

...to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

He is checking to see if God is the center of your life or not. That is the reason why He tells the Ephesian Church, "Repent, because you have fallen away from your first love. You're doing a lot of things and it's occupying a lot of your time but you know one thing in your life – you don't love Me the way you used to. Remember the kindness of your youth and the love of thine espousals, when you went after Me in the wilderness, in the land that was not sown. Israel was holiness to Me and all those who offended Me, I destroyed them." First love. Ultimately, it is love, whether we love God with all of our heart. We say we need God and we sing, "Lord, I need You. O, I need You. Every hour, I need You." How about saying, "God, I love You"? We need God but do we love God? That's the difference. He says, "You shall not listen to the words of the prophets or the dreamer of dreams for the Lord your God is testing you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." And then, what happens?

Deuteronomy 13:4

⁴You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him.

You shall walk after the Lord. You shall fear Him. Keep His commandments. Obey His voice and then, serve Him. Hold fast, cling to Him. Five things He says that we need to do –walk, fear, keep, obey, serve and hold fast. Sixth thing – Obey His voice, it is just not His word.

Turn with me,

1 Samuel 15:20

²⁰And Saul said to Samuel, "But I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

Look at what God has to say.

1 Samuel 15:22-23

²²So Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. ²³For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king."

The Word of God has got a voice. There's a letter and there's a spirit. The letter only does the first mile. The Spirit takes you to the second mile. The letter only looks at only what is needed. The Spirit looks at what is in the heart. David obeyed or fulfilled God's purpose. In Telugu, it is 'uddesham', which means 'intention in his generation'. David fulfilled God's intention in his generation and he rested with his fathers. Therefore, he's called the man after God's own heart. That is the reason why he is a Jew who is one inwardly. Circumcision is a matter of the heart of the spirit whose glory is from God and not from man. You see, I told you, right? God, glory and mind-set, and therefore, destination. What is happening? You're actually rebelling. What are you doing? It is witchcraft. And Saul says, "What are you talking about, Samuel? Witchcraft?" Ultimately, where does he end up? He ends up at the witch at Endor, the diviner. That's his destination. So, what do you do with the prophet, therefore? It's very tough.

Deuteronomy 13:5

⁵ But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death...

Meaning, silence his voice from your life. We don't go personally go and kill all the prophets in the New Covenant. We refuse to take their counsel. We cut off their voice from our lives. This is very important. Why?

...because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the LORD your God (In NIV, it says 'to incite rebellion'), who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst.

Jude 1:11

¹¹ Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

That is the reason why Paul says, "Take heed if those people who incite rebellion in your congregation." And whenever you see, it says, "Korah, Dathan and Abiram took men." They took men. Why should you take men? Because you can't stand alone. You need a bunch of fellows to justify your rebellion. So, whoever rebels, actually, he'll never take anybody. He'll not go down by himself; he'll take others along with him. That is the reason why, when satan incited rebellion, he took one-third of the angels with him. He managed to deceive one-third of the angels. Very dangerous. These are very dangerous because our eternal destiny is at stake. Do all these guys who incite rebellion, are they accountable for your soul? Okay fine, you left. Where are you going to go? What is your latter end? Where will you end up? Have you ever considered that? Who's going to give an account for your soul? Isn't it interesting that two trees, both are fig trees; one tree is on the road; Jesus comes to that tree which was green and He says, "The tree is very nice and green, but where is the fruit?" It has no fruit. What does He do? He curses it and it's immediately gone. There's another fig tree, after three years, He comes looking for fruit and He says, "Pull it down." Immediately, one guy stops him and says, "Master, one more year, master!" Is there a man in your life who can plead for you like that? Or a woman or a shepherd who can guard you like the way Moses guarded the people of Israel? One Moses stopped so much of the wrath of God. And what is he called? He's called the shepherd of Israel. And what does he say? When he prays, he says, "Lord, give Israel a shepherd so that they will not be scattered like sheep without a shepherd." And God gives him Joshua. Who's accountable for your soul? And people who incite rebellion; where are they gone? "You also come along with me." "Where are we going now?" "I don't know." "Who's going to feed us?" "I don't know." "Who's going to be accountable to our souls?" "I don't know." Pride bargains for deception. It's like fish out of water. Gone!

So, let's go back to *Deuteronomy 13:6*. This is the second category. First category will be a prophet who'll try to stray you away.

Deuteronomy 13:6

⁶ "If your brother, the son of your mother, your son or your daughter, the wife of your bosom, or your friend who is as your own soul...

How many people are there? Brother. Son. Daughter. Wife. Friend. What do they do?

...secretly entices you...

This fellow comes and shows you a sign and a wonder. What is the essence of a sign and a wonder? "Let us go serve other gods." These people come secretly and entice you. There are two categories of people here.

...saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods,' which you have not known, neither you nor your fathers,

First are brothers within the Church. We call them 'false brothers'. We looked at that yesterday. What does it say?

⁴ For certain men have crept in unnoticed...

It's a snakish spirit. Pharisaic spirit. That's why Jesus calls them, what? "You brood of vipers." It's not a viper. Brood of vipers. The other day, a Russel's Viper came into our home, the other day. Two weeks back. My landlord called the snake catcher

and they caught it. I was a little perturbed because there's a snake in my home. It's not a pleasant thing to think about. So, I went online and said, "Russel's viper" and what does it do and characteristics and etc. When it lays eggs, it lays eggs by the dozens. One Russel's Viper can lay 36 eggs at one time. That means three dozen eggs. Incredibly fertile! That's what Pastor was saying. Prophet can be one. False prophets breed by the dozens. And I looked at that. That was in an animal institution in Bombay. That scientist was saying, "The mother and the children are doing very well." I said, "Thank you. That is not very pleasant." How many vipers are there? 36 vipers and then, I saw it. 36 poisonous snakes and what are they doing? They're petting and conserving them. Secretly, they come. What does Jesus call them? Not vipers. "You are a brood of vipers. You multiply by the dozens and your brood is what gives you strength." "I'm not a viper. I can stand by myself." "With what authority do you do these things? I'll also ask you a question: the baptism of John, was it from God or from man?" "All the vipers come together and discuss." John Piper does this. "If we say that he is from heaven, He'll ask us why we don't believe him. If we say, he is of man, all of them think that he is a prophet and the people will stone us." See the deception? "We will tell him one answer (single mind) – we don't know." One fellow comes up and says, "We don't know." Amazing! Jesus says, "I will also not tell you." After that, He makes another pronouncement over them. And then, He asks them one more question, "In *Psalms 110*, David says, "The Lord said to My Lord," who's the Messiah?" "The Son of David." If David, in the spirit, called him 'Lord', how is He his son?" After that, nobody asks Him any more questions. Finished! All voices silenced. You know why? Truth doesn't need any support. Vipers always breed and by the dozens. 36 eggs, they lay at once. They are very fertile. That is what he's saying. Certain men have crept in. It's not one man but men have crept in. It is both. What are they doing? They are changing the grace of God into license to sin.

...who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is one side of the spectrum, where they're taking you away from the straight and narrow path and towards fleshly and worldly things.

Galatians 2:1-5

¹Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem...

The entire *Book of Galatians* is a tale of two visits. Paul's visit to the Church in Jerusalem and Peter's visit to the Church in Antioch. Paul did not mess up. Peter messed up. That's the story. And the whole *Book of Galatians* is essentially an expansion of what happened here.

...with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me...

Barnabas is Jewish and Titus is Greek.

²And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain.

He is saying, "This is what I preached to the Gentiles subjecting myself to peer review." And everybody looked at it and said

³Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. ⁴And this occurred because of false brethren...

Not brother, but brethren. They crept in.

...secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), ⁵to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

"I was so zealous that I did not even allow them to say anything. You know why? I understood those fellows," says Paul. And one guy is enough. It was because of false brethren. What do they want to do? Take you back to the law. You have brethren on this side and brethren on that side and they always come in groups. One man is enough, but those fellows cannot survive

without groups. You know why? Because their numbers give them justification. "See how many people are there in my ministry! How can you say that I'm a false teacher?" Jesus had only eleven. Paul, at the end of his life, the entire Church in Asia forsook him. And he had only one brother following him. Timothy was somewhere else. Titus was somewhere else. Only Luke was there with him. He says, "Please Mark, come. Timothy, you also come. Bring my cloak and my parchments." Look at verse 11.

Galatians 2:11-12

¹¹ Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; ¹² for before certain men...

Again, certain men. You see that?

...came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision.

You see how dangerous this is! Right there in the first century Church, there was almost satan entering into that Church where he could have deceived Peter. Now, I ask Pastor, "Can you imagine if Paul wouldn't have confronted Peter?" What if he thought, "Oh, can I confront Peter? O, he's a senior apostle. I'm just a junior." He just withstood him to his face." On the other hand, if Peter would have been gotten offended, what would have happened? 1st and 2nd Peter wouldn't be there. Peter will be history. And the rest of the Jews also played hypocrite with him so that even Barnabas; and then, he says, "When I saw." You see one man. One man! You see, that's the reason we need one guy. God is always looking for one man. He's looking for one Phinehas. He is looking for one Aaron, for one Paul, for one Timothy, for one Elisha who will stand in the gap and stay. Like Pastor was saying and I completely agree with him, "You cannot bring genuine shepherds and prophets and apostles out of the assembly line." They're not made in a day.

Psalm 12:6

⁶ The words of the LORD are pure words, Like silver tried in a furnace of earth, Purified seven times.

How many times should you be purified? Seven times. Elijah, after he hears from God, "Thus says the Lord," "Before my word comes to pass, there will not be any rain," and he's hiding where? At Cherith. Cherith means cutting. After that, God says, "Move to Zarephath." What does Zarephath mean? Furnace. And after he finishes his episode in Zarephath, turn to,

1 Kings 17:23-24

²³ And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives!" ²⁴ Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now by this I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is the truth."

She doesn't say, "It is not that the word of the Lord is truth, but that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth." Everybody can speak the word of the Lord. Nobody can deceive you unless until you don't speak the word of the Lord. That's the reason why if you are following anybody, Paul tells Timothy,

2 Timothy 3:10

¹⁰ But you have carefully followed my doctrine (That is my words.), (my) *manner of life*, (my) *purpose*, (my) *faith*, (my) *longsuffering*, (my) *love*, (my) *perseverance*

So many things are accompanying his doctrine. That is the reason why the Word of God in Paul's mouth is true. And God says, "Your mouth is so true, you write Scripture and I will not contradict it. Whatever you say, it is the Word of God. The word of the Lord in your mouth, Paul, is truth. The word of the Lord in your mouth, Elijah, is truth." You know why? He's come through the cutting away of the flesh. He's come through the furnace of affliction. He's purified and now, he's ready to go through Carmel to confront the 450 prophets of Baal. One prophet against 450 and all of us, we have to be longing to be that one man. God is interested in the individual. He, who has ears, let him hear. So, He's speaking to the Churches and He's speaking to the individuals. He wants individuals. And therefore, if you're going through afflictions and trials, praise God; God is bringing you through. And if you come through those afflictions and stayed that course on that straight and narrow path, my God!

Your God, Your Glory, Your Mind, Your End

You are approved of God and God has a stamp over your life and He says, "Listen to him. He speaks My words." We want that, right? What is the whole point, otherwise? What is the whole point of ministry, then? If God does not approve of us, we just might as well shut down everything and go home. That is why Paul says, "If I seek the approval of men, I should not be a servant of Christ!" Do I try to seek men's approval or God's? He's very clear as to who is his God. He is very clear as to what is his glory. Therefore, he's very clear how he's thinking because he wants to end up on the other side. Therefore, he says, "I will beat my body into subjection for after having preached to others, I myself should not be disqualified." Boy! "I want to stay in that straight and narrow path. Because you know what? Certain brothers have crept in aware." So, there are brothers of two kinds – the brothers of the Spirit, so-called; and the brothers of the flesh. They are also a problem. One is doctrine; the other is sentiment. Turn to *Luke 11:27-28*. Look at how Jesus fights sentiment.

Luke 11:27-28

27 And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!"

You know what Jesus said immediately? "You don't need to be so sentimental."

28 But He said, "More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

He is not saying, "My mother is not blessed." No, no. He is not saying that. Don't misunderstand Jesus. Jesus is saying, "Yes, My mother is blessed. Sure. She bore the Son of God. She bore God herself." We sing that song – "Mary, did you know? When you kiss the face of your Baby, you are kissing the face of God." Boy! It's real powerful lyrics. Yes. She is blessed. No question about it. And even her own sister-in-law, or relative, says, "You are blessed of all people. The mother of my Lord has come to visit me." She is blessed. We are not denying that at all but Jesus says,

... "More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

Why? Because in the last days, there will be a famine, not of food, but the famine of, what? Of hearing of the Word of God. And if you are being sentimental, what will happen to you? If you have sentimental attachments, what will happen to you? It's not that you don't love your parents or you don't love your children or your wife or your family; no, no. You love God more. And sometimes, people think that by appeasing them, you are loving them. No. You are loving them if you stay on the straight and narrow path. Then, you are loving them. They might misunderstand you but God is working in them too. God is working in them. If you compromise, God is not working in their lives. Do you love them more? Will you risk being misunderstood? By your wife or by your children? Will you risk being misunderstood by your friends? In fact, if you have more friends after you have become a believer, then I need to question you because your number of friends will reduce. Because your friends also are included in that list, in *Deuteronomy 13:6*.

Deuteronomy 13:6

6 "If your brother, the son of your mother, your son or your daughter, the wife of your bosom, or your friend who is as your own soul, secretly entices you, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods,' which you have not known, neither you nor your fathers.

In fact, friends are more dangerous. You will risk being misunderstood by your wife for being with your friends, right? Arey, komcham friends tho time spend cheyyani nannu (Let me spend some time with my friends). "After I'm married, all my freedom is gone. Let me just go and have a party once in a while." But you know what happens the moment you become a believer? Your friends will slowly start going away from you for sure without a doubt unless and until they are attracted to Jesus. If they are not attracted to your Jesus and your Jesus that you are worshipping is not confronting and offending them, then I do not know which Jesus you are actually worshipping. I'm telling you, you will have very few people around you. You will have only one Jonathan. David didn't have Jonathans. He had only one Jonathan. And blessed in a man who has a wife who will support you and not pull you down. You know why? Secretly, they will entice you and their essence is – "Let us serve other gods." And they might misunderstand you. Look at how they misunderstood Jesus.

Mark 3:19-21

¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. And they went into a house. ²⁰ Then the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. ²¹ But when His own people heard about this, they went out to lay hold of Him, for they said, "He is out of His mind."

He is crazy! Like Jesus mother saying, "He is gone mad (vaadu pichodu ayyipoyadu)." Like Agrippa and the other guy say, "Paul, much learning has made you mad. You are convincing me to become a Christian so quickly, almost. You are crazy!" Who's calling Him mad? Can you imagine telling the Creator of this universe, "You are out of Your mind"? That is how you need to look at it. It's like saying, "Actually, God doesn't have mind (Asalu devudiki thelivi ledu)." It's a blasphemous word. God is working; He is out of His mind. If God is out of His mind, your existence is gone. Because He holds everything by the word of His power, He is upholding everything like that and if He just says, "I am out of My mind and let Me play a little bit of hide and seek." That's the reason why David said, "Lord, don't hide Your face from me please. A little moment if You are hiding Your face from me, I'm going crazy. Please, Lord."

"Arey, marchipoyav ra mamalni nuvvu (You forgot us)." Friends antaaru kada (Your friends will tell you, right?) "You forgot us re! That is Hyderabad. Entra eppudu choosthey Bible (What is this, all the time Bible and Church?) Pichodu vaipooyinav nuvvu (You've become a mad person). Dhimak kharaab hogaya iskaa (He has gone mad)." That is how they say – "He is out of his mind. You are too much into it." In other words, "Be at our level, okay? Worship our gods." You see, sentiments have power to secretly take you away and before you know it, you will be at their level. That is the reason why Jeremiah is saying, "What is this, Lord?" You should not be influenced by them but You should influence them. It's always 'them' in Jeremiah. Out of his mind! Sentiments ke liye place nahi hai (There is no place for any sentiments). Or they may say, "Why should you take success in such a difficult route? What is this? Slow and narrow path and nobody knows you. How many people in your congregation or school know you?" This is the constant question. How many people in your school? "14 or 15, we don't want more." "You don't want more?" They are surprised because we have rejected their admission. Some people will say, "How come you are rejecting us?" We don't want you simply because we don't know you. "It's not that we are better than you but our focus is God and we are afraid that you will take us away from our vision and ask us to confirm your vision. Well, your vision is your vision and my vision is my vision. God has showed me a path and I'm going to stick to it. If you come alongside and help me along, then you are welcome." Choose your friends wisely.

John 7, look at what it says.

John 7:1-6

After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him. ² Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. ³ His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. ⁴ For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world."

Who is this? Secret deceptive doctrines. "Why do you want your success so slow? You going through a problem? You in the ministry? Do you want some money?" "Well, I don't want." "How are you managing?" "I am managing." "Why are you taking this trajectory? Send some advertisement somewhere so that you can get some funding." "No! Because everybody is after a particular glory." It's God's glory all the time, my dear brothers and sisters. God's glory and that comes through different trajectories and different people.

⁵ For even His brothers did not believe in Him. ⁶ Then Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready."

"I do according to God's timing. For Me, even seconds matter," because immediately, He says that and the next moment, He goes. Because that was God's time. It could be the very next second. You did it, right? But it was God's time and at this moment, it is not God's time. In fact, "They have no wine." "Woman, what does that got to do with Me? My time has not yet come." Why did He say that? There could be several reasons, "My time to do this miracle has not yet come because God has not spoken to Me yet," but the very next moment, He does the miracle. So, that may not be the correct interpretation. "Maybe, My time to get married has not yet come. I'm waiting for My bride. This is not My bride." Why did He say that? Because only after He does a lot of miracles, many Jews believed in Him when they saw the signs. But did Jesus entrust Himself

to them? No ways, no. “My time has not yet come; My bride is not yet ready. Why is that My time has not yet come? Because My bride is not yet ready.”

Turn to *Jeremiah 23:6*.

Jeremiah 23:6

⁶In His days Judah will be saved, (who is this? Jesus Christ) And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Everybody got that? Now turn to Jeremiah 33:16.

Jeremiah 33:16

¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved, And Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.’

So, He is telling, “I want to be their righteousness and I am waiting for their confession. I’m waiting for My bride.” He will be called, “My God, my righteousness.” Will the Bride confess the same? What does that ‘righteousness’ mean? “You complete me. Jesus, You are my glory. You are my God. You are always in my mind. I love You with all my heart, soul, strength and with all of my mind. You are mine and I am Yours.”

⁶Then Jesus said to them, “My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready.

For a lot of people, their time has already come for marriage. Why? Either two things – either parental pressure or pressure from friends or biological pressure. You don’t wait for God’s timing. That is just an aside. Food for thought. What says thou? So, what should you do with your brother? Turn with me to *Deuteronomy 13*.

Deuteronomy 13:6-8

⁶“If your brother, the son of your mother, your son or your daughter, the wife ^[c]of your bosom, or your friend who is as your own soul, secretly entices you, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods,’ which you have not known, neither you nor your fathers, ⁷of the gods of the people which are all around you, near to you or far off from you, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth,

Oh, there are so many gods. I told you, right? Their elements and their principles but there is only one God who actually holds the elements together and instead of worshiping the God, you are worshiping the elements. It’s amazing, right? How foolish we are! Instead of worshiping the Creator, we worship the creature.

⁸you shall not consent to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him or conceal him;

That is exactly why Paul confronts Peter to his face. This, he says, “Behave, Peter. This is not acceptable. You are setting a wrong example and if you do not nip it at the bud right now, this is going to permeate in the Church and you know why? A little leaven leavens the whole lump.” Now think about it – the Apostle who is supposed to set the doctrine goes wrong. Can you imagine what had happened to the Church? The division would have taken that time itself. The person who is supposed to hear the words of God and gift it to the Churches and that is exactly what we have looked at yesterday in the *Book of Revelation*. John, the final Apostle, receives the revelation from God and he gives it to the Churches. They were supposed to be the pillars of the Church and what was going to happen? You shall not conceal. That is the reason why we need people who are close to us. We need to earn trust; you cannot stay far away and just give some off hands statements. There is a relationship that is required in a Church. A close relationship. By living with Sam and Peter for a period of 10 days, I know what their behavior patterns are and they also know what my behavior patterns are and hopefully, we are not ashamed of each other. I said, “Hopefully!” And look at what he says, “You shall not conceal him.” What shall he do?

Deuteronomy 13:9

⁹but you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people.

This is what you called as 'the priesthood of Phinehas'.

That means you should be the leader. In other words, in every Church, a man of the spirit should be the leader and not the man of the flesh. And only he has the authority and revelation and has the grace of God to teach others. Otherwise, if a man is compromised by his flesh, he has no authority in the Kingdom of God. These are the Levites. We are all the priesthood in the order of Levi. Of course, Melchizedek but we are looking at the principle here.

Deuteronomy 33:8-11

⁸ And of Levi he said: "Let Your Thummim and Your Urim be with Your holy one..."

What is Thummim? Perfections and Urim means lights or revelation. Who is that holy one over here? The Levite. "Y" if you see, is in capitals and 'holy one' is in small letters. 'Your holy one'. That means he is the fellow who is separated totally unto You. All his fleshly, worldly attachments are gone. To that person, who is completely set apart, he is the holy one of God. Am I the holy one of God? He is the holy one of God. Am I the holy one of God? He is my righteousness. Am I saying, 'He is my righteousness'? It says,

... "Let Your Thummim and Your Urim be with Your holy one Whom You tested at Massah, And with whom You contended at the waters of Meribah,

That means this guy dealt with contentions and arguments. He is completely in agreement with God. 'Massah' means contention and 'Meribah' means argument. He is dealt, he has settled all his arguments. That means there is only one way – "The Cross before me; the world behind me. No turning back. I am totally separated to God." That's what it means. To that fellow, the Urim and Thummim should always be there. Why?

⁹ Who says of his father and mother, 'I have not seen them'; Nor did he acknowledge his brothers, Or know his own children...

The Levites had the Spirit. The genuine Levites had that Spirit. You see? The genuine Levites had that Spirit. The sons of Korah ran away from Korah. Genuine Levites. Because they said, "This fellow is not my father. You know why? I'm separated to God. I'm supposed to be the Levite after God's own heart. I'm not going to be destroyed in the incite of rebellion. No." Look at this,

... 'I have not seen them'; Nor did he acknowledge his brothers, Or know his own children; For they have observed Your word And kept Your covenant.

What is the covenant? "You are my righteousness. I confess that. You are my righteousness." He says, "I am Your righteousness." You said, "Yes, Lord. You are my righteousness." And what do they do?

¹⁰ They shall teach Jacob Your judgments, And Israel Your law...

So, Jacobs have to be turned into Israels. So, what should you tell Jacob? Judgments. What should you teach Israel? Law. So that he remains like Israel and not become like Jacob again.

... They shall put incense before You, And a whole burnt sacrifice on Your altar. ¹¹ Bless his substance, LORD, And accept the work of his hands; Strike the loins of those who rise against him, And of those who hate him, that they rise not again."

Wow! This is a Levite. If you read that, you should go crazy. You know why? Because He is 'Your holy one', God. You are not just 'His holy one', He is 'Your holy one'. Both of them have been separated and sanctified.

1 Peter 2:21-22

²¹ For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

²² "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth";

Who is this? The Holy One of God. He is our Holy One, right? Turn to,

Revelation 14:3-5

³They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.

I think it's a number.

⁴These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. ⁵And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

They are God's holy one and He is their Holy One, the Bride of the Lamb. That is the reason – *blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose iniquity is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute his sin nor in whose spirit there is no guile.* That is, ultimately, when we have actually appropriated the righteousness of God to ourselves.

Finally, let's go back to *Deuteronomy 13:12*,

Deuteronomy 13:12-18

¹²"If you hear someone in one of your cities, which the Lord your God gives you to dwell in, saying, ¹³'Corrupt men...

The word is 'sons of Belial'.

...have gone out from among you...

From where have they gone out? From among you. *1 John* will say, "Men have gone out from among you." Why did they go out from among you? Because they did not belong to you. That's exactly what it says in *1 John*. They have gone out from among you. The spirit of the Antichrist.

¹³'Corrupt men have gone out from among you and enticed the inhabitants of their city, saying, "Let us go and serve other gods"'

Their idea is – "This life now."

—which you have not known—¹⁴then you shall inquire, search out, and ask diligently. And if it is indeed true and certain that such an abomination was committed among you, ¹⁵you shall surely strike the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying it, all that is in it and its livestock—with the edge of the sword. ¹⁶And you shall gather all its plunder into the middle of the street, and completely burn with fire the city and all its plunder, for the Lord your God. It shall be a heap forever; it shall not be built again. ¹⁷So none of the accursed things shall remain in your hand...

What is he saying? If there will be anything inside your own life, for example, things which bring curses from God,

Acts 19:11-20

¹¹Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul,

Boy! What an amazing thing! Unusual miracles. These are just not miracles; unusual miracles.

¹²so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them. ¹³Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists...

We have itinerant preachers. I like that 'itinerant Jewish exorcists'. How the Holy Spirit has seen the end of this! We will have itinerant preachers. They don't belong anywhere. From Church to Church. "Which is your Church?" They don't know. Like

Pastor was saying yesterday, “Ultimately, if you are not part of a Church, how can God reveal what is happening in the future?” The revelation is to the angels, given to the angels of the Churches who are in the hands of God.

¹² so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them. ¹³ Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.” ¹⁴ Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. ¹⁵ And the evil spirit answered and said, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?” ¹⁶ Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. ¹⁷ This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus...

You see, certain men, who do not belong to you, crept there and tried to do all kinds of nonsense.

¹⁷ This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

Why? Because of one man. And the next verse,

¹⁸ And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. ¹⁹ Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver. ²⁰ So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

You know why? We don't wrestle against flesh and blood. We don't put the cruel people to death. We take the accursed things out of our own lives which they entice us with. It could be movies; it could be books; it could be pieces of art; it could be, I don't know. Whatever that is in your house. Accursed things in your house! What is an accursed thing? Either it is devoted to God or it is devoted to destruction. Two things. If you take something which belongs to God and you keep it with you, it is accursed. If you keep something which God says, “It should not be a part of you,” it is also accursed. So, what did Achan do? He took something which belongs to God. They had to put the whole city to death. And what were they supposed to do with the silver, the gold and the garments and everything? They had to give it to the temple, to God. What did he do? He took something which belonged to God and kept it. Now, question is: is there something in our lives which belongs to God and we are keeping it? We are not giving it? It's called 'an accursed thing'. Or some book or something through which demons are entering to your home – books, demonic books. That's how pornography enters into so many families. You know how it enters? Through horrible books. The funny thing is – Christians introduce you to that. What are they? People who have gone out from among you, entice you to accursed things. “You know what? I went to this place and I brought you a laughing Buddha.” You are having your family prayer and Buddha is laughing at you. I remember Derek Prince, in one of his sermons, he says that he had one of his relatives who left a will. In that will, he inherited two Chinese dragon pictures or something. They were antique pieces. Highly valuable pieces. And he just put it in his house. He said, “What is wrong with this? It is fine.” And the Lord told him, “What does a dragon signify? A serpent. Why is a serpent symbol there in the house of My servant?” And immediately, he was convicted; he tore it down and burnt it into pieces. Are there accursed things in our lives? Clothes? Designer-wear? Earrings? Earrings! I am not saying that. Turn to *Exodus 33:3-6*,

Exodus 33:3-6

³ Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people.”

Do you know what God is saying? “You go. I will send an Angel. He will drive out all the Perizzites. Go and occupy. I'm not coming with you.” Why? “If I come with you, I will fall on you. You will be destroyed.”

⁴ And when the people heard this bad news, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments. ⁵ For the Lord had said to Moses, “Say to the children of Israel, ‘You are a stiff-necked people. I could come up into your midst in one moment and consume you. Now therefore, take off your ornaments, that I may know what to do to you.’ ”

You want to know the will of God?

⁶So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by Mount Horeb.

Why? Because these are the very same ornaments with which you make the golden calf and said, “These are the gods which brought you out of Israel,” right? They are accursed things! See, God is a God who loves us. Let me tell you something – He wants to dwell with us. So, He allows all these things to happen in our lives. He allows false prophets. He allows false brethren. And He allows people who will tempt us with accursed things. Whatever you find in the market, my dear children, oh boy! You need to be very careful nowadays. You buy one bag. Bag is a very harmless thing. It will have Pokémon, Barbie, who is always beautiful forever. She was beautiful for the past 70 years. She never grew old. Children become a prey. Question today, therefore, God is asking us: have we dwelt in our heart? Our heart is the point. Love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all of your soul and with all of your mind. And keep on walking in that straight and narrow path. And then, you know what? One day, you will know, for sure, your destination because you know who your God is, you know who your glory is; and your mind has been transformed into doing the will of God. And after that, your destination is very well. What is your destination? Not Heaven; Christ. He is our destination.

1 John 3. And we will stop for today.

1 John 3:1-3

¹ Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ² 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. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Ultimately, we want to be with Him. What’s the whole point? Destination is not Heaven; destination is Jesus. “A glass of wine and a loaf of bread and Your Presence is paradise in the wilderness,” said Omar Khayyam. What about you? What about us? “Wherever You are, Lord, that is Heaven.” That’s what Moses said, “If You don’t go with us, don’t take us.” So, He showed Moses His ways and His acts to the children of Israel. But acts can always deceive us. If you are always after acts, a guy will come and show you a sign and wonder and then, he will take you to other gods. The focus of all teaching is God. I love You, Lord, and nobody else is going to steal that devotion from me, my devotion toward You.

Shall we stand and shall we pray? And we will end today’s session.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we just thank You for this day. Circumcise our hearts. Circumcise, Lord, our hearts; for You promised that You would circumcise our hearts and the hearts of our children – our spiritual and our own children – that we will love our God with all of our heart, with all of our strength and with all of our mind. To that end, I pray that You would always bless the teaching and the hearing of the Word that it will start burning everything that is not of the Word of God and set our hearts apart for You and You alone. We thank You, we praise You for this time. I commit all of us into Thy hands. For in Jesus’ Name we pray, Amen.