



King Jesus-Part 2
Lamenting His Rebellious Subjects
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While the marketers and the advertisers up at Disneyland will tell you that it is the happiest place on earth. It's not. It's not the happiest place on earth. You got to go on the I-5 just to get there. We know that can't be the happiest place to go to. And then you follow the signs once you get off the freeway and you follow the signs to parking and you realize that your car ends up about a mile from the entrance to the park. And I wish that were the worst thing about the parking. The worst thing about the parking, of course, is about how much it costs to park there. Well, at least they pick you up in a tram, take you to the front, and then you get to stand there in front that uniformed worker there in the kiosk and you find out how much it costs. And they say, "Oh, do you want to go in all of it? Well, that's going to cost you even more. Then they sell you ticket for half of it. And then don't get thirsty, don't get hungry while you're there. You have to take out a loan for that. Keep the blinders on the kids, they see all that souvenir stuff, you don't want to check the price on all that stuff. Speaking of kids, they're melting down everywhere, in every corner of the park, screaming and yelling. Then you want to go on rides and of course there are trillion people waiting in line on the rides. It takes three hours to go on a ride. People are out there with their elbows up, cutting in lines, snarling at you. It's not the happiest place on earth.

But the Christian will say, "Well, I know what the happiest place on earth is. The happiest place on earth is the Church of Jesus Christ. Ahh... That's the happiest place on earth. That's what they'll say, but before you clap, let me tell you I don't believe that either. It is not the happiest place on earth.

No, it's not. Now I know all the church websites out there are trying to depict that it's the happiest place on earth. But it's not the happiest. And I don't care to go through a list and itemized all the reasons it's not the happiest place. I only want to give you, really, one reason today why it's not the happiest place on earth. Well, I know we like to think about equating Christianity with fun and having a good time and being fulfilled and being happy and all those things that we equate with having a great life, but there are a lot of things about Christianity that would make us question that proposition.

And you may say, Well, wait a minute, I beg to differ. You just preached, last time we were together, on the Triumphal Entry. Well Exhibit "A" Triumphal Entry. Everyone's pretty happy here. They're waving palm branches, they're laying out the red carpet, kids are singing, people are happy, Jesus there, hailed as king. Blessed is he who comes with the name of the Lord. Man, that's great. Well that's true but you've got to read the rest of the account, which I plan to do for you today. Because the one who's there, being hailed as King, in the middle of all of that revelry and joy, breaks out in tears and starts crying.

Jesus. You can't take him anywhere. I mean, he starts crying at his own party. If you didn't have the respect for him that you do and you're Peter, you're going to think, "What is going on with you Jesus? This is your moment. People are yelling and screaming and excited and you're crying. What are you crying about?" Well, thankfully the text tells us, but before we even read the reason, if you knew your Old Testament and you were there in the first century, it shouldn't surprise you. I know that Peter might rebuke him and James and John might wonder what's going on and they're fishermen. But really the well-taught Sadducees, the Pharisees, the scribes, they had to know because they've read passages about the Messiah.



Now a lot of them don't depict it, but some of those prophecies are very clear. The Messiah is going to come and he's described this way in Isaiah 53 verse 3, "He is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Now, I quoted for you the second half of the verse. The first half of the verse tells us why. "Because he was despised and rejected by men".

Oh, wait a minute. Exhibit A. Isn't that the whole point of the Triumphal Entry? They were receiving him as King. "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." See he's being received, he's being accepted. Well, even if you paid attention last time we were together, in the middle of all of that, the Pharisees, really the ones with the most stripes on their arms, the high-ranking people who people looked up to, they stepped in and said, "Hey teacher. tell your disciples to be quiet." Even in the midst of all that acceptances they came down that "Palm Sunday road" with all the palm branches, there were those in the crowd saying, "Shut these people up." Maybe he's just crossed through the Kedron Valley and he's coming up to the entrance of the gate of the city, as we pick up the story in Luke 19 verse 41, he starts to cry. He cries because he's at the front of a week that will end with him hanging naked on a cross with the crowds jeering at him, after the Romans have beat him up. You want to talk about acceptance? No, it's not really about that. In his mind's eye is the future and it's less than a week away. He is going to be crucified.

This spells rejection. Look at it with me, Luke 19 beginning in verse 41, it says when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it. Don't misunderstand any of this. This is not the word that you might have in the Greek language that describes someone kind of getting misty eyed or, you know, like that old Indian commercial about pollution with the little tears rolling down his cheek. No. I know that's the word, even as Jesus stood at Lazarus' grave, unfortunately the Greek language in the New Testament, in which the New Testament was written, we translate a lot of different words into the same English word and sometimes we don't have the distinctions that they have in Greek and this is one example. When he stood there at Lazarus' tomb, he wept. That's the little verse we are so proud you knew at seven. Right? You had memorized the verse, "Jesus wept." Remember that? Jesus wept.

That's not the word here. Oh, it's the same in English, "He wept over it," but it's the word that's used in Matthew Chapter 2 when all the babies are slain in Jerusalem and it speaks of the mothers that are wailing and weeping over their infants that Herod had killed. It's the same word that used of Jairus. Remember the official who came to Jesus because his 12-year-old daughter had died and he wept? This is not, he started to have a little tear drop down his cheek. This is a word for he starts sobbing. He started crying.

Why was he crying? Verse 42. "He was saying, 'Would that you...'" You. What's you? The city of Jerusalem, the people of Jerusalem. "Even you," because he already said earlier this is the city that kills the prophets, they don't want to listen to the truth but even them, "had you known on this day," this day when I'm being presented here as the King, "the things that make for peace!" And we put an exclamation point at the end of that, but grammatically, especially if you look at the Greek text in the New Testament, this is an incomplete sentence. He didn't even finish it.

"Oh, would that you..." and I guess logically it works that way in our own mind, "Oh that you would. Oh that you would" Well what, what? Well, it would be great, but it's not great. He breaks in the middle of that train of thought and we have this rest of this verse, this next sentence in our English text starting with a contrasting conjunction. "But," I can't even finish that thought, that would be great but, here's the reality, "Now, all that would make for peace, hidden from your eyes." A self-imposed blindness by the way.



They so welded their eyes shut because they didn't want to see it. And he says look at you, "You're blind." He weeps because of this. Being the Christ who sees the end from the beginning, he says, "For the days will come upon you," here's a prophetic word from Christ in 33 A.D., "when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation." God drew near. The King mounted on a donkey, on the colt of a donkey, the foal of a donkey. The Messiah's here. And really, though there's a throng around me as I come down the Mount of Olives, when I enter the city it's filled with people that reject me. These tears in verse 41, as I've tried to depict for you, are real, they're sincere, they're deep and they're filled with pain. Jesus. Weeping. "A man of sorrows, acquainted with grief." Why? Because he's "despised and rejected by men" and he knows how good it would be if people did not reject him. If people did not despise him, if everyone, not just a selected group of disciples, but if everyone would embrace who Jesus is.

I wonder how much you are like Jesus. I hope if you're a real Christian your goal is to become more and more like Christ. Right? You'd like to be conformed to the image of the Son of God. You'd like your life to be a reflection of his life. You'd like the things that make him happy to make you happy. You'd like the things that make him weep, you'd like those things to make you weep, you'd like to have some kind of connection here with the heart of Jesus Christ. He is the perfect example of godliness. The godliest man at this celebration started crying. I wonder how you would feel when you think about the things that he's thinking about here. I wonder how you feel when you look at the city you live in and you see people that, by and large, reject Christ. How does it go for you in your heart? You ought to and let me say this pastorly to you. Number one on your outline, you ought to gauge your grief for the lost. Man, I don't know how to do that. I can't quantify it. How much of that is there and how often is it there?

You know it is a godly thing, as I said, Jesus, and this is no argument here from you I know, is the godliest person coming down that Palm Sunday road on the Mount of Olives. As he looks up coming up to the city and he sees the city, maybe he's got the gate in view, here he now feels grief. How much grief do you feel when you see a city, a neighborhood, an office building, a classroom that's filled, maybe not completely, you got a few people, just like they had a few people surrounding them, but most people reject Christ? They don't submit to him as King. You have any grief? Really, do you have any grief? Is there sorrow in your heart?

The apostle Paul, Godly man. I mean he's not the Messiah, I understand that, but when he peels back, in his autobiographical description of his own heart, he says this about his heart, when he speaks of the people who he's tried to reach with the Gospel, he's in the synagogues Sabbath after Sabbath and he's reasoning with them from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ and they reject him, reject him, reject him, here's what the Bible says. Romans Chapter 9 verse 2, he says, "I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart." Context? Because here, these people, my kinsmen according to the flesh, the Jewish people whom I am a part of. They're rejecting Christ. "Unceasing anguish."

Does that mean you couldn't walk up to the apostle Paul and tell him a joke? He never preached with a smile on his face? No, it's much like the command given to us in First Thessalonians Chapter 5 when he tells us to pray without ceasing. If I'm obeying that verse, praying without ceasing, it doesn't mean if you walk up to me on the patio after the service is over and you start to talk to me, I go, "Oh, I can't talk to you right now, I'm praying." That's not what it means. It means that prayer is such an integral part of the fabric of my everyday life that I'm coming back to it all the time. Coming home, I'm praying and then I'm talking to you and I'm doing my work and then I'm praying



and I'm going about this and I'm eating my lunch and then I'm praying and I'm praying and I'm praying and I'm praying. It comes up repeatedly, it's unending.

It's not like I used to pray but now, you know, this month I don't pray, or this year I don't pray, last year I prayed. No, it keeps on going.

I pray without ceasing. And Paul says "I have great sorrow" over the lost in my life. "I have unceasing anguish." That's a strong word. What does that mean? It doesn't mean that he and Silas and Timothy didn't laugh and smile and doesn't mean that he never had great joy when he sat down in front of his meal or stood up to preach to people who were receptive to the truth. He was the one that told us to rejoice and again I say rejoice, he wants us to rejoice and he rejoiced, it just means that he could never get that sorrow out of his life. Unceasing. It wasn't like, "Oh yeah, I used to feel bad about the lost but I don't feel bad about them now. Last week I felt bad, but this week I feel OK about it." Here's a part of reality you will never be okay with if you're a godly man or a godly woman. And that is that the world you live in right now, you're rubbing shoulders with people who reject Jesus Christ. And if you don't feel that, if there's no response, no visceral gut check for you, when you look at people who are lost, if you don't feel that, I assure you you're not seeing people the way God sees people. You certainly aren't seeing the city the way Christ saw his city. How do you view south Orange County? If you don't view them with some kind of..., and I know it's unpleasant, we all want a pleasant Christianity, you'd like to have a happy Christianity, I get that. But if you don't have some pain in that Christianity, a pain that keeps recurring in your heart because of the lost people who you rub shoulders with every week, then I'm going to say there's something deficient in your Christianity.

Let me suggest one of four things. Number one, letter "A" if you're taking notes, perhaps you don't think sin is a big deal. Maybe you just don't think sin is a big deal. Maybe you're believing the people that you've actually stood up and tried to share the Gospel with and they tell you this, "Ahh... nobody's perfect." Maybe you are believing that. Maybe you believe that when it comes to God, God's going to look at us and grade on a curve, and you know what, not that big of a deal. "I'm not on America's Most Wanted. I'm not a really bad guy. I'm not a criminal. I'm not a terrible person. I'm not going to end up in jail. I'm a decent human being" they'll tell you.

Maybe you're believing them. Maybe you believe them and you've bought into the spirit of the age and you think when it comes to sin it's no big deal. But the Bible says all of us have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. You learn that as a kid. And then three chapters later you learn this verse, did you not? It was one of your memory verses, "For the wages of sin is death." All of us have fallen short? Yep, that's what sin is. Matter of fact, the Greek word "hamartia" in Greek, it means to miss the mark, to fall short, to not measure up. Your neighbor doesn't measure up. Your co-workers don't measure up. People in your family don't measure up. Oh, and you don't measure up either. And that's why you kind of buy the line, right, because I know Christians aren't perfect either. But the Bible says, if you don't have that problem solved, there's a consequence.

And that leads me to number two, letter "B". Maybe you don't believe Christ's warning. Maybe you don't believe Christ's warning. Christ's warning is if you don't deal with this problem called sin, there is a huge, huge threat hanging over your head. Jesus put it this way and we actually studied this back in Luke Chapter 12 verse 5, if you want to write down a verse. Luke 12:5, he said this. There's a lot of people, let me paraphrase it for you, who you're naturally afraid of because you think they may harm you. Right? We are. You take a wrong turn down an unfamiliar street in the city that you're trying to drive through in some rental car and you go, "Uh-oh, looks like there are menacing people here, seedy part of town. I'm afraid I might get carjacked, I'm afraid they might

drag me out of my car and take my money, I'm afraid, I'm with my wife, maybe they're going to beat me up, maybe they're going to kill me, going to rape my wife. Man that's scary. I feel very uncomfortable right now." Jesus said don't fear those people. Comparatively, let me tell you what you need to be afraid. Don't fear people who can kill the body, don't fear people who can break into your house, rummage through your dresser and steal your stuff. Don't fear people who can punch you in the face, knock your teeth out. Don't fear people who can strip your clothes off and violate you sexually. Oh, I understand we're to have a proper understanding of the cautionary issues of life. Of course, there's a proper fear. Christ is trying to make such a contrast between what should really make you upset, what should really concern you. He says, "Don't fear those who after they kill the body there's nothing else they can do. Fear him who, after he kills the body." and he can do that today, "has the authority to cast you into hell." And he's not done yet, here's the rest of verse 5, "Yes, I tell you," Jesus said, "fear him."

Maybe you believe the Oprah mentality of our day. As long as she's in the headlines let me drop her name this morning. "Really, I'm OK, you're okay. I can get a few flunkys here, apostate preachers, come alongside of me, 'Hey, you know what, everybody's fine.'" Or as Oprah always says, "All roads lead to heaven. We're all going to get there." Maybe you don't believe the threat that Jesus gave us, that sin is such a big problem it requires a payment of hell.

Speaking of all roads lead to heaven, maybe you don't believe the Gospel. Letter "C". You don't believe the Gospel. "Oh, I do believe the Gospel, Mike. Give me a test. Pass the Scantrons out, I can pass the test." Tell me what the Gospel is. Oh, you'll know the Gospel. You can parrot the words but do you believe the Gospel. The Gospel says there is hell to pay for every single sin that you've ever committed. God is so holy and our sin is such an offense to a perfect and holy creator, he's got to punish it, and the news of the Gospel is Christ has been punished. God the Father has spent his wrath on that cross. Christ has absorbed that. It's what we call substitutionary atonement, penal substitutionary atonement. God has poured out his wrath, he settled the score. Propitiation. There's no longer any payment for me. God says no condemnation for me because all the condemnation has been laid on him. That's the Gospel. And then Jesus made it very clear, I'm the only way to get right with the Father. "I'm the way, I'm the truth, I'm the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." The Apostles preached it, they believed it. They got up in town and they said, "There's no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." That's the only way. They took Jesus' word seriously and they believed the Gospel. They didn't sit around and saying, "Ehh... sin is not a problem. Ahh..., hell, don't believe that threat. Oh, the Gospel? I'm sure you'll be fine. Figure out another way to get there."

They preached it like they believed it, because they did believe it. I just wonder if we believe it. Because if we believe that that is the only way and we have someone cross their arms and say, "I don't want to hear your Gospel, I don't want to submit to your Christ, I'm not interested in hailing Jesus as King and Lord, I'm not interested in all that." That should grieve us because most of the town of Jerusalem, the city of Jerusalem, was rejecting Christ and he started crying over that.

Lastly, letter "D". Maybe you just don't care. Don't care about what? Don't care about people. Maybe you really don't care about people. Maybe the only person you truly care about is the one you look at in the morning when you look in the mirror. Oh, and you love those people who are under your roof, you love them too and if you have you got some kind of affirmation that you think they're okay with God, that's all we need, we got ours, everyone else has to fend for themselves.

Maybe you're a lot like Jonah. Remember Jonah? The whole point of that book, at least from our perspective, looking at God who was willing to reach out to the enemies of Israel, the Assyrian

nation with the capital that was the hot bed in their minds of all that was wrong with the world, the Ninevites. And he sends a reluctant prophet out there and after all the rigmarole, you know the story, he sits there in Chapter 4 looking at the city, just like Jesus is looking at the city of Jerusalem, and Jonah is sitting there frustrated, thinking that they've repented and that God's going to relent, he's not going to punish them and he was mad about it. And you know the story, the plant grows up, gives him some shade, and then the plant dies. And Jesus comes on and says to him, "You know what Jonah? You have more," here's the word, translated pity, compassion, "You have more compassion for a plant than you have for this great city." Jonah replies, "Great city? Great city? Great city?" I mean, if you ever want to correct God about something, this is not a great city. "This is a city filled with sinners and irritating people and they're nothing but a thorn in my side." No, it's a great city. Why? Because it's full of people made in the image of God who need forgiveness, they need peace with God. He said, "Am I'm supposed to look the other way at a city filled with all these people." Well, I know they're sinners, I know they irritate you, I know you're mad at them, I know you were raised in Israel where you were taught to hate them but... Maybe you don't understand a God who loves people. Oh, I'm not saying you shouldn't get frustrated with the sinful wickedness of our generation. But if you can't look at our cities, at our county, at the people through our TV screens and say, you know what, I'm sad, because these people are lost, then you've got the heart of someone who is not very Godly. The heart of a Godly person, a Christ-like person, he grieves. We need more grief in our Christianity. Wow! Tweet that one. Right? We need more grief in our Christianity. Grief over the lost, because Jesus, the perfect man, the god-man, saw a city full of people who rejected him and he wept. "Why can't you just celebrate the crowd that hails you as King?" Well, because there are a lot who don't, and that's painful. Gauge your grief for the lost. "Well, what should we grieve about?" Versus 42 through 44. He grieves because he says, you would not have to reap the consequences of your rejection. "Would that you, even you, had known this day things that make for peace!" You can be at peace with me, you can be at peace here in the city, "but now they're hidden from your eyes. For the days will come," because of your rejection, because of your obstinate, self-imposed blindness to the truth, the days are going to come "when your enemies will set up a barricade around you, they'll surround you, hem you in on every side, tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. They will not leave one stone upon another in you because you did not know," this wonderful offer that's laid right here before you. You refuse to embrace it. You would not, as Jesus said earlier in the book, "I wanted to gather you like a hen gathers her chicks and you wouldn't have it." "The time of your visitation." It's like your last chance, he says to the city. And he grieves. He grieves over the consequences, the cost of their rebellion.

Number two, it would be worth jotting down, Grieve The Cost Of Rebellion. Not for the ancient people of Jerusalem because there's nothing we can do about them, but you can do something about the people of South Orange County. And what I'm saying is we need to get very specific about the cost of them rejecting Christ. And instead of running quickly the eternal consequences, let me deal with the temporal consequences, because that's clearly what's in view here in Jesus' mind. Oh, I know he cares about eternal things far more than temporal things, but he takes a moment to weep over the temporal consequences of people rejecting the Gospel. I want you to think right now, you have people in your life who reject the Gospel. Think of a few faces. People in your office, people in your neighborhood, people in your family. You can see those people and you know they have no interest in Christianity. Christianity is the only solution to their sin problem, it's the only way for them to be right with God. There are consequences. Let's just start with these consequences between now and the day they die. Between now and the day they die, they are going to have consequences for their sin. The consequences here were for a city named Jerusalem that was going to be, as he says, barricaded, surrounded, hemmed in. They're going to tear it down and they're going to kill the people in it, even the children. Not one stone left upon another.

Before we think in detail, I suppose, about the consequences for your friends and my friends, your acquaintances and my acquaintances, your co-workers, I want you to think for just a minute about what was going on here. A little sidebar, I suppose, about the historical elements here. It was 33 A.D. as I mentioned. In 66 A.D., 33 years after this, the Israelites had had about enough. In Judah they started a rebellion. In Judah, of course, the region in which Jerusalem is there as the capital of, they said enough is enough. We're tired of the Romans. And if you know anything about this period of time, Nero was on the throne, he is the Emperor. Nero, of course, was not kindly toward anybody but the Romans, really, I mean he hated the Christians, he blamed some fires in Rome, the big fire of Rome, on the Christians. He was persecuting Christians and he didn't care much for the Jews in Jerusalem, particularly because they had had enough for all this exorbitant tax, they didn't like the way that they were conscripted under the Roman thumb, they didn't like the fact that if they wanted to kill someone that they had to do it the Roman way and get permission from the Romans. They wanted independence, they wanted autonomy and for the few that kind of thought Jesus was the answer, 33 years have gone by now, there's no deliverer, there's no king, there's no Messiah. So they sparked their own revolt and there's an uprising. And then that uprising, what was an attempted coup basically to say we're overthrowing the governor of Judea, and we had Felix, we had Festus, we had a new guy on the throne now, they said we've had enough. They started a rebellion and Nero said, I've had enough. He sends Vespasian and who would later become the emperor in Rome and he goes, "Go out there and quell this rebellion." And they start a war.

And for three years, four years, they start a war there in Jerusalem that ends up taking Vespasian back to Rome to go sit on the throne in Rome, and send Titus, who would eventually again become the emperor of Rome. But he comes out as a general there to man this rebellion. Now, they would like to save things in Jerusalem like the temple. The temple was very important because it was filled with all this gold, it had all these jewels, it was a very important building. I mean, Herod had poured all this money into it before Christ was born. It was a tremendous edifice. And so that was the goal, just to go in, quell the rebellion, crush them, you know, but not decimate them, we certainly don't want to destroy the temple. We at least would like to get all the things that we can out of there. Well, the Romans were so frustrated with the rebellion of those Judeans that they disregarded even some of the things that they had initially set out to do years earlier. And they said we're going to burn this thing to the ground.

There was a Jewish man. He was a son of a priest. His name was Joseph Ben Matthias, son of Matthias. Maybe you know him under his Roman name, Flavius Josephus. Do you remember him? He was the most famous historian.

He was caught in this rebellion in Jerusalem and he runs out to try and save his own skin with a group of people and they hide in a cave and they basically try to make peace. They call for terms of peace, just like we read in Luke 14 about the fact you can't do that without becoming subservient to those you make peace with, when an army is coming in that you can't destroy. And so they broker terms of peace. Well, he's the scholarly type, Joseph Ben Mathias. And so he gets conscripted to become the historian. We want to write this history of the Jews, among other things. He writes 30 volumes of history. Now a lot of it is from all the source work that he does and the Romans feed him and they pay for him and basically he's a historian for hire, a conscripted historian, and he tells all these amazing things about the history of Israel, about the history of a lot of things, and when it comes to his day, he's right there watching what's happening in this rebellion. In particular, he lives through this destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

When he writes about it, it's funny because Jesus gives us this prophecy 33 years before the

rebellion. And add another three years, four years, you've got the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, the general. And Jesus, you might say, I'm not very impressed with this prophecy because that's how you'd take down any old city and you're right, you would, I guess if you're going to take down a walled city of the ancient world, you would barricade up against that, you'd surround it, you'd hem it in, and you'd cut it off from any imports or exports, you'd try to take the water sources and hem them off, you'd tear down the buildings, if you could, at least the walls. I don't know that you'd be so brutal as to go through and kill everybody, including the children, and I certainly don't think you'd have to take every stone and topple every stone so there's not one stone left upon the other.

But Jesus predicts that in great detail and Josephus, without any deference to anything that Jesus ever said, he writes this about the siege. He says, "The emperor ordered that the entire city of Jerusalem and its temple be razed to the ground." We had up this from "quell the rebellion" to "utterly destroy this city including the temple." Josephus says, "Leaving only the loftiest of the towers." Now that was a thing, as we're about to see, of the corners of the ancient walls. Today, if you go there, you've got the Turkish walls that were built, you know, a 1,000 years later. But the idea there, in the first century, was you had this set of old walls that looked a lot like the walls today, that they could shoot from and throw rocks off of and all that was their defense. And you had the towers in the corners. And he left the towers, it says. That's the only thing he wanted up and here's why. He said he wanted the towers left and all the rest of the wall that surrounded this city to be so completely razed, he was so furious at this point, razed to the ground, so as to leave future visitors, people who stumbled upon this old city, to spot no reason to believe that the city had ever been inhabited. I want it to be like these really pathetic towers and nothing else. I want no buildings, I want nothing, I want every stone toppled. And speaking of the ruthlessness of this, it had gotten so bad in terms of this rebellion and trying to quell it, he said, the sanctuary, while it was still burning, the soldiers neither pitied the aged or had respect for rank. They didn't care who you were. On the contrary, the children, this is him now without any deference to Jesus and his prophecy, children and old people, laity and priests alike, they were all massacred. It's a horrific scene of exterminating the Jews and routing Jerusalem.

You know, you watch those detective shows and they talk about the stabbings, whatever, and they say it's overkill. This was the ultimate overkill. Jesus describes it and he says, "Listen, you didn't have to go through all of that." Now I know you're going to raise your hand and go, "I don't get it. If they would have accepted him and never rejected him, he may never go to the cross." I understand all that, and I understand that God in his infinite plan works out this decreed plan, it's going to work exactly as it worked out. But it is not his prescribed plan. Do you understand a difference between his "decreed will" and his "prescribed will?" His prescribed will is that everyone comes to repentance, everyone hails him as King. So it all works in God's harmonious plan. Let's not start with a philosophical question this morning, let's at least deal with this. If you only knew what made for peace you wouldn't have to go through all these consequences. Your cities are going to be routed, all because you did not know the time of visitation, you didn't know what a big deal it was to reject Jesus Christ. I wonder if the people in your life who you share the Gospel with, if you understand what a big deal it is that they reject Christ.

I went on my date night this week and we happened to go to a restaurant on Pacific Coast Highway, not far from the beach, obviously, right across the street from the beach, and we're in this restaurant, we don't normally go there, but we were enjoying a meal there. I was living it up, I got some mashed potatoes because, you know, it's date night, and I reach for the salt. Got to have some salt on it and my doctor doesn't like that, "taste it first," I wasn't going to taste it. I know it's going to need salt, so I grab the salt shaker and I start trying to shake it on the mashed potatoes. It doesn't



look like anything's going out, my eyes are going, it's kind of dim, but I finally do shake it hard to see nothing.

And I thought, "Oh, it's one of these places. One of these places where they come along, they fill the salt shaker, I can see it's glass, I know there's salt in there, and they put it on and they pack it on so tight. Have you been in those restaurants? Just absolutely nothing comes out. I go, "Okay, I've been here a hundred times. I know what to do, I unscrew the top. So I unscrew the top and then I'm going to do that careful thing and pour little bit into my palm and then, you know, like I cook, and I just do that. Well, I take the top off, set it down next to my mashed potatoes, and I shake it again. Nothing comes out.

And I'm looking at the outside, I'm looking through it, and it's full of salt, but nothing comes out. I'm looking to see if there's cellophane over the top. No cellophane. I'm looking really odd at the table and my wife's like, "What are you doing?" I reply, "I can't get any salt out of here." And then it dawned on me where I was. Right? You know down there by the beach, that humid salt air. And, you know, they had no rice in there like those guys say to put rice in there to keep them from clumping together. That thing had clumped together, it was solid. It was just a white solid mass.

I couldn't get a grain out. I was going to eat, then lick it, eat. Nothing I could do to get the salt out of that. So then I thought I'd have some fun with the waiter. I took that salt that I couldn't get a grain out of, I put it onto the edge of the table hoping the waiter would come back up, and I turned it upside down on the table, next to the cap. So you can see there that the cap was off and the salt shaker was upside down. And I just waited for the waiter to come by.

And I was just trying to play with him. Right? And he walked up and he sees it and he sees me. He looks at me like, "What are you, twelve?" You know. And I looked at him and I said, "Pick it up." It was amazing, it was so funny to watch him. I mean a very professional, a great waiter, I liked the guy. We ended up talking to him for a bit afterwards. He stood there and looked at me, looked at it, looked at me, looked like, "Are you serious?" I said, "Yeah, picked it up, pick it up." And I've got to give it to him. He reached over and he did what I would have done, he went to try and pick it up and nothing came out. And he looked at it and then he had the little experience I had, nothing comes out.

Five minutes later he comes back and he starts telling me all their procedures for the salt shakers. He's very concerned that I'm upset about the salt. "Well, we clean them every week, we replace the salt." Like, I don't care about your salt procedures. I just was trying to make you laugh, you know, just having fun with you. I know we're by the beach and I know that's what happens. Matter of fact, I started thinking of last summer at some time at the beach with my wife, Carlynn, and I remember walking on a little walk by the beach and by this little park and, you know, you see the rails that would last, probably, for years and years and years if it were here, you know, just over the hill from the beach. But over there it's just rotting out. You know the paint layers, they try to paint everything 100 times and look at the locks on the doors and you look at the pipes of the fences that are all... You just think, nothing seems to survive here. Everything corrodes, all that salt air, it just corrupts everything.

You know the Bible says when you and I become Christians, here's how Peter put it, we were spared "the corruption that's in the world." And he speaks of two things in that passage, because "we share in the divine nature." That is not with the Greek Orthodox say, by the way. That means that we have been born again, that we have the Spirit of God dwelling in us, that we are a new creature in Christ. So, I have now a new heart and I have the Spirit working in my new heart. And

then he says I also have this book filled with his great and precious promises. I've got the Bible that I live by, it's my constitution. I've got the Spirit of God convicting me and prompting me. I have these two things, the Spirit and the book that the Spirit wrote, constantly reminding me to walk in step with him and that avoids this corruption and that avoids that corruption. You know what the world doesn't have? They don't have the Spirit dwelling in them. My non-Christian counterpart doesn't have the Word of God as his constitution. They live in a world and they just can't help but encounter the corruption. It's like we're living with a dehumidifier in our lives, if you will, and the desalination device that keeps all of that out, as long as I stay in step with the Spirit, as long as I defer to the principles and the teachings and the Word of God, I save myself a lot of troubles. Matter of fact, as a Christian, thankfully, I became a Christian when I was 18, from 18-years-old until my death, you track my life and you track a non-Christian who has none of that, they're going to experience a whole lot more corruption in the world than I do. Now, of course, we're not perfect, I understand that. We grieve the Spirit. There are times I turn my back on what God has said and I incur some of that corruption, there's some rust in my life, I understand that. But if you can see my life compared to their life or your life compared to your non-Christian counterparts, they are not spared the corruptions that are in the world. Matter of fact, here's how Paul put it in Galatians 6, "God is not mocked. Don't be deceived. Whatever man sows, he reaps. If he sows to the flesh," which is all the non-Christian has left, he does not have the Spirit or the book the Spirit wrote, "he sows to the flesh, he's going to reap from the flesh, corruption." Now, do you believe that?

Even though they seem to put up a front like everything's okay. They want to reject Christ, they want to reject his Word, and yet the Bible says, they will continually have a decreasing, degenerating interior life. They'll try to affirm these things that they know are wrong. As a matter of fact, there's a thrice repeated phrase in Romans 1, God turn them over, God turn them over, God turn them over. What does that mean? They just kept saying, "I'm going to do it my way. I don't care about God, I'm not repenting for my sins, I'm not going to hail Christ as king. I'm going to do it my way. No word, no spirit in my life. I'm not interested." And the Bible says, you'll keep shutting your eyes, and what makes for peace in your life, you're going to continue to ignore that, and God says fine. Then you're going to get what you want. Matter of fact, here's how it's put in Romans Chapter 1. Here are some of the things, verse 24. "God gave them up..." To what? To just be buried in the lust of their hearts, to impurity, to dishonoring their bodies among themselves. Two verses later, "God gave them up" because they kept on rebelling against him, "to dishonorable passions," unnatural passions, sexual perversions, they're "receiving in their bodies the due penalty for their error." They're getting corrupted. Their lives from God's perspective is like that rotten fence by the beach that is just completely rotted.

Again, verse 28, "God gave them up. Their minds are debased. They continue to do what ought not be done." They try to, as best they can, to give hearty approval to people who do the same. But they're just whistling in the graveyard because their lives are full of malice, covetousness. The interior of their lives, envy, strife deceit, gossip, slander, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient, foolish, faithless, heartless. That's what's going on in the heart of non-Christians who refuse Christ. They'll put up a good front, but the Bible says you are being renewed into the image of the creator of the man who made you new, the god-man, made you new, his Spirit is in you. You increase. You go from one level of glory to another level of glory. It's called spiritual growth. They're going down a path that's called, "OK. Give them over... Give them over... Give them over..." When someone rejects Christ there's a lot of temporal consequences that you and I ought to grieve.

And then there's a whole other set. Eternal consequences. I don't have time for those. We've been through it before, but I would encourage you to look at the back of your worksheet if you've not



heard that. I mean, there was a whole series of sermons on John the Baptist early on in the book of Luke. But you might want to start with this one that gets right to the heart of the matter. Sermon 1305: "Loving Enough To Tell The Truth about Hell." John the Baptist wasn't afraid of that. Jesus wasn't afraid of that. Matter of fact, Jesus said withholding that doctrine from you is the most hateful thing that could ever happen because I'm not warning you of a real problem.

You want to talk about the eternal consequences, just like we read in our Daily Bible Reading this morning, when Jesus says if a city has light, a city like Bethsaida, a city like Chorazin, a city like Capernaum, if they have all that light and you can add Jerusalem to that, you had Lazarus raised from the dead just outside the city walls in Bethany, you had the healing at Bethesda, at the pool of Bethesda, you have the greatest miracle of all that's coming to Jerusalem and they'll still reject him, that's the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, they have all this proof about the truth of the Gospel, and they rejected him, Jesus said this: not only will you want your city to be exalted. Oh Chorazin, you want to raise yourself up to the heaven, you want to be like the Tower of Babel, but you going to be brought down.

Not only is America headed to corruption and I mean real corruption, the fall of our country, if we continue to see our people reject Christ. I'm not talking about social change, I'm not talking political activism, I'm talking about person by person, heart by heart, people in our cities coming to Christ.

But the worst thing is Jesus said it'll be worse for you on the day of judgment than it will be for Tyre, Sidon and even Sodom and Gomorrah, because they had less light than you do.

The people who you work with, when they reject Christ, particularly when you've been there, open, willing to answer questions, engaging them about their soul and they are not interested, the Bible says you ought to grieve the cost and consequences of their rejection. There are some books there as I gave you two at the bottom of the page, the bottom of the worksheet. Look down in the M's there, Molar is one of the contributors to that book, that the next guy on the list, Chris Morgan was the one that edited that book as well, but his book is fantastic to show the drift away from these things. One of his friends at another university that teaches, Robert Peterson, Hell On Trial. If we don't take seriously the doctrine of the consequences of rebellion, we're not going to take the Gospel seriously. As I said, maybe we don't believe Christ's warnings. Well, the warning here is about the temporal cost of rebellion, but, of course, Jesus always has in view the eternal cost of rebellion, that ought to get us to grieve. But in a sermon about grieving and I want to end there.

Matter of fact, I'd like to go back up, if I can take this out of order, since I got the microphone, let's do that. Verse 42. Let's end here in the middle. Just to revisit this one phrase, "Would that you, even you..." even this city that's been so bad and had such a bad history of responding negatively to the truth, "if you had known on this day the things that make for peace!" Well, they did know it but they didn't know it. They knew it but they didn't embrace it.

They could see it but they wanted to shut their eyes and hide themselves from it. But you know what? It's there. And for us, I would hope you would say, "I know what makes for peace." Do you? I'm sure you do. I'd like you to keep sharing that to the world that you live in.

Number three on your outline, let's Keep Providing The Solution. The solution that would save them all this trouble and replace all the consequences with peace. We need to share the message. Here's how it's put in Romans 5. It is our faith that makes us have peace with God. God is not your friend, if you are not in Christ. God is your natural enemy. Oh, he's kind to his enemies. He lets his rain fall on the evil and the good. But you've got to solve that sin problem and it isn't going to



happen by you being better than the next guy. You get no credit for that at all. When it comes to you standing before the tribunal of God at the end of your life, the only thing that will work is you being clothed in Christ by faith saying, "My life, my resume, exchanged for his resume. I want to be found in Christ, not having a righteousness of my own, but the one that's found through faith in Christ." Peace with God.

Not to mention, you want to talk about temporal benefits? If you have peace with God something happens on the interior of your life. It doesn't mean all the grief goes away. You're going to have periodic grief, you're going to have that anguish in your soul when you think about cities like Jerusalem or Laguna Hills or Mission Viejo or Aliso Viejo. But we'll also have a much better peace with each other. Remember that phrase, we've studied it, we've looked at it, angels come and announce the birth of Christ and they say, "Peace on earth among those with whom he is pleased." God wants to bring peace on earth, but, you know what, it's not going to be peace for everyone, it is going to be "peace on earth among those with whom he's pleased." And that means the good news is we can get together in this life, between now and the time we die, and have better relationships, better fellowship, better connection and you should say, "I don't know how non-Christians make it without the support, the friendship, the connection, the Koinonia, to use a Biblical word, that we have with each other. We have the answer to these people.

They sit there in loneliness watching their televisions, doing their things. They don't have what we have and I hope you're taking full advantage of what we have in Christ. They need affection, they need joy, they need unity of the spirit to make my joy complete and that's what we should be striving for. And God holds that out to us. Peace with God. Peace with each other. And I know we're still warring and waging in our bodies the passions that wage war against our soul, but one day God has promised peace, our bodies will be redeemed, it says in Romans Chapter 8, and no longer will there be any disconnect between my regenerate heart and my fallen body, because God's going to give me a remanufactured body that beats in perfect sync with my regenerate heart. Peace in my body and then peace in the world. Speaking of Romans, he says that in Romans Chapter 8, he says at the end of Romans when he's signing off to the Romans, he says this, "The God of peace will crush Satan under your feet." One day the Church will prevail. The gates of hell will not prevail against it. One day the kingdom of the world will become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, he will establish his throne and the winners will be those who hailed Christ as King. And there will be peace for us. Yeah, the cities of New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, they're all going to be destroyed. But the ones who will be saved are those within each of those cities and all of those states and all over the world who put their trust in Christ. You should prayerfully provide that good news, you should persuasively provide that good news, you should optimistically provide that good news because God is saving people all over the world. But he does it through agents. Agents like you and I. And the good news is you're not living in the farmlands somewhere with your neighbors miles apart. You're surrounded by people, I know you want more space, but here's the good news, when it comes to your identity in Christ, you have everything you need all around you, all the time, because you live here with me in South Orange County. Right? We can't even get up the freeway without millions of people in our way. Those people need Christ.

The Bible says you're an ambassador of Christ. And as an ambassador, I hope you see in that, just to modernize that term, that you're a missionary. A missionary is simply a Christian who has a mission. You've got a mission to bring that message of reconciliation to a lost generation. This is our mission field.

And the good news is you don't have to go to language school, you don't have to get a passport, you don't have to get on an airplane, you are a missionary right where you live right now. You are a



missionary. I imagine if you were a missionary to a foreign land, you would keep that identity in the forefront of your mind, because when you introduced yourself to people and they say, "What do you do?" You'd say, "Well, I'm a missionary." But you know what? You should see yourself as that, even though you're not serving in a foreign land.

Some people look at John Knox and they think John Knox, of history of the 16th century, they think of him as a missionary, probably because of the one phrase he's most famous for. But you know what, he wasn't a missionary to a foreign land. Oh, he traveled a lot and he went a lot of places, did a lot of things, but his heart was to see the people in his own backyard saved and that's what he's famous for. The line that his friend stumbled upon when he came up to his house, the place where he studied, he was out on a patio, out behind it, and he heard the words of John Knox as he prayed. Do you know the famous line? He was a Scotsman. And he said this about his homeland, Scotland, he said, "Give me Scotland or I die." And his friend stopped in his tracks and you can imagine his eyebrows went up like, "Wow, listen to that prayer." And he leans in and a long pause and then he hears it again, this time more earnest, more articulate, louder, "Give me Scotland or I die." And he waits. And he thinks, "Wow, what an ardent prayer." And he says it again one time more with an extra set of words in the beginning. "Oh Lord, give me Scotland or I die." Here's a man who cared about his mission field and it wasn't in some foreign land, it wasn't far away, it was right where he lived.

A lot of people don't like John Knox if you read about him in history. They think he's brash. One scholar writing on his life said this and he wrote some articles and he said, "I found John Knox to be a stubborn and cantankerous person." I know he was brash. He was indelicate in his manner. But God gave that strong-headed evangelist what he so stubbornly asked for. He gave him Scotland. He did. You cannot tell the story of the Gospel, the true Biblical Gospel, impacting Scotland without reading the name repeatedly John Knox, John Knox, John Knox, John Knox. Yeah, I've heard people say they don't even like John Knox. I had one guy say, "If he were here today I'm sure I wouldn't like him." Well, I'm sure you wouldn't like John the Baptist either. Right? Because they were more passionate about the truth than they were about impressing you or flattering you. One man standing over his grave after he had died said, "He neither flattered nor feared man." But I know what he was stubborn about, reaching his own backyard.

Oh, that there would be some people listening to this sermon this morning, knowing that Jesus, their King, cries over crowds of lost people, who would say to God today, ambitiously, give me South Orange County or I die. I just want us to start feeling a little bit of the Godly sorrow of Christ that might fuel our passion to speak up this week about Jesus. I pray to that end right now.

Pray with me. God, may it be, and I'll pray big right now, that you can't tell the story of South Orange County, the story of the Gospel, the story of the Church, without names from this congregation being brought up. Maybe someone down the hall in our kids ministry right now, who will rise up to be one of the most outspoken, articulate, intelligent, purveyors of the Gospel in our day. A John the Baptist, a John Knox, a Wycliffe, a Martin Luther. Make that true God here in this place because we need more and more people who are going to be zealous to say to you in their prayer time, "God give me more of South Orange County, give me more of this place, give me more of these people in this office, let me win them to Christ, or I just can't handle it." Let it be our dying passion God to see people reached with the Gospel, and that means we've got to start talking about it.

We know we can't do this work. You can and that means we're going to have to pray. It's a work of God. You, who can just with a word, call light out of darkness. We know that you can open up eyes



to the truth of the Gospel. So we want to be prayerful. We like to think more about how to be persuasive, that's why that Equip Conference that's coming up is so important, God. We want to be careful and thoughtful and intelligent about our presentations of the Gospel. And God we want to be the kinds that are optimistic, not always lamenting that people don't want to hear it, but being hopeful that you've called and appointed people to eternal life in every city and every neighborhood, and we want to find those people by continuing to share the message of the Gospel.

So God for those who just think this is a message for someone else, may you just, even right now, speak to their heart in a way that convicts them that they can say with Isaiah in Isaiah 6, "Here am I, send me." And turn this church into a place where you see more and more people coming to Christ. How good would it be if a year from now, we had everybody in this auditorium who could look at people who've been won to Christ, if not won, at least planted and watered and cultivated and they're moving toward that decision to follow Christ because you're at work in their hearts. May that be the experience that we can have, that we can share in that joy of reaping in the harvest. Give us eyes for the harvest, God, we know it's right. Thank you that we live in a place where there are so many opportunities. And I pray you take great joy in your church getting serious about your call. Fuel our ambition through the tears that we shed for the lost.

In Jesus name, Amen