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00:06

We're beginning at verse 16. Now we're returning primarily to the topic of the kingdom this morning. And here's the way the story began. And He came to Nazareth. Now this is he's journeyed from Judea, north, to Galilee. And we have the beginning of the Galilee and ministry, which is the beginning of His ministry. And He came to Nazareth where He had been brought up, and he went to the synagogue as his custom was on the Sabbath day. And he stood up to read. And there was given to him the book of the prophet Isaiah, he opened the book and found the place where it was written. And this is his first public address that's recorded. The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me. Because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty, those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. And He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, today, this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing. And all spoke well of him and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth and they said, Is not this Joseph's son? And he said to them, Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, Physician, heal yourself, what we have heard you did at Capernaum do here also in your own country. And he said, Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his own country. But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when there came a great famine over all the land. And Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zehra fifth in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel at the time of the prophet Elijah, and none of them was cleanse but only naman the Syrian. When they heard this, all in the synagogue, were filled with wrath. And they rose up and put him out of the city, led him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw him down headlong. But passing through the midst of them, he went away, let us pray.

03:31

Our Father, help us to understand what it was that was so disturbing in the message of Jesus, we pray that we will understand so clearly that we will be disturbed that the disturbance will bring us out of our doldrums and out of our boredom out of our cynicism and apathy to lift us up and give us new vision a new mission a new reason for living intensely in Jesus name Amen.

04:33

Now, it may not be apparent at the very beginning why these events set off such an enormous

now, it may not be apparent at the very beginning why these events set off such an enormous reaction you know, Jesus as has gotten off to a good start. You know, he they try to kill him. Right off the real He had spent a good deal of time trying to figure out the ways in which he could be most acceptable and most popular, and least offensive. And then he goes out and his first public address stirs everyone, to the point of murder. Now, obviously, he didn't spend a lot of time trying to figure out what was acceptable, and what was the popular thing to do. But maybe in those three words that begin verse 25. But in truth, I tell you, now, let's begin to construct a diagram this morning, of the significance of his message. And I remember, in the last class meeting, Jesus had said, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom is at hand. And this was, this is the message really of Jesus, he preaches the gospel of the kingdom, the good news of the kingdom. Now, let's look at this word, first of all, and ask what it means. And then I want us to see it in relation to the reading this morning. And then in relation to all of the message of Jesus, the word kingdom, the kingdom of God is at hand. Or sometimes it's translated has arrived. Or in Luke 17, when Jesus said, The Kingdom does not come with observation, people don't say, here it is, or there it is. They said, The kingdom of God is within you. Or in the midst of you. That was a that was a strange conception of the kingdom. And Luke 12, he said, fair, not little flock, where it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. And Luke 16, he speaks of the people who pressed violently into the kingdom. And throughout Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, into the hundreds of times, Jesus speaks of His kingdom the the audience's that he addressed, were familiar with the concept of the kingdom. It's an Old Testament concept. And it as is true of many other facets of the New Covenant. It was, first of all given in a concrete form. Now, I'd like to illustrate this this morning. If you are going to teach a little child what beauty is? How would you do it? Wouldn't you try to find something that, in your opinion was beautiful? Maybe a picture, maybe a rose? And you would say now, now this is beautiful. You wouldn't define it in abstract terms to a little child. Now, here we are a group of human beings that God has made, and how is he going to communicate with us? How are you going to take themes like God, love

09:00

family and make them meaningful? How are you going to take words like salvation or sin, or holiness and communicate? Well, the gods method is sound educationally. Because the way he really did it, he said, knowing that one day sacrifice was going to be at the heart of religion.

09:46

Rather than trying to tell them what a sacrifice was, he said, you get a you get a lamb, and you kill it. And you take its blood and that's a sacrifice In other words, rather than theological terminology, he took something material, something that was concrete, and gave specific instructions for the process. And then said, now, that's what I mean by sacrifice. It's something that is put to death, because of something else.

10:29

The same thing is true with the temple. He says, Now I want you first of all, build a tent.

10:43

And he gave them specific instructions for the tabernacle. And then having worked with the

tabernacle a little while, then they could understand about a temple. And so the Temple of Israel was built. And after the temple was built, God could back away and say, now that's a temple. And people could understand. And then there's the idea of our priesthood. And rather than then trying to describe simply what a priest was, God said, Now, I want to, I want to make us a priest. And so he gave long and elaborate instructions for what a priest should do and what a priest should be, and the washings, and ablutions through which a priests should go. And after it was all over, God says, now you see Aaron over there, he's a priest. He's a priest. And that's the way he dealt, he dealt in the Old Testament, with concrete items. And each of these concrete items had significance that would extend far beyond the item itself. Now, before making applications, the word kingdom was the same way. You don't really read of a kingdom and Eden, it took a while for for the language to develop. It took a while for the concept to be established. And so beginning with Abraham, God begins to carve out a people, a people who will be called by his name. And with that people, he develops the whole concept of territory, the concept of King the concept of law. And with those concepts, after the kingdom of Israel is all completed, then God can back away and say, pointing to Israel, now that's the kingdom. And there were other kingdoms as well. There was the kingdom of Babylon. There was the Assyrian kingdom. But here is God as the great schoolmaster, who is taking concrete symbols and saying, Now, that's what I mean by the word kingdom. Then when you come to the New Testament, you have these symbols, turn inward, and watch how they're turned inward. The sacrifice finds somehow a tremendous fulfillment in the death of Jesus. For years, man had wondered about the ultimate meaning of all these lambs that were slain, the sum of whose blood would have filled a river that ran through the length of the earth. And men wondered what the meaning of the blood was. And the Old Testament man when he would sacrifice he believed that something happened with the power that was in the world. He believed that somehow when he made sacrifice, that God's power to destroy was somehow held back. And that that, that he was granted liberation for another year. And so sacrifice came to signify power and life. Power to to hold back the wrath of a vengeful god and life that could continue in an approved way before God. And I think we can't underestimate the significance of this. It wasn't confined to Israel. pagan religions had sacrifices, and they believed that when the sacrifice case was right, then God's power to destroy them was somehow held back. And they were granted the privilege of living another year, acceptably. And so when Jesus came and died, they had a rich background of terminology with which to understand his death. When Jesus died, somehow God's wrath that had been been toward the lawless and the sinful, was staid. And somehow, life, eternal life was promised to mankind so that you have a two fold effect. On the one hand, there's power sufficient to take care of God's wrath that's directed toward the center. And on the other hand, because God's wrath, the staid, life can be granted to those who respond to the sacrifice. And then he says, that we become living sacrifices. In other words, if you're a Christian, you're a sacrifice. In Romans 12 chapter, he says, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies, a living sacrifice. And Hebrews the 13th, chapter, he speaks of the sacrifice of our praise. And so what a Christian is, is a living sacrifice. That is, he is a person who lives for others. He's a person who gives his life for others in the tradition of his Lord, and his master. But you see gone, or the bloody sacrifices, gone, or the lambs gone, or the turtle doves, gone are all these physical symbols. Because now we can speak the word sacrifice. And with that rich heritage of meaning, that associates itself with the literature of sacrifice in the Old Testament, we can we can comprehend, we can know what it means. The same thing with temple. In the Ephesians, the second chapter, we learned that, that we are the temple, we're the habitation of God. Well, we can understand what that means. Only if we have some knowledge of the place of the temple in Jewish life. It was the place where God's presence was. And so now in first Peter two, he says, You are living stones and your build together for a spiritual house to the Lord. At one time, God met us in a temple of stones and precious metals. But now, God dwells in us. He's taken his abode his residence, in human life. And so once again, you move from the material to the spiritual. And moving from the Old Testament to the New Testament. The priesthood at one time, was confined to a certain tribe. But now we learned from Revelation one that we have been made to be a kingdom of priests. And again,

from First Peter to that we are a royal priesthood. But how do we how do we learn what that means? Well, we learn what that means by studying the background of the word. And so what was an actual body of man from one tribe, in the Old Testament, has come to represent all of God's children. Today, you are a priest, if you're a Christian, you're a priest as surely as the Levites were priests. Now, if you don't know what a priest really is, then it would be good if you would go back and look into that so that you'll know what you are. You can be what you are better if you know but here again, is that tremendous movement from the physical to the spiritual. Now another item that that we could we haven't put in there, that that could be put in there is a matter of like incense. Now incense in the Old Testament, was a physical idea. It was a burning of incense. You This has become rather prominent in this society, again today with some of the occult groups. But in the New Testament, in the book of Revelation, The incense becomes our prayers. Our prayers and our praise go up as incense, our lives form and aroma before the throne of God. And so once again, you're leaving the physical and it's become a matter of the heart. I believe in the same category, we find instrumental music.

20:29

Instrumental music was practiced in the days of the Old Testament, David played upon his his heart upon his lyre. But once again, it moves from music that is made on a physical instrument, and prays to God, to the fruit of our lips, giving praise to his name. And I think that one would at would would, as expect to find, today in the church, a literal temple with literal sacrifices, and with literal Levitical priests, and with literal incense, as he would define a literal instrument of music. You see, with several of these matters, it's not that there are explicit rejections of it in the New Testament. That's not the point. The point is that there are things here that are inconsistent with the nature of the New Testament with the nature of New Testament worship. And when one understands the tremendous movement, from the childhood, of religion, in which concrete specific symbols were given, that were designed to furnish asked the background for language, the background for concepts of the new creation, that Jesus was going to inaugurate, then a lot of the pain and a lot of the problem of biblical interpretation is removed. It's difficult when we use the Old Testament, as a happy hunting ground for whatever might suit our particular tastes. All right now, applying that to kingdom. There was a kingdom of Israel, physical, literal King, physical cabinet. And now Jesus says that the kingdom is within you. And Luke, 17:20, and 21. Paul says in Romans 14:17, for the kingdom of God is not made and drink, but it's righteousness. It's its peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. In the fourth chapter of First Corinthians at verse 20, he says, The kingdom comes with power. It's not a thing that exists, or is perpetuated simply in Word, but it's in power. And so we move from a physical kingdom in one place, to the reign of God in human hearts. And that's what the kingdom is today. It's the reign of God in human hearts. It's God's rule established in people's hearts. Now, we'll see later that one was either born physically into the kingdom of Israel, or he wasn't. It was a matter of birth, and therefore, it was an involuntary matter. But Jesus came offering the kingdom of God on a purely voluntary basis. No one was forced, no one was coerced. Everyone was invited. And it's those who voluntarily accept God's will God's rule, God's reign for their lives, who become the ones who make up the kingdom of God. Now, there is a danger, that we become members of the Church of Christ in much the same way that Jews became members of the kingdom of Israel.

24:44

It's a perfunctory matter that it isn't voluntary. That it's more one joining a certain place and taking all uncertain doctrinal beliefs, and associating themselves with one group of people than it is anything else. And that produces always miserable, unfruitful, unproductive, unhappy Christians.

25:21

If you've just become a member of the church, you've missed the glory in the splendor of the message of Jesus. The splendor of his message is a direct challenge to your heart, we'll put our man back up this morning. The message of Jesus isn't simply taking this body and joining it to a group of people. That's not the way it begins. But rather deep in the heart of man in the control center of a person,

26:02

the message of the Kingdom comes and it challenges and it disturbs. And then the man decides on his own, without any force at all, if he wants to participate,

26:22

nobody has to participate. Nobody has to enter the reign of God, nobody is forced. But it's an offer that Jesus makes to every person, that if you want to, you can. If you want to, if you want to enter God's rule, then you may, but you don't have to. And Jesus was, was constantly cautioning people against making the decision too quickly. He was always saying, You ought to think it over before you decide. We usually have the approach that says come on and do it now and then think it over. That's why we have an ignorant church in many instances. Becoming a part of the Kingdom of God requires a conscious, voluntary decision on your part. And you must consider what the demand of the kingdom is. And you must decide whether or not you will accept that demand or not. And if you haven't confronted the kingdom of God in that dimension, then you must do it now. Otherwise, you'll never really know why you're a Christian you'll never really tap the power sources of Christianity. And so one of the things that we ought to do in this course is to see how many of us

28:19

are really participants in other words, God has something going down here and he invites anyone who wants to share that to do so. But if you don't want to share it, then you don't do it

28:44

and so you ask, Do I want to share that? Do I want to participate now let's let's back away from from that general Is this the way you understand the church? Anybody liked to come in is this strike anybody is it's new, different

29:20

models that we put on so young, in elementary school, it's hard for them to really understand what for the rest of your life and do we still

29:42

owe you all that dies and the ones that are? All right. Okay,

30:00

Do you want to respond to that

30:17

Do you understand

30:25

you're not supposed to know it all but I don't know enough

30:34

All right, Greg, did you have okay

31:12

all right, the question is how do you relate orthodoxy or maybe to use a little more familiar Church of Christ word doctrine to the idea of the kingdom where did where do the doctrines fit in if if the kingdom of God is the rule of God voluntarily accepted by a person then where do the doctrines fit in we'd like to chew on that a little bit does it make any difference what you believe hey you're hesitant doesn't make any difference

32:24

all right. Got a lot of different different religious groups in the world because a lot of people don't think it makes any difference what one believes most of you are in the church of Christ Why aren't you saying something

32:51

hard to kingdoms built on the doctrine how does that fit you like that?

33:42

All right, now we've got a lot of really good words zinging around here. Orthodoxy doctrine legalism

we haven't no one has used the word liberalism yet but it would fit into this general context now remember okay

34:19

already says doctrine is rules. The kingdom is a way of life

34:34

my wife by air by Weird duckling,

34:42

we were on the right day. Y'all very

34:47

good. But we here we're talking. We're not done. Alpha diversity The third document that

35:09

I mean every every

35:16

every document read or not doctors are loving God All right

35:40

are live

35:55

okay

36:04

put up with with our doctrine because we love ourselves

36:15

now there's something peculiar that's happening here this morning what's what's happening in the comments so far that's peculiar why pardon separation between church and life Are you for or against doctrine

36:50

so far I've kind of had the feeling that you're a little bit negative where doctrine is concerned

37:10

all right, some say doctors a set of rules some say doctors a set a life but how can we know until we know first what doctrine is

37:20

okay

37:40

all right

37:48

alright. So, you think that sometimes we have a tendency to define doctrine too narrowly a little bit

38:04

is not something that we have elders are a part of that are that everybody knows the power

38:28

and power struggle in conflict and somebody decide how worship should be

38:52

designed for everybody how they can work wonders

39:07

Alright, let's see now if we can shape this up. And let's, let's begin with two points that we've already made in the course so far and see if we can now begin the process of linkage. First of all, let's begin with remember the concept that we gave of sin. That Sin means that you're that there is a trajectory for a human being that can hit the bull's eye of what a human being is for and what a human being is about. And that that the whole point of life is to understand the truth about life well enough to know when we're on this trajectory that's headed for the bullseye. And when we They're out here somewhere missing the whole target. And we don't want to wait until we drop off and a hole six feet deep, and awaken to discover that we were on the wrong road all along the way. There is a way that seemeth right unto a man but the end there are other ways of death. Now, first of all, the 10 commandments were given number 123456789, and 10. And that's precisely what the 10 commandments were for. They were designed to keep a man on the right trajectory. They were designed to keep a man from floundering around out here in Wire Zone. They were designed to keep him on course. And therefore they were like little retro rockets. And when the human being strays, there was a commandment that said, Wait a minute, adultery is not the right trajectory. Don't do that. Put your life back in line. When a human being was out here as a thief, there was a commandment that said, Wait a minute, that's not the way to go. And it points you back to truthfulness and integrity and honor. And so on with all the commandments, the Commandments were designed to put the pressure back toward the right trajectory, so that a man would not sin, or missed the mark. missed the target. So that it wouldn't be an era that went sailing off somewhere and never found its mark. Now that's what that's what sin is. It's missing that trajectory. And the 10 commandments were were 10 points designed to show us what the trajectory was. And so the design of the 10 commandments was to produce a healthy human being not an unhealthy human being. The 10 commandments were designed to bring life. The 10 commandments were designed to bring wholeness. They were designed to bring integrity Don't badmouth the 10 commandments. And say it's just a bunch of rules are just a bunch of thou shalt nots. The design of the commandments was a good design. And happy is the human being who was able to approach the moral life that was depicted in the 10 commandments. We need to overcome any negativism that lingers in our hearts about the commandments. The same thing is true of the law itself. The law was intended to keep a man on the right course. Now I couldn't do it. It couldn't do it because the heart of man lacked capability. The heart of man was infected to to greater degree, his stream of life had been poisoned beyond the ability of the law to purify. And so the law could not really do for man what man needed done for him. And it had the effect of instead of bringing some men closer, it only magnified their knowledge of sin. And this is Paul's point in Romans that, that by the law comes the knowledge of sin. Here was a way that the law pointed to that was right and that was wholesome and that was moral, and that was righteous and that was good. And men broke their backs literally trying to do it. And they just couldn't. And the more they tried the more aware of their missing the mark that they were. And so instead of producing a healthy situation, it produced

44:48

Christ came to do for us what the law could not do. That is make a man who or make him healthy, or save him. That's what the whole mission of Jesus and so the kingdom of God is designed to put in to the law, the content that was lacking in the law. The Kingdom contains the heart of the law. With the exception, that with the kingdom comes power and grace, adequate to make our lives new. The law did not have that sense of grace. The law did not bring the same sense of love, the law did not bring the same sense of the Fatherhood of God. It couldn't, because the law couldn't deal with the problem that was that was at the heart of the wrongness, the problem of sin, but Jesus came, and through His sacrifice, he dealt with the problem. He dealt with sin, he knocked down the wall, he tore away the

barriers, so that God and man could be at peace with one another. That's the second point that we want to link together. And that is, when Jesus came. And let's make his entrance into the world. He comes and an eventually, he dies.

46:35

That's what the law could not do. That's what the law couldn't do. The law couldn't die. The law could bring about the death of even those who who adhered to it.

46:56

But the law could not die. For us. The blood of bulls and goats slain by the 1000s in the Old Testament, could not take away sin. And so the problem remained until Jesus came, Jesus dealt with a problem on the cross. Now, out of that, they're gross two points. This becomes first of all, the faith. Now, do you recall earlier, when we tried to define the core, the heart of New Testament Christianity, what is it? What is the fee? Yes, Christ died. Christ was buried, and Christ arose. That's the heart of our faith. No one can be a Christian, who does not believe with all of his heart that Jesus Christ died for our sins was buried, and was raised the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. That's why every world religion is ruled out. It's excluded. There is only one basis upon which a man can be made righteous before God. And that is, through union with Jesus death, burial and resurrection, there is no other way.

48:37

And that can strike us as terribly offensive. But that is the faith. And if you would turn to the second chapter of Acts,

48:50

that is precisely the one point that they labored to prove. And if you would turn to every sermon that is recorded in the Book of Acts, that was the point at which there was absolutely no room for any compromise whatsoever. Whatever else the people believed or didn't believe there was one thing for sure, if they ever became a Christian, if they ever entered the room, the kingdom of Almighty God, they must believe and be convinced that Jesus died for our sins was buried and was raised the third day in keeping with the scriptures. That is the point at which men were admitted into the fellowship of God's kingdom. And it was the only point at which men were admitted into that fellowship. And it is the point that is least clear today in the conversion process. In most people's lives, people become Christians for a whole lot of different reasons. And oftentimes, they are not aware that they are becoming Christians because of This faith that God was in Jesus Christ present, alive, dealing with our transgressions, with our failures and our frustrations. And when we preach the gospel today to the non religious world, if there is such a world as that this is where the message must be focused. It must not focus anywhere else. The point of conviction to which we are trying to bring the world to its knees, is the faith that Jesus died for the sins of man. And that he was raised. The church that really believes that will be alive on on fire for Christ, the church that believes that nominally will be a dead church. Nobody can really believe that Jesus died for our sins according to the scriptures and was raised from the dead on the third day, conquer triumphant, victorious over death victorious over the

forces of the Hadean world victorious over the demons of hell, no one can really believe that with all of his heart and not be alive to tell it I have a feeling that those who don't tell it don't believe it all set in First Corinthians 4:13 I have believed and therefore I speak and the church today is done with a message of Christ because in too many instances the church today believes this fact simply as a fact but it has no emotional impact in their lives whatsoever okay.

52:12

I think so.

52:21

Alright, let's, let's see if we can speak to that, by looking at this as step number one. That's not the whole story. But that's where the story begins. You see in there was there was a Jewish world. And there was a pagan world, who made up the first century church, each of whom was converted at this point, and at no other point.

53:02

It was at this point, and at absolutely no other point. And the more you think about that point, the more incredible it is, that a man that a woman in the 20th century would dare to say, I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. That is, I believe that Almighty God, the power that moves the world was in that peasant Jesus Christ, who was born among the stinking steaming dung of animals in Bethlehem, of Judea, and was finally murdered on a cross by religious and governmental authorities that in that man was Almighty God, who has dealt with a basic problem of my heart and your heart and the hearts of all the world.

53:54

Now, that's something to believe, and how in the world we can believe that and be silent. is more than I'm able to comprehend. How a church can believe that and not run with a message is more than I'm able to understand how a church can believe that and be blind and materialistic is more than I can understand. And the only understanding that can come and the only hope for renewal that can come is for individuals, one by one, which is always the way that people enter the kingdom to to see what the core is and to begin responding to it. With all of the heart, it can turn a campus upside down. If you'll just turn a half a dozen people loose on it, who believes that and are willing to lay down their lives and die for anybody because of it. Criticism does this N. apathy. hdacis N. Brethren, do us n not Because fault lies with, with everything that's around us. But because in our hearts, the fires of faith are nothing more than than cold coals. There isn't a power, on earth or in hell that can stop the man, the woman who believes with all of his heart that Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of God. He is the world's conquering hero. He is the world's unconquerable man. He is the person who cannot be stopped. The story is, is is told of of a man of the East, who was about to have his tongue cut out, because they preached, they asked him if they had any last words to say. And he said yes, oh for 1000 tongues to sing my great Redeemers praise. Sofia and in Poland, when the arresting Polish officers had come to disband the meeting of the Christians, and forbid them to meet again, legally. She stood in as the 50 or so is fixed 50 or 60 or so Christians passed out she was saying right beside

the guards who disbanded and broken up the meeting, she said, we will meet again Friday night. We'll be meeting again Friday night, we will be meeting again Friday. And I told every one of them as they went out. She said instead of meeting twice a week, we're going to have to meet three times a week because this is an occasion that's going to require more prayer and more faith and we need each other. She spent 25 years in confinement or 25 months in confinement, for that kind of faith. But the church is spreading in Poland today. Because there are people whose mouths cannot be stopped. A silent church and unbelieving church, a church that doesn't know why it's in. In the church, the church doesn't know why it's in the kingdom, a church that doesn't appreciate the fact that God has invited us to participate in his work in the world. He's a church that won't have much impact in the community. But let's let's let's turn to the second step, there is a step two. And step number two, for lack of a better term, let's call it corollary. How do you spell it? I don't know if that's right or not. But that's close. I think that there's another there's an A, this may be an A I don't know, maybe it's stroke a corollary beliefs, we won't hang up on the spelling.

57:53

I always have liked spelling. And I'll never forget the first really big word I learned to spell. I told everybody I saw spelled it for everybody I saw whether they wanted to hear it or not. It was the word biscuit. That may be small to you. But when I first learned to spell biscuit, that was my coming of age. There are corollary beliefs that are so to associate themselves with the faith. Now here is here is the problem. When that when the corollary beliefs become the point, the core of the Christian faith, then we're going to have problems. For example, how are these people who are voluntarily participating in God's reign? How are they going to worship?

58:48

I believe inspired writings tell us how to do it. How are they going to organize? inspired writings tell us? What is their life together going to be like? I believe the inspired writers tell us see, what's their work? What will be the dimensions of their work? And again, inspired writings tell us and so what we have is a volume of people who are responding to the message of Jesus Christ, God's work in Jesus Christ and who become the Christians.

59:46

Now, rather than being a loosely, organized, permissive, unstructured, weak and flabby fellowship, the core eleri beliefs impose upon them the discipline on faith and life, that is essential to the progress of any group who's going to do anything. Now, one accepts as voluntarily, and as joyfully, the discipline of the Lord, as he accepts the initial offer of salvation, made by the Lord. I have no desire anywhere in my heart, to worship and anyway, but according to the clues that are contained in the scriptures. I don't want the the organism of which I'm a part to be organized on any other basis than that which is clearly delineated in the scriptures. I don't want my life together with my brothers and sisters on any other basis than that one, beautifully, simply outlined in the scriptures. Rather than the scriptures being something that we impose, upon a fellowship of people, the scriptures become that body of information that these who have given everything they are in have for the Lord Jesus Christ to say, Lord, how. Then you read and as you read, then that begins to shape your life together, shows you how to live in harmony shows you how to live in love shows you how to live in peace. So it shows you how to get the most mileage out of a body of people. It's all designed to, to strengthen and

to and to promote the progress of the kingdom. It's not, it's not designed to hold us down. It's not designed to hold us back. It's not designed to bury us, it's not designed to be the place at which we're going to stop and fight every two or three years. And the problem is, when a person says, I believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and I'm willing to give my life as his slave. Everything I have, from the clothes on my back to the money in the bank, to the possessions that have my name on them. They're all his, he can dip in and out of it at will. I have no desire whatsoever to hang on to any of it, not a shred of it. The persons who are converted on that basis on that basis, are persons who joyfully await the word of the Lord that that adds the further shape and direction to their lives. They're hungry, and they're thirsty for the word. And rather than coming to the word with the kind of negative bent that says, Do I have to do that, and do I have to do something else and they're coming to the to it from exactly the opposite direction? It's speak Lord, thy servant heareth command and I will obey. And I don't know. I don't know if the discipline that brings structure and solidarity and stability to the Lord's people can ever be accepted and can ever be practiced biblically until we are sure that we're on the right foundation of faith.

1:04:02

All you have to do to a person who is converted at this point, relative to the giving of his possessions, and simply to show him what the will of the Lord is? And he will do it and he will do it gladly.

1:04:25

You see, when a person is convinced that God did this in this way, he's ready to believe anything that God says. And there's such a difference in our coming to the word and are coming to our fellowship and the church are coming to doctrine. Believing that that that is is the is the discipline that brings stability to our lives. I need it That's that that is the that puts muscle into my faith. It puts direction in my mission. And rather than leaving those who are one to this message, to fight for themselves in an alien world, it brings them together in a fellowship. It brings them together in a community. And that community's watchword is simplicity. Its simplicity. And so when they come together it's not simply what they do. But it's the joy with which they do it. Once in a while, in fact, quite often people say, you know, the Lord's Supper, we need lots of teaching on the Lord's Supper. You know what the biggest teaching of all we need on the Lord's Supper is the conviction that the Lord of the supper is indeed the Christ of God. No man who believes that will struggle along with the significance of the supper. And if that conviction is not there, I don't care how you rearrange it. I don't care what kind of, of atmosphere you can bring. It will never get beyond shallow, superficial sentimentality. The Lord's Supper is a tremendous celebration of praise to God, for his liberation of our lives accomplished in Jesus Christ the Lord. And how could one live and the freedom and purpose of Jesus Christ for a week and not rejoice when he came together with his brothers and sisters together around the table, the Lord, to eat and drink and to remember the Lord's death and to proclaim His coming again. Give it to me under a tree in deepest Africa, and it'll be the sweetest feast of the week. Give it to me in a bright shining silver tray at Minar lane that zips by me almost too fast for me to get any of it. And it'll be the same. The problem isn't in the speed with which it's done. The problem is in the conviction of faith, which lies behind it. Now that doesn't say that we shouldn't always be bringing our best to such matters as singing, the Lord's Supper and, and our worship. We should. But it does say that so called renewal and joy and celebration, and meaning, genuineness and significance can never be brought to the church when it comes together, or when it's apart until their lives and that

church, the deep and abiding fear that their alliances have been liberated by Jesus Christ. And that God has invited them peasants foolhardy, crippled, tattered as we are, to join him as an active participant in spreading his rain, to the ends of the earth

1:08:58

the life of Jesus

1:09:05

maybe, maybe we only have one point for the course. And maybe that grows out of my own loathing. But I loathe the spirit in would be followers of Jesus, who are dead headed and ignorant and unexcited about the work of God, I loathe that I despise it and detest it. And the message to each one of us is if we're going to be Christian, then let's be a Christian. And if we're not then grab another philosophy and good luck.

1:10:06

There's too much at stake here to be quiet and weak about it. And I must remind you before going further today at the design of this course isn't trying to make everybody a Christian

1:10:28

but it is designed to make you understand what it means to be a Christian so that you can make an intelligent decision about it. And then, if you are convinced, then spread the good news, through your dormitories and across the campus that Jesus is alive and well today. We'll see you next week.

1:11:04

A great

1:11:05

day