

**Confronting Unbelief**  
**Pastor Ty Blackburn**  
**John 5:41-47**  
**January 22, 2012**

Turn with me in your Bibles if you will to John 5. We've been in this chapter for a number of weeks and this may well be our last time in it today if we get through the outline. The title of the message this morning is 'Confronting Unbelief'. John 5:41-47 is the passage. In this passage we have Jesus do just that. He confronts in particular Jewish unbelief, but in doing so helps us to have a pattern for how we can really help people around us who don't believe. This passage aims directly at that measure of unbelief of the Jewish people, but also at religious people, people who think they're Christians but who you know are not because their hearts are not for God. They may be very religious. They may be Baptists, or Presbyterians, or they may be in other clearly unbiblical faiths. This passage helps us to focus on real heart issues.

I made a new friend the other day, the man whose vision and burden led to the founding of the ministry 'Jewish Believers in Jesus'. His name is David Zauber, a good friend of many in our congregation. Particularly, he went to school with Ken Temple. They were roommates. I was blessed to meet him through Ron and Dianne Sheintal, who are intimately involved in this wonderful ministry 'Jewish Believers in Jesus'. David was the man God used to start the ministry, and as we were talking the other day in the office, fellowshiping together, he was telling me about how the Lord had brought him to faith in Christ. He grew up in a Jewish home. One of the things he shared, and what led to a lot of the burden for the ministry, is he said, "I realized, as you read the scriptures, one of the purposes of God in giving the Gospel to the Gentiles was to provoke the Jews to jealousy. We have their Messiah. We have the One in Whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. We have the One Who is the Author of life, and He is their Messiah."

Now he and his wife have 12 kids. I thought that was pretty interesting, 12. He's a really faithful, Jewish person. Anyway, under the providence of God he has 12 kids. He said that in all the years growing up, the Gospel came to him through his sister being converted through the college ministry of Navigators. He said, "I reflected back on my time. I had been to a church one time, and I knew many Christians growing up in the area, and none of those Christians ever once said to me, 'Do you know that the Jesus I worship is Your Messiah?'" And he said, "That

is according to Romans 11:11, exactly the way the Gospel should be presented to Jewish unbelievers around us. In a loving, humble way, but in a way that really does seek to provoke some godly jealousy. I found life, and you? You, who have the Old Testament scriptures and the covenants and the feasts and all of the beautiful pointers that pointed to Christ, you do not? How can that be?"

This is essentially what the Lord, Jesus Christ does in this passage. He tries to confront this astonishing unbelief that He has encountered by saying to them, "You are rejecting Me because you are rejecting the essence of what it means to be a Jew," which must have been explosive words when He first uttered these words, particularly the last three verses of our passage, Verses 45-47 of John 5, when He spoke about the fact that Moses would now stand in judgment of them. Nothing more startling and stunning could have been said to the Jews who, as Jesus tells us, were hoping in Moses. In this we have the Good Shepherd lovingly seeking lost sheep. That's what you have in this passage. Sometimes love has to be strong and confrontational, and that's what Jesus is doing here. He is strongly confronting unbelief, trying to slap them out of their stupor and say, "Look to Me and find life." We'll read Verses 39-47. We're focusing on Verses 41-47.

***John 5:39-47 ~ You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; 40 and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life. 41 I do not receive glory from men; 42 but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. 43 I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. 44 How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God? (And in these explosive words:) 45 Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. 46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"***

Let's pray together:

*Our Father, we thank You for speaking to us. We thank You for giving us Your Word in written form and then giving us the spirit to illuminate and to open our hearts to receive it. We pray today that You would do just that, that the entrance of Thy Word might bring light, and in Your light we might see light. We pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.*

Remember that in this passage, what Jesus has done is He healed a man who was lame for 38 years. He did it on the Sabbath, and we've talked about this in previous messages, so that He could then show them His glory. Because essentially He says, "The reason that I have not violated the Sabbath is because I am Myself, God. God works on the Sabbath. God, the Father, works on the Sabbath. And God, the Son, works on the Sabbath." He has unveiled for them the splendor and glory of the triune God. He opened up as it were, the inner workings of the Trinity, the communion of God. He senses and in His omniscience He's aware of the hardened unbelief that has happened in response to the revelation of glory. Remember John is selecting certain things, certain discourses, and certain miracles. There are so many miracles and wonderful things Jesus said, but he's just chosen these so that you may believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and then believing they may have life in His name. He's particularly aimed, we've said, interestingly enough, at Jews in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, or Jewish proselytes who were associated with the synagogues throughout the Mediterranean area. He's particularly focused on bringing them to see Jesus as Messiah. So he, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, recalls the words of Jesus in this encounter with the religious leaders, with the scribes and the Pharisees, with the Jewish people at large who have come to see how He's going to respond to the animosity and antipathy of the Jewish hierarchy. In these words you have Jesus Himself inviting them to turn from unbelief to belief. He is basically saying, "Your religion is a sham. Your faith is false. You are not Jews. You are not followers of Moses." In the climax of that appeal, Verses 45-47, particularly Verse 45, ***Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses,...*** This is shocking, particularly in light of the way Jewish people saw Moses, and particularly in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century.

Scholars tell us that 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jews believed, largely based on a Jewish apocryphal work called 'The Assumption of Moses' or 'The Testament of Moses', that Moses was even in Heaven at the present after he was taken up by God, after he died on the mountain at the end of Deuteronomy. That he was taken up into Heaven by God and that there he continues to maintain intercession for the people of Israel. This was their doctrine, kind of the common doctrine. Now, of course, Moses was in fact an intercessor for Israel. When you read Genesis through Deuteronomy, you find again and again Moses having to intercede saying, "Don't destroy them." He was an intercessor, but they believed that he had an ongoing intercession so that he was the defender of Israel. God says, "He is not your defender." Jesus says, "At the Day of Judgment, he will be the one who accuses you, because Moses wrote about Me and you have not believed what Moses wrote. There is complete consistency between Me and Moses. You reject Me because you have utterly rejected Moses." What He does is He makes a three-prong assault on

their self-righteous, their self-confidence in their Jewish heritage. He gives us three points that really help us in witnessing to unbelievers, or people who we think may not have genuinely, from the heart become converted. Folks that we know that are trapped in legalism. Jews who have not received Christ. These three areas that Jesus deals with are things that we can use to examine our own hearts. “Am I merely religious or have I truly become a follower of God?” Questions we need to allow the Spirit to search us.

He basically says, “There are three problems that illustrate the fact that you are not being faithful to your heritage, that you are not truly the Israel of God.” These three problems are three points. We’re going to make them into declarative statements that Jesus is making about the nation of Israel in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, about the unbelievers around Him. There are such a number of opponents. We’re going to see as we read through John’s Gospel, the opposition grows. The opposition intensifies until finally they take Him and nail Him to the cross, through the hands of the wicked Romans.

1) “You are not truly of God because you do not love God”

***John 5:42 ~ but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.***

That is a very powerful way of saying, “You don’t love God. You don’t even have it in you.” He’s not saying that you don’t love God, I mean, He is saying that. He could say that, “You don’t love God,” like I just said in my point, but He even says it more forcefully, ... ***you do not have the love of God in yourselves.*** It’s not even there. You’re religious but you don’t have the love of God in you. Then He proves His statement in Verse 42 and in Verse 43:

***John 5:43 ~ I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.***

What He’s saying is, “If you loved God, you would love Me because I have come in His name, in His character, under His authority, to reveal His person to you.” Remember what He says later in the Gospel, ***He who has seen Me has seen the Father;... “I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me;... therefore, you do not love God. You claim to love God, you claim to follow Yahweh, but you do not know Yahweh and you do not love Him, because if you did you would love Me.”*** Just think about that. If you love somebody, you have a dear friend that you love and then you meet their son or their daughter. Isn’t there

just a natural affinity for the child? Some of you may think if it's a little child, "I wish they'd discipline that child a little more," but still there is a sense of love that you feel for that child. You may think that about any of us, including myself, or whatever. But anyway, I got myself wrapped around in a circle there. I hate when that happens.

The issue is if you love the father you love the child. Why? Because you see the attributes of the father, the parent, in the child. You see a little girl that looks like her mom. You see that, and if you love the mom you're going to love the child. And how much more is this true of Jesus? For the scripture tells us He is the image of the invisible God. God was not visible and then Jesus came and the God Who was communicated about, prophesied about, preached about throughout the Old Testament suddenly became visible. If you loved Him, if you loved the Father, you would love the Son. That's what Jesus was saying. In fact, the fact that you don't love God is made even more evident because the second part of Verse 43 He says, **...if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.** The fact that you don't love God and won't receive the One Who comes from God, Who looks like God. You'll receive anything else. I mean, if anybody comes in his own name, you're going to receive him. In fact, it's interesting, the 1<sup>st</sup> Century saw a number of false Messiahs, even into the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century an extraordinary number of false Messiahs came along, and the Jewish people flocked to them one after another, but they didn't come to Christ. Why? Because they hated God. "He looks too much like Him." They completely repudiated the visible manifestation of the God of Israel. They loved religion but they did not love God. They loved their tradition but they did not love God. They loved even their theology but they did not love God.

One of the reasons that people hate you and me still today is if we tell them about the Lord, or as we, by God's Spirit in us, begin to look more like Him. You know, **Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called...** What? **...sons of God.** When you're taking the Gospel to someone, you are a peacemaker. In deed and in word, when you're taking the Gospel to someone you're a peacemaker. If you are called the sons of God, why do you look like your Dad? At those very moments sometimes you will find intense opposition and hatred because you are making visible in some small way the invisible God that they hate. Unbelievers hate God. The glory of it is that the Spirit will sometimes, through those moments, give them a new heart and they will feel like the words describe in Isaiah 62, **How lovely on the mountains are the feet of Him Who brings good news?** How lovely are His feet? That's amazing.

So He says, “You do not love God. You do not love Him. You love your traditions, you love the trappings of religion, but you do not love God. You have not moved in your heart to understand the real point of it all.” Now this is a place for us to stop and examine ourselves. How are we doing? If you don’t have the love of God in you, you’re not a Christian, but even when you have the paradigm shift and God’s Spirit gives you a new heart and now you have the love of God in you, you still have to labor not to go back to your old ways. You have to remember that it’s all about loving God. How do I express my love for God? How do I get sidetracked? And Satan is always trying to sidetrack us. Even after we become Christians, and we become convinced of the Gospel, and we really are born again, we find ourselves winding back off the path into those worn ruts. One of those ruts is that we obey God out of any other motive than love. In fact, turn over to John 14, because one of the important things that he teaches as he goes through the Words of Christ in his book is, “How do you show your love for God?” If the love of God is in you, how does it manifest? There ought to be affection, yes. There ought to be enthusiasm, yes. But what’s the real measure of love for God. In John 14:15, Jesus says this to His disciples:

***John 14:15 ~ “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.***

If you love God, if you love Christ, you will obey Him. He hammers that theme home. Look down at Verse 21:

***John 14:21 ~ He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.”***

***John 14:23 ~ Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. 24 He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s who sent Me.***

John says in 1 John 5:3:

***1 John 5:3 ~ For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.***

If we love God we want to obey Him. The Jews had somehow found obedience without love. I mean, talk about the Pharisees. Remember how Paul describes

himself before conversion? “A Pharisee of Pharisees. Zeal, as unsurpassed, as judged by the law blameless,” Paul said. That’s astonishing. They keep the law and yet he had missed the whole point of obedience as an expression of love. It’s an expression of a personal relationship with a living God. What the Jews had actually done, and this is the danger of legalism, is that you obey God to keep God away from you, to keep God off your back. You do certain things so that you can feel okay about yourself, and you can assuage your guilt and keep God at a distance. The beauty of Christian love for God is that obedience now is an expression of love. We obey because we love Him. We used to hate God. We used to run from Him like Adam did, run and hide. But now we love Him, and when we obey Him, we have an opportunity to express that love. In fact, look at John 15, he’s continuing to teach about obedience and he gives this beautiful image of the vine and the vine dresser, and he says, “Abide in me and I in you.” What does it mean to abide in Christ? Look at that picture, a branch of a vine abiding in the vine. The intimacy, the connectedness. Look what he says on down in Verse 9.

***John 15:9 ~ Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love.***

Okay, abide in His love. He wants us to abide in Him. How? Look at the next verse:

***John 15:10 ~ If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.***

What He’s saying is, “Look, you abide in My love by keeping My commandments in the same way that I love the Father and abided in His love by keeping His commandments.” The Lord Jesus Christ was continually living His life before the face of His father. He was continually looking to what God wanted Him to do. He was continually thinking about pleasing only the Father. That was the one thing that mattered. He says, “Live toward Me the same way I lived toward the Father.” The wonder of it is, when we come to the Gospel we understand that we love because He’s already loved us. We don’t obey in order to be accepted by God. No, Jesus has purchased a perfect acceptance. He’s given us a perfect righteousness. We can’t add anything to it. In fact, the best thing that you and I ever do is still stained, and soiled, and dirty. The most wonderful works we do are not fit to be brought into the presence of God, but somehow the blood of Christ interceding for us makes them ascend as a sweet-smelling aroma to God. But it’s only through His blood, it’s only through His atoning work. We don’t have to obey to be accepted by Him, we obey *because* we have been accepted by Him. It is a joy. When we

forget this, we start obeying because we don't want somebody else to think badly of us, or because we want to please God in some way. When we forget the Gospel and that we're already accepted, then our obedience grinds to a halt, it becomes burdensome. We need to learn to live every moment before the face of God.

This is such a challenge. I've been trying to do this in such little ways. I mean, we got a puppy a week ago Saturday. Dogs are an interesting part of life, and I've shared that often in my sermons, I know. "Through the years, we can track what things he's said about dogs." Anyway, I love my dog. We have a new boxer puppy the Koontz' gave us. We got it on Saturday night, which was a tactical error for a pastor to get a new puppy on Saturday. This was the second Saturday and it wasn't much better than the first Saturday. I've been trying to bring the training of the dog in a more intentional way than I ever have before in making it an act of worship and obedience, because the dog will irritate you. It's like having a baby, but it's worse in some ways, right? Amen! That's right! There are moments when you really want to unleash anger and try to convince this thing through anger that's the way it is. "I'll show you that I am a lot bigger than you. There's nothing you can do." Right? But what we have to do is say, "Wait a minute. How is the dog really going to obey me if he senses that I'm out of control for practical purposes?" If I'm angry it's going to frighten him, it messes him up. It's like a picture of child-rearing. Your child can't obey you properly if you're out of control. You've got to be in control. How do you do that? You make this an act of worship. You're under His authority. At this moment, I'm under His authority. "Father, help me train this dog right now. I don't want to be training this dog right now, but I rejoice that you've allowed this to happen and I cooperated in it by saying, 'Yes.'" So that helped me train this dog. It's amazing what that does to the whole dynamic. Now I'm worshiping God by training the dog. That's the way all the parts of our lives are supposed to be.

How much food we eat at a particular meal, we ought to learn that the joy of it is to do it in worship. It's not that we're sitting there with each bite saying, "Am I supposed to eat? Am I not supposed to eat?" You can over analyze it, but there's a sense in which as you eat this is worship. "Lord, thank You for making food taste so good. Let me savor this slowly. Do I need an extra portion or not?"

2) "You're seeking glory from one another and you're not seeking glory from God":

***John 5:44 ~ How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?***

It's interesting. He's not talking about glorifying God, although that's certainly a part of this, but he's saying, "You're not seeking glory from God. You're seeking glory from man. How can you possibly believe if you're seeking glory from one another?" In fact, it's impossible to believe if you're seeking glory from people, if you're seeking to please men, if you're living for the fear of man.

John Calvin writes about this. He says, "*This is a remarkable passage which teaches that the gate of faith is shut against all whose hearts are preoccupied by a vain desire of earthly glory. For he who wishes to be somebody in the world must become wandering and unsteady so that he will have no inclination towards God. Never is a man prepared to obey the Heavenly doctrine until he is convinced that his principle object throughout his whole life ought to be that he may be approved by God.*"

It's all about that. What does God think of me? And when you have that in view, it puts an end to any desire for earthly glory, doesn't it? What does God think of me? He sees me as I am. He knows the impure motives of my heart, even as I am serving in the power of His Spirit, because I am still tainted with sin. And the one with whom I have to do, sees everything, so that I come before Him continually aware of my unworthiness, and in that, I am now in a posture of humility, I see again the glory of my Savior, and I realize that I have His affection, His love, and now by my action, I just want to be pleasing to Him. Seek the glory that comes from God.

In Verse 44, the NIV translates the word 'glory' as praise. ***You seek the praise from one another, and do not seek the praise that is from the one and only God.*** The King James uses the word honor there instead of glory. The word is 'doxa' which is normally translated as glory, though it can certainly be translated those other ways as well. The word comes from the Greek word 'dokeo', which means to think, to suppose, to recognize. The noun from that verb, the action of thinking and supposing and recognizing, means thought or opinion, and generally it means favorable opinion. It means that what we're seeking is the favorable opinion either of other people, or we're seeking the favorable opinion of God. There's no in between. There are only two options. If we're seeking the reputation, and acclaim, and appreciation of people, then it is impossible, Jesus says, to be seeking the acclaim of God. How foolish that we would seek the glory of men.

We sang 'Be Thou My Vision' earlier. There's one line in there: *Man's empty praise. Thou art my inheritance now and always.* I'm not going to seek man's empty praise. Even as we try to encourage one another, we shouldn't live for that.

We're supposed to encourage one another. We're supposed to, from time to time, say how much I appreciate you and the ministry that you have done in my life. I see how Christ is being formed in you. I appreciate that. That's all good. But you and I must be careful when those things come to us, not to drink from that. We need to receive that, but not take it into our souls. What really matters, Lord, is how you see me, that I please you. That's what I'm living for. What helpful correction that is, because we're all so prone to forget and to get back into those well-worn ruts of seeking the approval of men.

To these Jewish unbelievers, he says, "You don't even know what it is to seek glory from God. You seek only glory from men." And Jesus deals with that really explicitly in Matthew 6, remember, where He talks about the Pharisees and their motive for doing alms. He talks about when you give alms and you sound a trumpet. "Hey, I'm about to give some money here! Everybody look!" What is that? You fast and you mess up your face and your hair. That's what they would do. They wanted everybody to see that they were fasting. They would pray out loud. You can pray silently walking down the street and nobody knows. You have to be careful when you're driving not to close your eyes, of course, and probably when you're walking, but you can pray anywhere, and we're supposed to pray secretly. But sometimes we can pray together. The Scripture talks about praying together, but when we pray together, this is the test: Am I more concerned with how my words sound to the people I'm praying with, or how they sound to God? Am I communicating with Him or with them? So subtle is the deceptiveness of the fear of man. We should seek only glory from God.

So Jesus says it's impossible for you to seek the glory of men and at the same time believe. Why? It's not possible to want to make much of yourself, and at the same time make much of God. And so to walk the narrow way that leads to salvation, someone has to come to a place where they completely stop lifting up themselves, and they come to a point of poverty, and they fall on their faces, and they lift up Christ. If you've not ever come to that point, then you are not saved. That's why Jesus said, "Let any who would come after Me deny himself," not lift up himself. Literally disassociate yourself from yourself. I don't want anything to do with myself. Take up your cross. Put self to death and follow Me. That's the path. The path to Christ is self-denial. Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in Spirit." That's the first beatitude. We must be those who are totally impoverished. That is essentially the offense of the cross. What's so offensive about the cross? The offense of the cross is that you and I are so wicked, so utterly destitute spiritually, that that was necessary, that for you or I to come into the presence of the Holy God, God's Son had to be murdered in the most heinous, wicked, and vicious way. That is the

offense of the cross. And when we see that correctly, we come like the song says: *Nothing in my hand I bring. Only to Thy cross I cling.*

Once you come to that point of not seeking glory from men, when you deny yourself, and you cast yourself before Christ, and you acknowledge that you are nothing, what's amazing is that the Lord is going to pick you up and crown you with glory.

Men seek the praise of men because we feel this desire to be valued. We feel this desire to be important, and we were created with a yearning for glory, but the problem is that in our sin, it's gone haywire. We want our glory at the expense of God. We're like Satan. We want to be like the Most High. That was the essence of sin, wasn't it? "Eve, eat this fruit and you will be like God." There's this sense of being destined for greatness that God has put into our hardwiring, but the path to it leads down before you can go up. You have to come to the end of yourself, despising yourself, because if you see yourself rightly, you would despise yourself. We would eclipse the glory of God if we could in our sin, and we did. But once we come to Him, the amazing thing is that the Lord created us, He's going to redeem us, and He's going to glorify us.

***Romans 8:30 ~ and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.***

We are destined for glory. In fact, he talks about this earlier in the passage:

***Romans 8:17 ~ ...if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.***

We're going to be glorified with Jesus.

***Romans 8:18 ~ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.***

The whole creation is going to be blessed:

***Romans 8:21 ~ that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.***

There's something about the new age and the new order that God's going to make when He recreates the universe. The whole universe is going to rejoice in the glory that belongs to us. I don't understand that. How can that be? You and I are not worthy of glory, and yet Jesus is making it so. And the reality is man wants glory and he tells God, "I hate You. I don't want You. I want to exalt myself," and he comes to nothing. You and I, by God's grace, realized that we are nothing, and He lifts us up. Jesus says the problem with the Jews in John 5 is they are seeking glory from one another. They're doing everything for the approval of men, for the praise of men, and they're not doing it for the praise of God. They don't have a God-ward view. So he says, "You do not love God. You do not seek glory from God." And finally the last point in his argument is: You do not believe Moses.

***John 5:45-47 ~ Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. 46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"***

Two times he points out you do not believe Moses. It's really something to stop and ponder this too. His three-fold charges: "You do not love God. You do not seek glory from God. You do not believe Moses." You have not listened to Moses. You have not heard Moses. You are not following Moses. Moses was their hero. They thought they were following Moses, but Jesus has said, "No, you're not. You have completely missed the point of Moses." What did Moses say? He wrote the first five books of the Bible: Genesis through Deuteronomy. In our Wednesday night study a couple months ago, we looked at the book of Deuteronomy, and we saw that Deuteronomy was the last of the five books, and the title means "Second Law". It's a little bit of a misnomer really in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. I think it would be better to call it an exposition of the Law, because that's what Deuteronomy 1:5 says is that Moses set out to expound the Law. And he does in a sense give the Law a second time, but he doesn't just give it a second time. He gives it with an expansion, an exposition. You have the Ten Commandments repeated in Deuteronomy just like they were in Exodus, but you have an expansion upon that, an exposition of it. Deuteronomy really tells you what the Law means. What was the Law about? What was the Law seeking? Do you know what the answer in Deuteronomy is clearly? Love God. The reason God gave the Law was so that you would love Him. 18 times in the book of Deuteronomy, and one time in the book of Exodus, it speaks about us loving God or God loving us. It speaks of that only one time in the first four books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. In Deuteronomy, it's there 18 times, because he's expounding upon the

fact that this is what God's about. God said this. What does He want from you? He wants a relationship. He wants you to love Him.

He says, "You totally missed what Moses was talking about. You don't understand Moses." And what was it about Moses? Moses spoke to God face to face. Moses loved God. If there was ever a man besides Jesus who didn't seek glory from men, it was Moses. I was reading again through the Pentateuch this week, looking at the story, and as you read through Exodus and Numbers, what do you find again and again? The people grumbled against Moses. They rose up against Moses again, and again, and again. Even his own brother and sister, Miriam and Aaron, form a coalition against Moses. Man, if he was trying to please people, he was in the wrong business. He never pleased them, but he wasn't trying to please them. In fact, the Scripture tells us there was never a man like Moses in meekness until Christ. He wasn't looking for his own. He was completely surrendered to the will of God. He was completely committed to the glory of God. He was seeking only the approval of God.

Jesus said, "If you believed Moses, he told you seek glory from Me, not from one another." But then He also says, "You don't believe Moses then, because he wrote of Me. He was writing all about Me." We talked a little bit about this last week when we went through the Bible and how the whole Bible speaks of Jesus.

***John 5:39 ~ You search the Scriptures... ..it is these that testify about Me;***

In Verse 46, He's talking about how Moses particularly wrote about Him. He wrote about how you find glory by humbling yourself before God's anointed one. Let me share with you a couple of passages. There's so much that Moses wrote about Christ. All of it's about Christ, but particularly I was reflecting on this recently.

The last 14 chapters of the Book of Genesis are the story of Joseph, and I want to take a minute and go through that with you really quickly. You're familiar with the basic points of the story of Joseph. Joseph is the eleventh son of Jacob. He's the first son born of Jacob's wife Rachel, and he is the son of Jacob's old age. Jacob was the father of Israel, the father of the 12 tribes. Jacob treasures Joseph. He loves him so much. In fact, in Genesis 37:3-4, you see that he loved him more than all of his sons. He loved him so much that he gave him a coat of many colors. He loved him so much that he kept Joseph at home while the other were out. He had his little

baby Benjamin who wasn't out there either, but to the first ten sons, he said, "You guys go out there and tend the sheep. Joseph, my eleventh, is going to stay here."

You know it wasn't just to protect Joseph, because he sends Joseph out later to check on them, wearing his robe, his coat of many colors, that said, "He's my favorite." When I first read that passage years ago, I remember thinking, "This is a terrible example of how to be a parent." The text never gives any inkling of that fact. There is nothing that talks about Jacob doing anything wrong. I don't believe that's the way that you should parent, but something bigger than parenting is going on here, and when Jacob did it, it was appointed by God. Nothing is said derogatory about Jacob's fathering.

In fact, at the end of Jacob's life, after all the unfolding of the story, he blesses his sons. You can read this in Genesis 49. It's astonishing. It would be like the blessing of Issachar. He's going to live by the sea and he's going to be good with ships. I'm making stuff up. I can't remember off the top of my head what these different blessings are. Naphtali is going to bring forth dainty morsels. This is Naphtali. That's Issachar's whole blessing. Joseph is a fruitful bow, and he goes on for six verses about Joseph. He's a fruitful bow by a stream. Though he was attacked by the archers and you foolish brothers went after him, look how fruitful he is. Look how wonderful he is. Look how precious he is. And he ends up by saying, "Lord, that all of the blessing that is upon me be upon him, the one distinguished among his brothers." Jacob hasn't repented for his parenting. Do you know why? Because the whole story of Joseph attests to the fact that one man will be exalted among his brothers, and he will be uniquely favored by his father, and it is good and right that it is that way.

That's what's going on, because in the same way, the story of Joseph is a picture of Jesus Christ. And you also see Joseph. He has those two sets of dreams. He has that first dream about the sheaves bowing down, and he says with his coat of many colors, "I've got to tell you about my dream. There are twelve sheaves. You all had sheaves and they bowed down to me." I'm thinking, "Joseph, man... You're not a very tactful guy." When he has that dream, they get angry. "We're going to bow down to you?" They're enraged. He has a second dream. I would think he would know better and keep this one to himself, but he goes and he tells them. Why? I believe first of all because it was like a prophecy from God. It was burning in his bones. He had to speak it. He wasn't an arrogant young boy. Maybe in some ways his sin was going on, but the text doesn't point to that at all. The bigger point is that God put a word in his mouth and he had to speak it. He speaks it, and he prophesies something that's going to come true. What is that word of God coming

forth from him? Say, “I’m going to be exalted. I’m going to be set apart from you. I’m going to be above you.”

What happens with his brothers? They rage against him. “We will not have you over us!” So they hatch this murderous plot to kill him. It says in Chapter 39, that when they see him coming from a distance, they say, “Let’s murder him, throw him in this pit, bury him in this pit, and we’ll see what comes of his dreams.” Well, the Lord stops them. Reuben is too scared to do that. He says, “No, we don’t need to do that. Let’s not shed blood. Let’s just put him in the pit.” Judah comes up with the idea of selling him into slavery. And this man who was going to be ruling is sold into slavery. He’s given this picture of how he’s going to be preeminent, but look at the descent. As soon as he has the dream, he has this descent downward. Now he’s in the place of death and ready to be killed. He’s sold into slavery. He’s goes down into Egypt, and then he’s falsely accused by an immoral woman, Potiphar’s wife, of trying to seduce her when she was trying to seduce him and he was resisting faithfully. He does what’s right and he suffers for it. He finds himself in the dungeon which is basically death row, where the guys who are possibly going to be executed go. He’s down at the very lowest point and he stays there for years.

What’s happening there? The one who is to be the most noble, who is to rule, is taken down to the lowest point, and at the right moment, God calls him forth, because that cup bearer, after two years of forgetting, suddenly remembered. When Pharaoh has a dream, the cup bearer says, “Oh, I remember.” Joseph had said, “Don’t forget me,” but he’d forgot him for two years. Pharaoh has a dream and now the time is right. “Hey, I know a guy who can interpret dreams.” The Lord calls him out, puts him second in command in Egypt, and crowns him with all of this glory, so that when Joseph’s brothers come, he says, “God has made me as a father to Pharaoh.” He keeps them in the dark as to who he is by speaking to them in Egyptian through a translator. They finally see who it is and they know, “We’re dead meat.” He says, “No, don’t worry. I’m not going to harm you. You think you sent me here, but God sent me here to bring about a great deliverance, a great salvation.” That’s a picture of the Gospel. You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. He took him through the place of death, the pit that’s talked about in Chapter 37. Five times we see the pit in that chapter. It was to be the burial place. He goes through the pit and into slavery. He’s there for all of those years in bondage, and yet God takes him and lifts him up. It’s exactly what He had planned.

The Lord is saying in that picture, “Listen, it’s not about Jacob’s parenting strategies. It’s not about Joseph’s foolishness in speaking the dreams. When I

choose to favor one son among all others, I will do so righteously. It will be right, and you better accept it. Jesus Christ is anointed above every other man. He is the One who is taken from among His brothers and lifted up.” In Deuteronomy 15 and 18, Moses himself speaks of this. He says, “The Lord will take for you one among your own brothers and will raise him up, and he will speak God’s word to you.” He says that twice. He will raise up one from among your brothers. That one is Jesus Christ, and you and I, if we’re going to know and receive glory from God, we have to bow our faces down before the One who is supremely excellent, the Man who is like no other, the Man whose righteousness shines like the sun in all of its brilliance, the One who has done nobly far greater than any other Man. There is no one who has ever been like Jesus, and until you acknowledge that and fall on your face as in desperation, asking for His mercy, until you kiss the Son, you are doomed.

In fact, as the Psalmist says, “Kiss the Son lest He become angry.” Bow in homage to the Son. And the wonder of it is when you bow in homage to the Son, you will find that in due time the Son will come to you and lift you up, and say, “Come reign with Me.” What an astonishing miracle that though our righteousness is as filthy rags, God is going to glorify us. I love that second verse of ‘Holy, Holy, Holy’. When He glorifies us, there’s going to be a part of us that’s going to be just so in awe, and we’re going to keep glorifying Him, shining it back on Him. *All the saints adore Thee, casting down their golden crowns.* That’s what we’re going to be doing.

Moses, in his life, showed that the way to glory from God is by looking at the glory of God. Remember how his face shone when he was in the presence of the Lord? He came down and he was glowing because he had seen the glory of God face to face. The glory of you and me is just like that. We have the glory of the moon. We’re not the glory of the sun. But you think about how glorious the moon is. It’s pretty impressive. On a dark night, isn’t it amazing when a full moon is out, the cloud moves away, and you’ve got a full moon? Do you know what that moon is doing? Here you are sitting in darkness. It may be so dark that you can’t see your hand in front of your face. You feel alone. You feel helpless in the dark, and then the moon comes out, and it shines brightly. Why? Because the moon is seeing something you can’t see. The moon is looking at the sun. You can’t see the sun, but the moon is looking at the sun, and the moon is reflecting the glory of the sun. You bask in that reflected light. You and I are the moon. There are unbelievers out there who are in darkness and despair and hopelessness. They can’t see their hand in front of their face. They don’t have a clue about what life is about, and God has put you and me in their life. And if we are looking at the glory of the Son,

constantly looking at His glory, we are like a full moon on a dark night. Some of them are going to run, because they don't want the light, but sometimes God's going to open their heart and they're going to bask in the light, and we're going to say, "It's not me, it's Him. Look at Him." That's the glory of the Gospel. Our God is a great God, and Jesus Christ is a great Savior. Why would anyone not come to One who is so amazingly loving and kind as to forgive us, to make us His own dear children, and to one day share His glory with us? Why would you turn away from life?

Let's pray...

*Our Father, we stand in awe of so great a salvation. We marvel, Lord, at the beauty of Your plan, and Lord, we marvel in the presence of the One who is the fairest of 10,000. Lord, there's never been One as beautiful and lovely, as strong and mighty, as good and noble as Jesus. Father, help those of us who belong to You already, to kill anything in us that exalts ourselves, and may we say with John the Baptist, "I must decrease and He must increase." And for those here today who have not yet come to You, for those who are still there in hardened unbelief, Lord, give them a new heart. Help them see it's about loving You. It's about receiving glory from You, but it comes through despising themselves, seeing themselves as they are, as You see us to be apart from You, and then let them run to Christ. We pray this in His marvellous Name, Amen.*

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