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Despised Truths

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path."

PSALM 119:105



JOHN WEAVER

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE

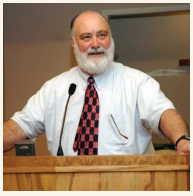
Thy word is truth.

JOHN 17:17, EXCERPT

Truths may be neglected because they challenge human pride rather than because they lack clarity. John Weaver considers God's sovereignty, mercy, and the inability of man to place God under obligation. These messages ask readers to examine their response to Scripture and to receive difficult doctrines as reasons for humility and gratitude.

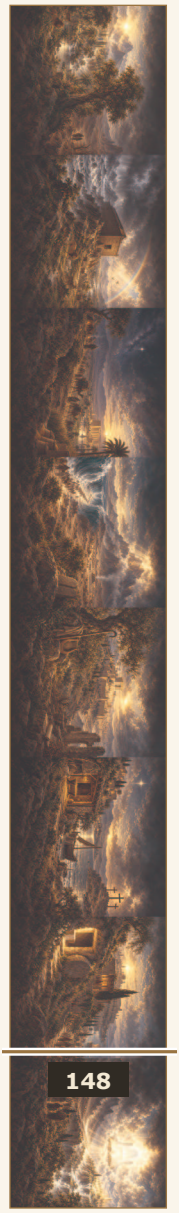
"If you understand these truths, they will make you more appreciative, more grateful, more thankful, and more humble."

JOHN WEAVER



John Weaver

John Weaver's sermons form the teaching collection presented by Weaver Bible College. This volume gathers his teaching from that collection.



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CHAPTER 1

Despised Truths

Part One

SCRIPTURE READING - Luke 4:16-27 (KJV)

Introduction: The Reality of Despising Truth

> And he came to Nazareth where he had been brought up, and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he opened the book, he found the place where it is written.
>
> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book and he gave it again to the minister and sat down and the eyes of all of them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

> And he began to say to them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.
>
> But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elijah sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

Despised Truths

And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way.

Despising truth is a concept that is foreign to the mind of any real Christian. We really cannot conceive of anyone who is a real child of God, or really anyone for that matter, despising truth, and especially despising the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the God of truth. And yet the Bible says this in Isaiah 53 and verse 3, talking about Christ: “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.”

Biblical Examples of Despising God and His Word

Throughout biblical history, there have been numerous illustrations of men who despise God. They not only despise God, but they despise His worship and His service and everything about Him. I suppose the first example given in the Bible is that of Esau. The Bible tells you in Hebrews chapter 12 and verse 16 that he was a profane

person. And yet the Bible says in Genesis 25 and verse 34, “Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.”

Esau was the oldest son. The birthright not only meant he was to be the head of the clan, the family clan; he also would get a double portion of the inheritance because he'd be responsible for taking care of his elderly parents. But also in line with that was the lineage of Jesus Christ. And so he despised all of that and sold it for a morsel of meat, the Bible says.

It is possible, then, for individuals to despise God and despise His truth. But what many people have a difficult time understanding is that it is also equally possible for an entire nation to despise God and His Word. In Leviticus chapter 26 and verse 43, God is saying this concerning Israel: “The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them.”

That is, he will send them away into captivity. And they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes. So God says, Here is an entire people who despised my judgments and my laws. Their soul abhorred them. Anytime you see the word abhor in the Bible, it is a very strong word for hatred. It literally means extreme hatred. They abhorred my statutes.

One of the most difficult things for you and I really to consider and to accept is the fact and the reality that it is true that even Christians can despise the Word of God. You say, “I don't see how that is possible.”

Well, let me ask you. If David, who was considered a man after God's own heart, despised God's Word and despised God himself, is it not possible for those of us who may not be as holy as David to end up despising his Word as well? Let me show you. Turn in your Bibles to 2 Samuel chapter 12. Everyone knows the story of how David committed adultery with Bathsheba. He also had her husband Uriah the Hittite killed with the sword of the children of Ammon. There are many other sins that he actually committed against Uriah as well.

But when God sends Nathan to confront David, look what he says in 2 Samuel chapter 12, verse 9: “Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.” Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

David is asked, “Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD?” And in verse 10, “Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me.”

Any time that we despise the word of God, at the same time we are despising the God of the word. It is impossible to maintain one attitude toward God and a different attitude toward His Word. They stand or fall together. God asks, “Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight?” Any time anyone despises the Word of God, the ultimate result and outcome is going to be doing evil in the sight of God.

You may say, “As a Christian, I don't really despise the Word of God. I believe the Word of God. I love the Word of God.” But have you ever stopped to think about this? When you do something that you know is contrary to God's Word, and you are going to do it anyhow, what are you doing? You are despising the Word of God. You are saying, “Lord, I'm going to do what I want to do regardless.” That is what David did. David despised the word of the Lord; consequently, he ended up despising God.

It is not that we simply sit here and say, “I despise all of it.” We pick and choose because there is something we really want to do that we know is wicked and wrong. If we go ahead and do that, God says it is not only despising His Word; it is despising Him as well. Why? Because we are setting our own will, desires, and pleasures above God. So, basically, we are idolaters.

It is not only individuals, even godly individuals, who despise God and His Word. Sometimes entire nations do so. Isaiah chapter 5 is speaking about Judah and Jerusalem. In verse 3, God says, “And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray

you, betwixt me and my vineyard." Then, in verse 24, He says, "Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff,"

"So their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel." Remember the passage from 2 Chronicles, chapter 36, where the Bible said that when God had compassion on His people, He sent His messengers. But the people despised the messengers of God and His Word. The wrath of God arose against them until there was no remedy, simply for despising the Word of God.

Amos 2:4 says, "Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked." God says He will not turn away their punishment because they have despised the law of the Lord.

It is possible not only for unsaved individuals to despise the Word of God, but also for saved individuals. It is possible for entire nations to despise the Word of God. God even charged His own priests with despising Him. Ezekiel 22:8 says, "Thou hast despised mine holy things, and hast profaned my sabbaths." All through the Bible, God speaks about individuals who despise His Word.

Have you ever read Proverbs chapter 1 and considered the awful judgment of God against those people? God said in Proverbs 1:30, "They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof." They would not listen to God. Therefore, He said, they would cry to Him, and He would not listen to them; He would destroy them.

It is possible for individuals and nations to despise the Word of God, and it is possible for professing Christians to despise it. In Proverbs 5:12, after the man has sinned, Solomon says he must ask, "How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof?"

The Penalty for Despising God's Word

Do you know what the penalty was in the Old Testament for despising the Word of God? It was death. In Hebrews chapter 10,

verses 28 and 29, the Bible says: “He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?”

In the Old Testament, when Moses issued the law that was given by God, it was actually God's law given through Moses. When people violated it, despised it, would not keep it, and would not obey it, the penalty was death. The passage says that the person who despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. That was the judgment for despising the written Word under Moses.

Now, here is the reasoning in this passage: If the death penalty was given to those who despised the written Word under Moses, how much worse judgment is deserved if one despises the living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ? The penalty for despising in the Old Testament was death, and it should be worse in the New Testament, because now we are not just despising the written Word, but the living Word as well.

Unbiblical Anger and the Reaction at Nazareth

People may despise God's Word and consequently despise God. In Luke chapter 4, these people became exceedingly angry. Have you ever been angry? I know that you have been. Have you ever experienced an unbiblical anger?

Do you realize there is a difference between unbiblical anger and biblical anger? The Bible says in Ephesians 4:26, “Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” There is a way to be righteously angry, to be biblically angry, and not sin. Most of the time, however, our anger is not righteous or biblical; it is unrighteous and unbiblical.

How do we know the difference? How can we discern which is righteous anger and which is unrighteous anger? It is really very simple. Unbiblical or unrighteous anger will always manifest itself in one of two ways. The first is what I would term a volcanic eruption. You know how a volcano suddenly begins spurting out magma, heat,

rock, and lava? That is exactly what happens to individuals when they become so angry that they blow up, cuss everybody out, tell them off, holler, and scream. Very obviously, it is close to a volcanic eruption. That is unbiblical anger.

Another way to tell that anger is non-biblical is internalization. If Kevin made me angry, I could look at him and smile while saying inwardly, "You just wait, big boy. Your time is coming. I'm going to nail you." I could keep smiling while internalizing that anger. As I became increasingly upset, it would essentially eat my insides out. Dr. S. I. McMillen's little paperback book, None of These Diseases, has been in print for years, and it shows how unbiblical anger creates medical problems in the body—colitis, ulcers, and all kinds of trouble—because anger is internalized and eats you up.

Biblical anger always deals with sin or with the problem. If a problem exists between Kevin and me, and I am righteously angry, then I am angry at the sin. I will do what is necessary to ensure that there is repentance and reconciliation and that the sin is dealt with. I do not blow up at him, and I do not internalize it in my heart or life. I simply say, "This is the problem. This is a sin. Let's deal with it and get on with our lives."

Each one of us understands that unrighteous anger is sin. It is wicked, wrong, and ungodly. One of the great problems with unrighteous anger is that it usually gets out of control. Have you ever been angry enough to fight?

I saw my father, who has been dead nearly twenty years, ready to fight only two times in my life. One time was over a man who was abusing me and my sister. Believe it or not, he was a dentist. My father caught him by the shirt and held him against the wall. He said, "If you ever touch my children again, you'll be sorry."

The only other time I saw my father ready to fight, I was in the courthouse with him. There was a big meeting of all the farmers. The county agent stood up and called my father a liar. My dad never said a word. He stood up and started walking straight toward the county agent. When he got about six feet away, the county agent began backtracking. "Oh, no, no, no. I've got to apologize. It was not Mr.

Weaver that lied. I'm the one that lied." When he said that, Dad simply turned around, came back, and sat down in his seat.

Have you ever been angry enough to murder? The people in Luke 4 were angry enough to murder; they tried to do so. This is where unbiblical anger truly gets out of control. Those who have no control over their anger inevitably suffer the consequences. In the last three months, I read about two murders. A father murdered his grown son because his son would not get cable television for him. In the second, a grown son murdered his father because they were fighting over the remote control. You can read newspapers and find that people have murdered one another over a quarter or some other small, insignificant amount. It is all because of unbiblical anger.

The people of Nazareth became so angry with Jesus Christ simply because He told them two stories, which I will tell you about tomorrow night. They had heard those stories all their lives, yet they became so angry that they took Him and were willing to push Him over the cliff and murder Him.

Fallen Man Has No Claim upon Christ

In Luke 4, verse 16, we read, "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read." In verse 29, the people in the synagogue "rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong."

Why did these people at Nazareth become so angry that they were willing to murder an innocent man? What was it that made them angry? Christ simply told them two stories that they had known since they were children. Yet upon hearing them from Christ, they became so enraged, inflamed, and incensed that they were willing to murder Christ. What was it about these stories that set them off? What did they finally grasp or understand that they had never understood before in hearing these stories told? What was it they really did not want to hear?

Despised Truth #1: Fallen Man Has No Claim Upon Christ

The same truths that enraged and incensed the people of Nazareth still enrage and incense people today. People do not like these truths. But dislike and despisement do not change reality. The sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth is the determiner of reality, and not fallen man. Men may despise the truth and dislike the truth, but they cannot overthrow or destroy the truth.

The very first despised truth I want to share with you is found here in Luke chapter 4: Fallen man has absolutely no claim upon Christ—not in and of himself.

Nazareth was the hometown of Jesus. You say, "But he was born in Bethlehem." I understand that. But Nazareth was his hometown. Matthew 2 and verse 23 says, "And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene." Christ was a Nazarene, which means he was from the city of Nazareth.

He was not a Nazarite. A Nazarite took a vow. There is a Nazarite vow, but a Nazarene is someone from the city of Nazareth. Adam Clarke said concerning Nazareth, "It is likely that our Lord lived principally in this city till the 30th year of his age. But after he entered his public ministry, his usual place of residence was at the house of Peter in Capernaum."

John Gill said it like this: "Nazareth is where he was conceived, though not born, and where he had his education and wrought at a trade and was well known to the inhabitants; and therefore it was proper that he should first exercise his ministry and obtain a character in other places which would prepare him a reception among his townsmen who otherwise in all likelihood would have treated him at once with neglect and contempt."

So Christ was raised in Nazareth. You would tend to think that the people of Nazareth would really want to claim Christ. You would tend to think they would really want Him because He was their hometown boy: Look what He has been doing. But that was not so. In 2 Samuel 19, the people of Israel were actually fighting over David. Absalom had run his own father off the throne and had tried

to kill him. There was a war, and Absalom was killed. Now David was going to be brought back to Jerusalem, the kingdom reestablished, and he was to be enthroned again.

"Behold, all the men of Israel came to the king, and said unto the king, Why have our brethren the men of Judah stolen thee away, and have brought the king, and his household, and all David's men with him, over Jordan? And all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, Because the king is near of kin to us: wherefore then be ye angry for this matter? have we eaten at all of the king's cost? or hath he given us any gift? And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said, We have ten parts in the king, and we have also more right in David than ye: why then did ye despise us, that our advice should not be first had in bringing back our king? And the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel."

You would think the people of Nazareth would have been fighting over Christ. But the truth is, they really did not want Him. They could care less about Him. In fact, they were offended with Him and upset with Him.

Matthew 13:54 says, "And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house."

Mark 6 gives the same account. This was His own country, Nazareth, where He had been brought up: "And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him. And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of

James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him."

"But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching."

So the people of Nazareth were actually incensed at our Lord's knowledge, power, and wisdom. He began teaching, and they began looking around, saying, "Whoa, wait a minute."

Who did he think he was? Where did he get all this wisdom? Who did he think he was, coming there and trying to teach them—to straighten them out? They knew him: his father, his mother, his brothers, and his sisters. Who did he think he was, coming there and teaching them like that? Let us be honest: they not only refused to claim Him; they were offended at Him. They wanted to ignore Him.

Do you realize, unhappily, that this is the attitude of most people? Isaiah 53:3 says, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him." Then it says, "he was despised, and we esteemed him not." What does that little phrase—"and we esteemed him not"—refer to?

We did not even think He was worth thinking about. Why should we waste our time over Him? Who does He think He is? That was the attitude, not only of the people of Nazareth, but of most people around then. Fallen man does not have a claim upon Christ. Even some individuals who think they might have a claim upon Christ do not.

You may say, "I am a physical descendant of Abraham." Guess what that means now? Zilch, zero, nothing. John the Baptist was preaching, and many of the Pharisees and Sadducees came to his baptism. But when he saw them, he said unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto

you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."

"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Do not even begin to say, "We have Abraham to our father." God is able to raise up stones to Abraham. You have nothing special unless you repent. What John is saying is that you will perish.

Even some who might think they have a claim upon Christ in reality do not. In Matthew 12, we read: "While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee." In other words, stop what you are doing, get out there, and talk to your mother and your brothers.

"But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." What is He saying?

Even the fleshly relatives of Christ had no claim upon Him. Turn right over to Luke chapter 8. You will see it again. Luke 8, beginning at verse 19: "Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press." Plenty of people were around Him. "And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it." What is He saying? I will show you this from the Bible just momentarily, but He is saying that all fleshly relationships are now basically null and void.

Christ's Sovereignty Demonstrated

Look in Luke 11. Our Lord very quickly straightens out this one woman. If you want a passage that demonstrates that Mary idolatry is idolatry, here it is. Luke 11, beginning at verse 27: "And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company

lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it." What did the woman try to say? She tried to say, Blessed is the woman who gave birth to You, and blessed are those breasts that You nursed upon. Our Lord said, "Ah! No, blessed rather are they that hear the word of God and keep it." Prayers to Mary are basically worthless. She has absolutely no influence upon Christ.

I am probably going to make someone very upset when I say this, but Mary is not the mother of God. She is the mother of a human body of the Lord Jesus Christ. When Christ assumed that body, I want to show you something. Look back in your Bibles, Luke chapter 1. I think this is the big difference between sound theology and what you might call idolatry. The Catholics say that Mary is the mother of God. No, not so. Look in Luke chapter 1, verse 35. In fact, let us begin reading with verse 31. Watch what happens. The angel Gabriel comes to Mary and says, "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom"

"There shall be no end." Then said Mary unto the angel, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" And the angel answered and said unto her, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." What is the thing? The thing is just the human body that was shaped in the womb of Mary.

Christ was God before He became incarnate. Christ was God, He is God, and He always will be God. Mary was not the mother of God. She was the mother of the body that the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God, assumed and took upon Himself. The Bible says in 1 Timothy 3:16, "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.

Christ assumed a body; He took a human nature to Himself. Philippians 2:5-8 says, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant. He assumed that body being prepared in the womb of Mary and took upon Himself the form of a servant.

Christ is one person with two natures. He has a divine nature and a human nature. When Christ became incarnate, He assumed that nature, that body which was born through Mary. Thus He now has two natures, the divine and the human, but He is one God and one person. The Bible says in Galatians 4:4, “But when the fulness of the time was come,” notice what the Bible said, “God sent forth his Son,”

Christ was made of a woman, made under the law. The language of the Bible shows that the Father sent the Son and that the Son assumed human nature. John 10:36 says, “Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world.” What did the Father do? He sent Christ into the world. In John 16:28, Jesus Christ said, “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. I came forth from the Father.” Christ came forth from the Father and came into the world; afterward, He would leave the world and return to the Father.

Mary was not the mother of God. God assumed the human body that was produced in her womb. He was always God. The Apostle Paul said in 1 Timothy 1:15, “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.” Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Hebrews 1:6 says concerning Christ, “And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.” Again, when God brought the firstbegotten into the world, what did He do? He brought Him into the world when He assumed the body that was produced by the Virgin Mary. Hebrews 10:5 says, “Wherefore when he cometh into

the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me."

There was a body prepared for Christ, and Christ assumed that body. Isaiah 9:6 says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." Everybody quotes this verse, especially around Christmas time. The Son was given by the Father. Yes, He assumed that body in the womb of the Virgin Mary, because He was born according to the flesh in the lineage of David. It was our Lord's humiliation. Then He assumed that human nature.

Mary may have been the instrument of our Lord's birth, and that birth was real and genuine. But our Lord was the Son sent from the Father, who assumed that body that was produced by Mary.

SCRIPTURE READING - Luke 1:26-41 (KJV)

> And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.
>
> And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:
>
> And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the

> Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.

And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

Elizabeth acknowledged that the babe was her Lord. Mary now says, My soul doth magnify the Lord. Thus Mary confesses and acknowledges that the babe is her Lord. The word Lord in Hebrew is Adonai and in Greek Kyrios. It literally means boss, owner, master, sovereign. Mary, the mother of the body of the Lord Jesus, acknowledged Him as her Lord, her boss, and her sovereign. If Jesus Christ is sovereign, what possible influence could Mary have upon Him? If Jesus Christ is sovereign,

How can she persuade Him? If Mary or anyone else can have influence upon Jesus Christ and persuade Him, in that case, He is not sovereign. If He is not sovereign, He is not God. If He is not God, then He is not Lord. The one attribute that demonstrates and proves that God is God is that He is absolutely sovereign. Daniel 4:35 says, “And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?”

What is the one attribute that shows that God is God? God is sovereign. God does as He pleases, only as He pleases, and always as He pleases. Why? Because He is God. He is the Sovereign of heaven and earth. If Jesus Christ is Lord, if He is Sovereign, no one can have any influence upon Him. He does as He pleases.

An excellent example is found in John chapter 5, one of the best illustrations of our Lord's sovereignty in the entire New Testament. John 5, beginning with verse 2: "Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me."

"Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath."

How many people were in these five porches? A great multitude. How many needed healing? All of them. How many did our Lord heal? One. Did they not all need healing? Yes. Could He not have healed all of them? Yes. But He did not. The man He healed—did he cry out for mercy? No.

Did he recognize Jesus Christ? No. Christ simply walked up to him and said, "Wilt thou be made whole?" The man answered that he had nobody to help him get to the pool. Jesus said, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk." Why did Jesus Christ walk among all these sick, impotent, and lame people who needed healing and single out one individual who did not know Him, cry for help, or recognize Him? Why did He heal this one man? When the Jews learned that our Lord had healed him on the Sabbath, they were very upset and finally tracked Christ down.

The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole. Therefore the Jews persecuted Jesus and sought to slay Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." The Jews therefore sought the more to kill Him, because He had not

only broken the Sabbath—that was their interpretation of it—but had also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. They understood exactly what He meant: as His Father was God, He was God.

Why did Jesus Christ walk into that multitude of sick, halt, lame, and blind people and heal only one man? John 5:21 tells us: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." As the Father quickens whom He will, likewise the Son quickens whom He will. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him."

The one attribute that proves God is God is that He is absolutely sovereign. He raises up whom He will. To demonstrate His sovereignty and that He is God, He walked in and healed one man. He can do as He pleases; He is God. If you understand that Jesus Christ is God, you understand that fallen man has no claims upon Him by nature and no right to Him by nature.

Application: Coming to Christ as Beggars

Let me make some applications and tie this together. First of all, if the physical and earthly family of Jesus Christ had no claim upon Him, how much less would we have a right to lay a claim upon Him? We do not have the physical relationship that Mary had with Him, or James, or Joseph, or His sisters. No. Did you know that the half-brother of Jesus, James, is the author of the book of James? Do you know how James begins his book? Here is how he begins it: "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting." What? James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. He does not claim to be the half-brother of Christ. And yet the Bible tells us in Galatians 1:19, "But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother." So James was an apostle, not one of the twelve originally, but he was later an apostle and was the Lord's brother.

And yet he claims nothing. He just says, "I'm a servant." How would James say that? I want you to turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 5.

I want you to see what the Apostle Paul said. If you understand this passage, you will understand why James simply described himself as a servant of God, because now the spiritual transcends the physical. The physical is nothing. Look in 2 Corinthians chapter 5, and notice, if you would please, verse 16.

Look what the Apostle Paul said: "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." What? "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." Therefore, "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

What did he say? The physical has been done away with. The spiritual transcends the physical. If Jesus Christ were here physically on this earth and you could physically hear Him speak and physically touch Him, it would not amount to anything. People in the New Testament heard Him and touched Him, and He did not do anything for them. Paul said that even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. It is the spiritual that counts. Christ is God. Are you listening? Since Christ is sovereign, that means He is no longer—it never was, really—

But He is not under the control of man. Christ is not a babe in a manger. Who is afraid of a baby? Who fears a dead Christ hanging on a cross or a crucifix? But when you begin to proclaim a risen, resurrected, ascended, glorified, sovereign Christ, seated at the right hand of God, people suddenly do not like it. They understand that Christ is not a baby and that they have no control over Him. He is not on a cross; they have no control over Him. He is God. He is sovereign.

He does as He pleases, and we have no claim upon Him by nature. His mother said, "I want to talk to my son." He asked, "Who is my mother?" His brothers said, "We want to talk to our brother." He answered, "Who are my brothers?" He that doeth the will of God. Therefore, if we come to Christ, we must come to Him in a spiritual relationship—one of grace, mercy, and power.

Here is what people do not like to hear, but it is the truth: we must come to Him as beggars, helpless, hopeless, and lost sinners, seeking His salvation and mercy, because we have no claim upon Him. Fanny Crosby wrote the hymn, "Pass me not, O gentle Savior, Hear my humble cry; While on others Thou art calling, Do not pass me by." He passed by all those on that porch and went to one man. As fallen and rebellious sinners, we have no claim upon Christ. He may lawfully and justly pass us by. But we had better cry and pray, "Lord, do not pass me by." It is only by His grace and mercy that He deals with sinners. This truth is despised by many: man by nature has no claim upon Christ. We do not.

Tomorrow night I will show you that, really and truly, He does not owe us anything. When these people in Luke chapter 4 found out what they found out, they were so angry that they were willing to kill Him. If we come to Christ, it must be on His terms, not ours. His terms are repentance and faith. Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we bow to Thee this night.

We thank You for Your truth. We thank You for Your love. Lord, we acknowledge this is a despised truth in the Bible: man by nature does not have a claim upon You, nor a right to You. We forfeited all our claims through rebellion, sin, and depravity. But, Lord, we are thankful that You are merciful to sinners, and that You grant repentance and faith. We ask You to have mercy by Your infinite grace. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

Despised Truths

Part Two

Review of Part 1: No Claim Upon Christ

We will take a few minutes to review since we have a couple here who were not here last night. I began a message last night on despised truths and only covered one point. Tonight I am going to be covering the second point, and the second and third. We will begin reading in Luke chapter 4, verses 16 through 30, where we left off last night.

Father, we are thankful for this day. We're thankful for the Lord Jesus Christ. We're thankful for thy word. We pray that you would indeed teach us tonight, enlighten our minds, grant liberty and freedom in preaching, grant the Holy Spirit of God to minister and open our understandings. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

Luke 4, verse 16. And he came to Nazareth where he had been brought up. And as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah, and when he opened the

book he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of the sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down.

And all the eyes of them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is the scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bear him witness, and wondered at his gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? And he said, You will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself.

“Whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.” And he said, “Verily I say unto you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you of a truth. Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land. But unto none of them was Elijah sent, save unto Zarephath, city of Zidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them were cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.” And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath and rose up and thrust him out of the city and led him into the brow of the hill whereupon the city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

But he passing through the midst of them went his way.

I began last night by showing you that even the term despised truth is a concept foreign to the mind of any Christian. We cannot conceive of anyone despising the truth of God. Yet the Bible tells us in Isaiah 53 that Jesus Christ is a man who was despised, and we esteemed him not. Individuals do indeed despise Christ and despise truth. Esau despised his birthright, and the Bible says that nations despise God. So it is not just individuals, but nations as well. It is even possible for a Christian to despise the Word of God—not necessarily all of God’s Word, but the area in which he particularly

wants to sin. King David, however, was known as a man after God's own heart.

And yet God charged David with despising His word and despising God. When David committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband Uriah the Hittite killed with the sword of the children of Ammon, God said to him in 2 Samuel 12:9–10, "Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with a sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart out of thine house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife." Thus God charged David with despising not only His word, but despising Him.

Whenever you and I elevate our desires and wills above God, wanting to sin and do that which pleases us, God tells us that we are literally despising His Word and despising Him.

Our Lord said, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." But truth that is unknown is basically worthless. It is still truth, but if you do not know it, to you it is absolutely worthless. Furthermore, if you hear the truth and know the truth but do not apply the truth, it is still worthless. Ignorance is only conducive to slavery, and truth unknown or unapplied is worthless.

That is why James said in James 4:17, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." We began to look at this last night, and I showed you how the people in Luke 4 became so angry with Christ that they were willing to push Him over a cliff and kill Him. They were willing to murder an innocent individual.

I also pointed out the distinction between unrighteous, unbiblical anger and righteous anger. God said in Ephesians 4:26, "Be ye angry and sin not, and let not the sun go down upon your wrath." There is a way to be righteously angry and not sin. Unhappily, most of the time our anger is unbiblical, and unbiblical anger is revealed in two ways.

Number one, you explode as a volcano. You explode, cuss somebody out, tell them off, and that is it. Or, secondly, you

internalize that anger. You may be smiling at the individual, but inside you are saying, “You just wait, buddy. I’m going to nail you. I’ll get you sooner or later. You just wait.” It literally eats your insides out. Biblical anger, however, is designed to resolve problems and tackle sin. If Doc and I have a problem, I do not explode at him or internalize it. I go to him and say, “Here is the problem; here is the sin. Let us resolve it in a biblical manner.” Let us repent, reconcile, or whatever is necessary.

We work it out and work through it. Biblical anger always deals with the sin; it always resolves the problem. Here in Luke chapter 4, these people became so angry at Christ that they were willing to murder. I pointed out numerous instances where people murdered for absolutely insignificant reasons.

The one point I covered last night was this: fallen man does not have any claims upon Christ. Fallen man has absolutely no claim upon Christ. Although our Lord was raised in Nazareth, the people in Luke chapter 4 not only did not want to claim Christ; they literally wanted to ignore Him.

I showed you from Matthew and Mark that when He came into His own country, they said, “Is not this Joseph’s son? Is not His mother with us? Are not His brothers James and Joseph and Judas and whoever else and His sisters with us? For whence hath this man all this knowledge and this wisdom?” And they were offended at Him.

Their attitude was simply, “Who do you think you are, coming here trying to teach us? We know you.” They were offended and upset. No one has a claim upon Christ—not even His parents, His mother, or His brothers. When His mother and His brethren came to Him, He was told, “Thy mother and thy brother stand without.”

Desiring to speak with Him, what did our Lord say? “Who is My mother? And who are My brethren?” But these are they that hear the word of God and do it. He is saying that the spiritual supersedes the physical. Even those who were close to our Lord had no claim upon Him. As the Apostle Paul said, “Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we Him no more.” No man has a claim upon Christ.

The reason people become so upset with this simple point is that, although man by nature does not want Christ or desire Christ, he understands that if he has no claim upon Christ, then he is not in control. Jesus Christ is not your little servant boy. You are not in charge of everything He is; you are not even in charge of salvation. He is.

What humanism wants to do is place God under man's thumb. Fallen man wants our Lord to jump at his beck and call, even though he hates Christ. He hates to hear that he has absolutely no claim upon Christ.

Romans 8:6–8 says, “For to be carnally minded, or to be fleshly minded, is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” Why? “Because the carnal mind, the fleshly mind, that is the mind by nature, is enmity against God.” Enmity is a strong word for hatred: the carnal mind is extreme hatred against God. “For it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”

No one has the ability in himself to please God because his mind is enmity against God. People hate and despise God and His law, yet at the same time they hate and despise the fact that they are not in control. He is in control.

I gave you one illustration to show Christ's absolute sovereignty last night. In John chapter 5, He walked into a whole multitude of sick, lame, and impotent folks at the Pool of Bethesda, yet He healed only one man. The man did not recognize Christ or ask to be healed. Christ simply singled him out and said, “Wilt thou be made whole?” The man answered, “I have no man to help me when the pool is troubled to put me in. But while I'm coming, another steps in before me.”

Our Lord simply said, “Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.” Why did our Lord not heal everyone? He could have healed everyone, but He did not. He healed only the one. In John chapter 5 He said, “As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth whom he will, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.”

In other words, sovereignty is that which proves God is God. Man has no claim upon God. Likewise, the Son does this. Christ went on

to say that all men should honor the Son even as, or equally as, they honor the Father: “He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father.” Our Lord says, in effect, “I did this just to demonstrate that I am God.” The very first truth that men despise is that man has no claim upon Christ.

Introduction to the Second Despised Truth: God Owes Us Nothing but Justice

Secondly, look in verse 23. Here is the second point that most people despise: the truth that God does not owe us anything but justice. Remember that He is speaking to Nazareth, the people of Nazareth, His own people. “And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself.”

“Whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.” Before explaining that, notice what our Lord did. Going back to verse 17, He entered the synagogue, and there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Isaiah. When He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written. He turned there deliberately and read: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” Wow.

Christ's Selective Reading of Isaiah 61

Hold Luke chapter 4, and turn back to Isaiah 61. This is the passage our Lord is quoting, and something here is very unusual. In Isaiah 61, our Lord quotes all of verse 1 and only half of verse 2: “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, Because the Lord hath anointed me to preach the good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison of them that are bound, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourn.”

Now go back to Luke chapter 4 and look at verse 19. Our Lord says, “To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” He took half of

verse 2 and stopped. He did not read, “and the day of vengeance of our God.”

Why did our Lord stop halfway through that verse? Here is the answer: while Jesus Christ was present at that particular time, His whole ministry was one of grace and mercy. It was not one of vengeance. That is why, in Mark 1:15, when our Lord began His ministry, He said, “The time is fulfilled, the kingdom is at hand, repent ye and believe the gospel.” While Jesus Christ was present with all these people in that land, His whole life and ministry were one of grace and mercy. The day of vengeance did not come until after He was rejected and crucified. In 70 A.D., the Lord destroyed that generation, the temple, and those people. What He was saying was, “While I am here, it is all grace and mercy.” You know what the Bible says in Acts 13:27?

For they that dwell in Jerusalem and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled him in condemning him. Why did they condemn Christ? They did not know who He was. They did not recognize Him, nor understand their own prophets. Do you realize that is the problem? Most people have absolutely no idea who Jesus Christ is. I understand that many people in this land have never even heard of Jesus Christ. But those who have heard still do not really realize who He is. They do not think of Him as God of Gods and King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Sovereign, the Great I Am, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. No, they do not think of Him like that.

Our Lord then opens the book of Isaiah and reads the first verse and half of the second verse. Then He closes the book and says, “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” Notice, if you would please, verse 20: “The eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.” Look at verse 22: “And all bear him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.”

Now, wait a minute. Why is it that, on the one hand, everyone is sitting there riveted upon Christ, saying, “Oh, listen to those gracious, wonderful words proceeding from His mouth,” and in the

next instant they are trying to kill Him? How could they change from graciousness to murder?

Go back to verse 23: “And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.” Notice the latter part of verse 23: “Whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.” Do you realize that Jesus Christ performed many miracles in Capernaum? In Luke 4:23, the Bible says that He taught there; in Luke 4:31, He taught there again. He came down to Capernaum. In John chapter 4, our Lord healed the nobleman’s son at Capernaum. In John chapter 6, our Lord was at Capernaum when He gave that great dissertation that He was indeed the bread of life. Also in John chapter 6, Christ walked on the water there. According to Matthew chapter 17, Capernaum was where our Lord taught about the tribute money. In Matthew chapter 4 and verse 13, I pointed out last night how Christ was raised in Nazareth.

He was a Nazarene, not a Nazirite. He was raised in Nazareth. But the Bible says in Matthew 4:13, “And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim.” After He left Nazareth, He basically lived with Peter in Peter’s home in Capernaum. What all happened in Capernaum? I do not know. My knowledge is limited to the Scriptures, just like your knowledge.

Christ evidently performed an awful lot of miracles in Capernaum. I do not know how many miracles He performed there. Neither do you know, neither does anyone else, because John 20:30-31 says, “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” So even John says there were plenty of signs that Jesus Christ did that are not recorded. John 21:25 says, “And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.”

Our Lord evidently performed an awful lot of miracles in Capernaum, and probably in a lot of other people's places as well. Yet all those miracles did not have an effect upon the people. Matthew 11:23 records that our Lord pronounces a curse upon Capernaum: "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell." He continues, "For if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day."

Although He did many mighty works in Capernaum, the people did not repent. They did not respond.

The Nazarenes' Demand: 'You Owe Us'

If you go back to Luke chapter 4 and verse 23, here is what the people say: "What's there we've heard done in Capernaum, do you also here in thy country?" Let me interpret this for you. The people of Nazareth were saying, "You owe us. We helped raise you. We know your family. If you are going to do all these things to strangers and for strangers in Capernaum, you can do far more for your home folks and the people who helped raise you. You owe us. Whatever we have heard that you have done in Capernaum, you need to do here in Nazareth. We are your people. You owe us."

Let me burst your bubble: God does not owe you anything except justice. God does not owe me anything except justice. I will be absolutely frank and honest with you: I do not want what God owes me. I do not want that at all. Anything we receive from God other than justice, we receive in grace and mercy.

God does not owe you life. The Scripture says the normal span of man is seventy years, yet there are plenty of people who never make it to seventy. Some babies die before they are born or died birth. Some children die before they reach ten, or five. Plenty die at thirty, forty, or fifty. God does not owe us life. We are sinners; the wages of sin is death. You only have to commit one sin to be a sinner, and one sin is enough to condemn you.

God does not owe us help. I am thankful for the help God has given me, and I hope that you are thankful as well, but God does not owe us help. God does not owe us support, a family, friends, or

salvation. God is not obligated to anyone, and it is absolutely impossible for God to be obligated to anyone. If God is obligated to you, it means that you have done something that has merited and earned His favor and blessing, and have done something for Him that He could not do for Himself. Thus, you have Him now in your debt.

God Cannot Be Obligated

It's absolutely impossible to have God indebted to you or obligated to you. I want you to turn, holding Luke 4, to Romans chapter 11. And as you turn to Romans chapter 11, I want to quote from Job 41 and verse 11. As you turn to Romans 11, I'm going to quote Job 41 and verse 11. God asked, who hath prevented or who hath preceded me that I should repay him?

Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine. What did God say? Who was ahead of me? Who was first? There's no one before me. I don't owe anyone anything. Everything on the entire heaven is mine.

Now, look what the Bible says in Romans 11, beginning there, verse 33. Paul exclaims, Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out. Now watch verse 34. For who hath known the mind of the Lord? What's the answer? No one. Or who hath been His counselor? No one. Or who hath first given to Him?

And it shall be recompensed unto Him again. No one. For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Now, if you look at verse 36 again, for of him that is originally, and through him that is providentially, and to him that is ultimately, are all things. Who can first give to God? And the answer is absolutely no one. You cannot obligate God to yourself. When someone tries to say this, now Lord, I've done this for you. Will you do this for me? No. You can't obligate God.

Hold Luke 4, but go in your Bibles to Psalm 50. I want you to look in Psalm 50. Look what God says beginning there with verse 9. Psalm 50. Psalm 50 verse 9. And we'll read through verse 12. Look at

Psalm 50 beginning with verse 9. God says, I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy foals. Why? For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine and the fullness thereof. Everything is Everything that has been everything that is everything shall be belongs to God. You cannot first give to God, you cannot obligate God. Let me give you a quote by John Gill, the Baptist theologian. He said this. No man can give God anything which he is not first given to him or which he has not a prior right to or a claim upon for Adam in innocence.

Man cannot give God anything, nor can the angels in heaven, much less sinful men on earth. Our bodies and souls, all our enjoyments, and all that is good in us or done by us are from the Lord. By all their good works, best duties, and services, men give nothing to God and lay Him under no obligation. Hence, no man can merit anything at the hands of God.

None of God's mercies are conferred by way of obligation. We cannot constrain, make, force, or obligate God. Obligation would destroy the freeness of God's favors, as well as His sovereignty and independence. If I can obligate God to me, He is not sovereign, independent, or free. Who can pretend to have any demands upon God? To whom is God indebted?

Who has a right to any of His blessings? Can the Creator be obligated to the creature? How can the cause be dependent upon the effect? How can the author of providence and the Father of every good and perfect gift be under obligation to those whom He provides for and who are totally dependent upon His bounty? Everything that we have came from God; He gave it to us.

Our life, health, family, friends, station in life, monetary support—whatever we have—comes from God. In Job 35:7 the question is asked, “If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?” We should be righteous and holy, but our righteousness and holiness do not add anything to God.

Psalm 16 is a Messianic Psalm. As perfect and holy as the Lord Jesus Christ was in His obedience, and as much as He glorified His

Father in heaven, He did not add anything to God. Psalm 16:1 says, “Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust.” Verse 2 says, “O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, now look, my Lord, my goodness extendeth not unto thee.” The goodness of Christ did not extend to God the Father. It extended to the saints that are in the earth and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight. His goodness extended to us, but it did not extend to the Father.

Nothing can be added to God because God is already perfect. Nothing can be taken from Him, for if it was, He would not be perfect. Even the obedience of our Lord did not add anything to God the Father. It blessed us, but it did not add anything to God.

David confesses and acknowledges this in 1 Chronicles 29: “Blessed be Thou, Lord God of Israel, our Father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty. For all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine. Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all. And in mine hand is power and might, and in mine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy holy name.”

Then David asks, “But who am I? And what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own we’ve given thee.”

You may say, “But Brother Weaver, you don’t understand. I tithe.” If God had not given you money, you would have nothing to tithe. If He had not given you strength and the ability to work, you would have nothing to give Him. If He did not give you breath, you could not work or do anything; you would be dead. Everything you are and everything you have comes from God.

Everything We Have Is by Grace and Mercy

What is your attitude toward all of God's goodness and mercies toward yourself? I like to ask people this question: Why did you not die last night in your sleep? Why did you get to live through this day? Why did you not die last night? I can answer that for you. Lamentations 3:22–23 says, “It is the Lord's mercies that were not

consumed, because his compassions, they fail not. They are new every morning, great is thy faithfulness." The only reason you were alive this morning was because God had fresh mercies and fresh compassions upon you. That's it.

If you understand that God does not owe you anything, accept justice. That means everything you get from Him is pure grace and pure mercy. So what is your attitude toward Him? Are you thankful, grateful, and appreciative? Do you offer Him continual praise and worship? The more you recognize that God does not owe you anything, and the more you realize that everything you have is only by God's pure grace and mercy, the more you are going to thank Him and praise Him.

Hebrews 13:15 says, "By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually. That is the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name." What are we to offer our Lord continually? The sacrifice of praise, which is the fruit of our lips giving thanks unto our God.

You know what we do: We tend to take God for granted. We think automatically that He owes us life, food, bread, a family, or help. He did not owe us anything. We should not be like those lepers in Luke 17. Ten lepers came to Him, wanting to be healed. He said, "Go your way, show yourself to the priests," and offer the sacrifices that the law demands. As they went, the Bible says they were cleansed.

One turned around and came back. In Luke 17:17–19, the Bible says, "And Jesus answering said, Were they're not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that return to give glory to God, save this stranger. Arise, go thy way, thy faith is safety." Where are the nine? Where are the nine?

God Is Absolutely Sovereign

Do not make our Lord ask you whether or not you are thankful, grateful, or appreciative of His mercies, or whether you recognize that everything you are and everything you have is by His grace and mercy. You ought to be constantly and continually praising Him and thanking Him for everything that He has done. If you realize, first, that you have no claim upon Christ, and second, that He does not

owe you anything except justice, it should tend to make you thankful for everything.

The Third Despised Truth: God Is Absolutely Sovereign

Thirdly, go back to chapter four. Here is the third despised truth: God is absolutely sovereign. Look at verses 25 through 30. Our Lord said, "But I tell you of a truth, Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land. But in none of them was Elijah sent, save in the Zarephath city of Zidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them were cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian."

"And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way."

These three truths are not only closely connected; they are interrelated. They stand or fall together. When you realize that fallen man has no claims upon Christ, and that Christ does not owe us anything, that means, thirdly, that He is absolutely sovereign. The sovereignty of God means that God does as He pleases, only as He pleases, and always as He pleases.

Christ had just told these Nazarenes two Bible stories they had known since childhood. Suddenly they were so angry with Him that they tried to murder Him. Why were the people of Nazareth filled with wrath? Why did they attempt to murder Christ simply because He related these stories to them? The answer is that, for the first time in their lives, they realized the implication of these stories. They realized the application of these stories.

If you follow the context, you have to connect the dots. Here is what our Lord is saying: If you have no claim upon Me, I do not owe you anything. And if you have no claim upon Me and I do not owe

you anything, that means I am absolutely sovereign and I am God. They did not like that.

Consider the implications. The first thing He does is tell them about Elijah. He says, “But I tell you the truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine fell over all the land. But unto none of them was Elijah sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.” Three and a half years there was a drought in the land. Three and a half years people were starving and perishing. There were multitudes of widows in the land of Israel, but Elijah was sent to only one widow, in the city of Zarephath, a city of Zidon.

That may not mean anything to you, but Jezebel was a Zidonian. Jezebel, the wicked, perverted, reprobate queen of Ahab, was a Zidonian. Her reprobate father was king of Zidon. Zidon was not in Israel. What did God do? God sent Elijah into a strange land to a strange widow who was not an Israelite. He was not sent to a widow in Israel. Plenty of widows in Israel were famishing, starving, and dying, but God did not send him to any widow there. He sent him to Zidon. God overlooked, bypassed, and did not help any widow in the land of Israel through Elijah for three and a half years.

Nor was that all. He says, “And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them were cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.” Naaman was a Syrian—not in Israel. Not only was Naaman a stranger, he was an enemy to the Israelites. Syria and Israel were constantly at war. During the time of Elisha, the only leper who was cleansed was Naaman.

Here is what our Lord is saying: God does not owe His favors, grace, or mercy to anyone. He distributes them as He sees fit—to whom, wherever, and whenever He sees fit to send them. It is totally up to God. He is sovereign. He moves according to His will.

The Implications of Sovereignty: God Moves According to His Will

Let me tell you something that will upset you. You will despise it just like these people, but here it is: God does not move based upon your

needs. Go back to John 5. Our Lord walked in those five porches where the pool of Bethesda was, wherein lay a multitude of impotent folk, lame and sick, and healed one. Did they not all have needs? Of course. But He did not move according to the needs of the people. He moved according to His will.

God is not moved by anything except His own will. The Bible says in Daniel 4:35, “And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing. And he doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven and in the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?” Why? Because He is sovereign. You cannot stop God from doing anything, and you cannot make God do anything. God is sovereign.

It is the will of God that moves God. It is not the needs of the people, the circumstances, or the situations; it is the will of God. Ephesians 1:9 says, “Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.” God moves according to His will and that good pleasure which He has purposed in Himself. Verse 11 says that we have obtained an inheritance, “being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” The cause of all things is the will of God.

If you think God's absolute sovereignty is strange, then you are in the same boat as the people of Nazareth. You know nothing about the God of the Bible, because the only God that exists is the God of the Bible. Most people serve a god of their own imagination; they do not serve the God of the Bible. Years ago, I was in a pastor's office, talking about the doctrine of election and the doctrine of God's sovereignty.

His secretary was sitting at the desk, listening. We were not trying to hide anything, but neither were we speaking loudly. We were discussing God's sovereignty, the doctrine of election, and predestination. Suddenly, his secretary jumped up, ran into the room, looked at her pastor, and said, “I don't care what the Bible says; I know God's not like that.” Her pastor looked at her and asked, “Did you just hear what you said?”

Her god was up here; he was not the God of the Bible. The only God who exists is the God of the Bible. The God most professing Christians serve is like some old man in heaven, sitting in a rocking chair—very old—who no longer enjoys sin himself, but looks down, smiles, and leniently winks at the indiscretions of his people. That is not the God of the Bible. God said in Jeremiah 44:4, "Oh, do not the abominable thing which I hate." No. God is sovereign.

Romans 9:14-18 asks, "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth.

Now, what does the Bible say? It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. The only reason you and I are even saved by the grace of God is because of God's grace and God's mercy. We did not earn it. We did not deserve it. We did not merit it. God was just merciful to us.

The Parable of the Laborers and God's Right to Do as He Wills

Look in Matthew chapter 20. Our Lord says, "For the kingdom of heaven is likened to a man that is the householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, that would be nine o'clock in the morning, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. And he went out again about the sixth hour, that would be noon, and the ninth hour, that would be three p.m., and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour, that would be five p.m., he went out and found

others standing idle, and said unto them, Why stand ye here idle all the day?"

"And they said unto him, Because no man hath hired us." He said unto them, "Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, that shall you receive."

When evening was come, the lord of the vineyard said unto the steward, "Call the laborers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first." Those who were hired about the eleventh hour received every man a penny. When the first came, they supposed that they should receive more, and they likewise received every man a penny. When they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house, saying, "Thou hast these last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us which have borne the burden in the heat of the day."

But he answered one of them and said, "Friend, I do thee no wrong. Didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way. I will give unto this last even to thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thou not evil, because I am good?"

What if Troy had twenty brand-new four-wheel-drive pickup trucks? I could look at him and say, "You have twenty. You could at least give me one." But do they belong to Troy? Is he obligated to give me one? If he gave one to Hart, one to Kevin, and one to Greg, would he then be obligated to give me one simply because he had given them one? No. If he wanted to take those brand-new four-wheel-drive trucks out and set them on fire, burning them to the ground, he could do it. They are his.

He can do with his own what he wills. We see that when it relates to us, but we do not like it when it relates to God. We do not think God has the absolute right to do with His own as He wills. I have heard people say, "Well, I think God will save everybody in the world." God's grace is His own. God's mercy is His own. He is not obligated to give it to anybody. He was not obligated to give it to you. He did.

Since God cannot be brought into obligation and does not owe anyone anything, there should be no cause for complaint if God

deals more bountifully with some than with others. If God gave Greg a million dollars, why should I be upset if He does not give me a million dollars? God can do with His own as He wills. I could become upset that Lonnie has more hair than I do, but God can do what He wants with His own.

He blesses as He sees fit. We have to see the absolute freeness of God's distinguishing grace. God was not bound to give everybody the same thing, nor the same aid, nor the same means of grace. It is His; He can do with it as He wills. That is why He said in Romans chapter 9, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I'll have compassion on whom I'll have compassion.”

If I see four beggars on the street and walk up to one of them and hand him a ten-dollar bill, am I obligated to give ten dollars to the other three? No. I did not have to give him that one. We see that when it comes to ourselves, but we do not see it when it comes to God.

The people of Nazareth would fain make God their debtor: “What we have heard that you've done to Capernaum, do here in thine own country.” You owe us; we are Your people. Our Lord says, No, I do not owe you anything. They did not like that. Why were there no widows fed during Elijah's ministry in those three and a half years in Israel? Why were there no lepers cleansed in Israel during the time of Elisha? The people hated God, hated His law, despised His word, and despised His preachers. Do you think God is going to give somebody extra blessings like that?

One of them this week, when they were little, about three years old, two to three, something like that, Alice and I took them to Walmart because they wanted a pair of cow boots, cowboy boots, you know. I’ll be honest with you: I had paid all my bills, and I had twenty dollars left. That was all. I was saving it to buy some groceries. So we took our grandkids to Walmart and were just going to try the cowboy boots on them. We were going to come back when I got some money and buy them for them.

We put the little boots on them, made sure they fit, and let them walk around in them just a little bit. Then we took them off, put them back in the box, and marked them so we would know which

ones they were because we were going to come back and get them. I picked up the little boy and had him in my arms, while Alice had our granddaughter in her arms. As we started to leave, that little grandson of mine looked back at those boots and said, “Bye-bye, cow boots,” so pitifully.

I looked at my wife and said, “Get them. We’ll go hungry. Just forget it.” But let me tell you something: if he had gotten on the floor and pitched a royal fit, screaming and hollering, “I want those boots! I want those boots!” guess what? I would never have given him those boots. He would never have gotten them from me. He would have gotten a whipping from me, but he would never have gotten boots from me.

Do you think God is going to obligate Himself to someone who hates Him, despises Him, and acts contrary to what He said? Of course not. You cannot even obligate God if you obey Him. The only reason you are obeying Him is because He gave you grace and mercy. These people in the time of Elijah and Elisha just had contempt for God and His law.

Application: These Truths Should Produce Humility and Gratitude

I’ve talked to you about three things: despised truths. No man has a claim upon Christ. God does not owe us anything. And God is absolutely sovereign. If you do not hate these truths or despise these truths, you will love them. If you understand these truths, they will make you more appreciative, more grateful, more thankful, and more humble. You do not deserve what you have. I do not deserve what I have. The only reason we have what we have is because of the grace and mercy of God.

We have in our bathroom at home one of the old-timey four-foot tubs. I do not mind a shower, but I really enjoy getting in that old claw-foot tub and a hot bath, just lying back and soaking. Every time I get in that water, I say, “Thank you, Lord, for this bath.” Millions of people in this world cannot take a bath. Then I say, “Thank you, Lord, for a hot bath.” Millions of people do not have a hot bath.

You may not be in the best health, but you are not dead, and you can thank the Lord for the help that you have. You may not have a lot of money or strength, but you can thank the Lord for what you do have.

You can be thankful for your daily food, your family, life and health, and anything in your life when you realize that everything you are and everything you have is only by God's infinite grace and mercy. It will make you far more thankful. You will be like that one leper who turned around, came back, and gave our Lord the glory and honor for healing. Are you the one? Or are you the nine who just ignore Him?

Our Lord said, "You have no claims upon Me. I do not owe you anything. I am sovereign." But look at everything that He has given you.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we bow to You this night. We thank You for Your grace, mercy, compassions, provision, protection, preservation, and kind and gracious providence. We thank You for our wives, husbands, children, families, friends, and opportunities. Give us, Lord, a thankful, grateful, appreciative, loving, kind, obedient, submissive heart, and give us lips to praise Thee constantly and continually because of all that You are and all that You have done. May we say with David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me. Bless the Lord, and forget not all of His benefits," who daily loatheth us with benefits and blessings. We give Thee praise tonight in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. Amen.

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Chapter 2: Despised Truths - Part 2
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