

# Love For the Lost

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[ 0 : 00 ] Take your Bibles and turn to the Gospel of John in chapter 15. I'm going to begin reading at verse 26 and read through 16.

! When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.

And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning. All this I have told you so that you will not go astray. They will put you out of the synagogue.

In fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me.

I have told you this so that when the time comes, you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you. Now I am going to him who sent me.

[ 1 : 09 ] Yet none of you asks me, where are you going? Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell you the truth, it is for your good that I am going away.

Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.

In regard to sin, because men do not believe in me. In regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father where you can see me no longer.

And in regard to judgment, because the Prince of this world now stands condemned. Well, I had planned on moving on to the grace of hope this morning.

But upon further thought, I've decided to spend one more week on love. We started our study with God's love. And then we moved to man's love, which is to be patterned after God's love.

[ 2 : 13 ] And this love of ours flows in two directions. It flows Godward. We are to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. And it flows manward.

For we are to love our neighbor as ourself. And most of our study on love, manward, as we've been on it for three weeks or so, has focused upon our love for each other as disciples of Jesus Christ in the family of God.

As Christ's new command to his disciples is that you must love one another as I have loved you. And so I've not said much about our love for those outside the family of God.

But now I'd like to do so before leaving this all-important grace of love. Our duty of love is especially pointed toward our brothers and sisters in the body of Christ.

But they're not the only ones to receive Christ-like love from us. There are also those who are lost. And yes, even those who are regarded enemies of us.

[ 3 : 26 ] Love's the great giver. And it gives and delights to pour itself out on all people. Not just fellow saints. Just like the sun.

It pours out its warmth and its light on all people. So God himself pours out his gifts of love. Not just on the righteous, but on the wicked as well.

So let's consider today our love for the lost. Our love for the lost. And by lost, I just mean those that have not yet been saved. They're not yet reconciled to God through faith and repentance.

In Jesus Christ. They're still in their sins. And therefore still under the curse and wrath of God. The punishment for sin. Such that if they died this moment.

They would be in an eternal hell. Now, those are the lost. And we're speaking of our love for the lost. We've seen that love by its very definition delights in the good of the loved one.

[ 4 : 33 ]    Wherever you're considering love. Whether it's God's or yours. It delights in the good of the loved one. So what is the good? What is the good that we want to see lost people enjoying?

Well, we can learn from our Lord's own ministry to the lost, can't we? When he saw lost people hungry, he fed them. He fed the multitudes.

Saved and lost alike. When he saw the lost sick and diseased. He healed them. He never turned anyone away. When he saw them troubled, he sought to comfort them.

And as our great example of love. So our love for the lost must include their material and temporal needs. Jesus' own parable of the good Samaritan shows us that.

What does it look like to be neighbor? And to love a neighbor as we love ourselves. The Samaritan found this man robbed and beaten and left half dead along the road.

[ 5 : 36 ]    Others had seen him there but walked around on the other side. Failing to love him. But the Samaritan moved toward him and went to him and did all that he could to meet his material needs.

And a great sacrifice to himself in terms of time and money. He went out of his way. He was spending and being spent for him to see him restored to health.

But a man can be clothed and fed and educated and working all of his 80 years of life.

And then die. And go to an eternity in hell. So our Savior's love for the lost went far beyond just his material and temporal needs.

And so must ours. He not only fed and clothed them. But he preached the saving gospel of Jesus Christ to them. He saw the crowd not only as hungry.

[ 6 : 38 ]    But as harassed and helpless. As sheep without a shepherd. And so as the good shepherd he went to them and he invited them. Come to me and find rest.

Real rest for your soul. Once after an especially full day packed with preaching and healing. Our Lord was up early the next morning to pray to his heavenly father.

And when the disciples found him they said Lord everybody's looking for you. As if come on let's go have some more ministry to them.

And Jesus replied let us go somewhere else. To the nearby villages. So I can preach there also.

For that is why I have come. Men need more than food and healing of the body. They need the words of eternal life. They need to know the gospel of Jesus Christ that saves them.

[ 7 : 39 ]    And so love seeks to meet that greatest need. Of salvation from sin and hell. Love delights in their highest good. To see them reconciled to God.

Enjoying fellowship with God as they were meant to do. Indeed. That abundant and eternal life that starts now and lasts forever. In a new world.

That's perfect. That is to come. So that means we love the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ. That means witnessing is love to our neighbor.

That means that evangelism and mission is loving the lost. And that is part of our continuing debt of love. As the apostle Paul says I'm debtor to all men.

To the Jew and to the Greek. Why Paul? Why are you debtor to them? Because I have the saving gospel of Christ and they don't. Yes love seeks the good of the loved one.

[ 8 : 41 ] Didn't someone love you enough to bring the gospel to you? I know they did. You wouldn't be here as a saved person if that weren't true. Someone loved you enough to bring the gospel to you?

Probably more than once. Probably more than one person. What love? To want you to enjoy the very best. The very highest.

Blessing of all. Fellowship with the living God. Right with him through the Lord Jesus Christ. So here we are. We're back again in John 13 to 17.

Jesus with his disciples in the upper room on the night of his betrayal. And he's preparing his disciples for his departure. These in these last words of Jesus before his crucifixion.

We have seen that that love is the predominant note. But what I want us to see this morning is that right alongside of love. Their mission.

[ 9 : 41 ] Their witness to the lost world is never far from Jesus heart and mind. And indeed from his lips as he instructed them that night. Love is so important to the mission.

That Jesus not only spoke about love. But he spoke about the witnessing mission as well. In fact Jesus says that it's by loving one another as he loved us.

That all men including lost people. Will know that we are disciples of Jesus. His love commends the gospel. His love in his people commends the gospel to lost people.

As something supernatural. Something compellingly real. Nowhere else do we find such love as this. And so love adorns the gospel.

It makes it attractive. Love dresses up the gospel in beautiful garb. And recommends the gospel to a people hating and being hated. Love spreads everywhere.

[ 10 : 44 ] The sweet aroma of Christ. So critical to the mission. The apostle Paul in Philippians 1 27 says.

Whatever happens. Conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel. Whatever happens. That's I love those words. Because it includes whatever happens.

And that's where we live. And he says whatever happens. Live in a way that speaks well of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Christ. Now the gospel claims.

To teach people to love one another. As God has loved them. So whatever happens. Conduct yourselves in a manner. Of love.

Undeserved. Self-sacrificing. Unending love. The gospel claims to reconcile people to God. And to one another. So whatever happens.

[ 11 : 41 ] Conduct yourself in a way. That proves the gospel's power. To reconcile contrary parties. The gospel claims to make law keepers. Out of law breakers.

So conduct yourselves. Whatever happens. In such a way. That proves. That gospel claim. Keep God's laws. Of love. No wonder Jesus is emphasizing.

The importance of love. As he prepares to leave them. Their mission cannot succeed. Without love. Either for one another. Or for. The world. And so when Jesus comes to pray.

At the end of this. Evening. In John chapter 17. We see this same concern. For their mission. To the lost world. And the place of their loving unity.

In that mission. The two are intertwined. He says. Father. I've given them your world. Your word. And the world has hated them. For they're not of the world. Any more than I'm of the world.

- [ 12 : 39 ] And my prayer is not that you take them out of the world. But that you keep them. From the evil one. As you sent me into the world. So. I have sent them.
- Into the world. And we say. What? Why? Why would Jesus send his. His disciples. Into a world. Of danger.
- Where. Where they're easily allured. And tempted away from Christ. And where they're persecuted. By the world. Well the answer is. Because that world. Is made up of lost people. Going to hell.
- That need to see. And hear. Of the love of Christ. And be saved. And so. I'm not. Taking them out of the world. But sending them into.
- That world. And I'm praying. Lord. That they would have. Such a loving unity. Among themselves. That would be observable. So that the world. Will know. That you sent me.
- [ 13 : 35 ] And have loved them. Even as you've loved me. And may they be so one. In us. That the world. May believe. That you've sent me. And father. I'm going to. Keep showing them.
- And revealing. You. To them. So that the love. You have for me. May be in them. You see. The mission. Is never far. Out of sight. With.
- This. Teaching on love. And unity. Because that's. What's needed. In proclaiming. The gospel. To the world.
- That's what makes. A supernatural love. In believers. So critical. It adorns. The gospel. That they witness. To the world. About. Now.
- After the resurrection. And just before. Jesus ascended. Into heaven. Jesus will give. His disciples. That mission. That great. Commission. That we.
- [ 14 : 29 ] We often refer. To it as. As. And he'll tell them. To go into all the world. And make disciples. That's coming. After his resurrection. You.
- He'll say. In Acts 1. 8. But you will receive. Power. When the Holy Spirit. Comes upon you. And you will be. My witnesses. Here in Jerusalem. Samaria. All Judea. To the ends of the earth.
- But here. In the upper room. We have the preview. Of the great commission. Mission. And he not only. Sets before the disciples. Their mission.
- To be his witnesses. But he also. Promises the help. And power. Of the Holy Spirit. In that mission. Just as. He does. In Acts 1. 8. And in all of this.
- We're being told. How to love the lost. Remember. All commands. Have to do with. Loving God. And. Or else. Loving man. And that goes for the.
- [ 15 : 25 ] Great commission. Command. Command. To take the gospel. To the lost world. Is a command of love. And what. Encouragements.
- And. Instructions. There are. For us here. To do just that. So that's what we're on. This morning. John 15. 26. And 27. Jesus says to them.
- When the counselor comes. Whom I will send to you. From the father. The spirit of truth. Who goes out. From the father. He will testify. About me. And you also. Must testify.
- Because you've been with me. From the beginning. So the disciples. Must testify. About Christ. That's the. The commission. That's the mission. But the world.
- Doesn't want their testimony. About Jesus. You know that. You've experienced that. Someone just told me. Last week. That before he was saved. Every time. Somebody mentioned.
- [ 16 : 20 ] The name Jesus. The hair on the back. Of his head. Would stand up. So full of. Animosity. Against Christ. His laws. His gospel. You see.

So. The world's not dying. To hear about our Jesus. And even some places. In the world. They'll kill you. For witnessing. About him. But what an encouragement.

There is here. That. That as we testify. About Jesus. There's someone else. Testifying. About him. It's the counselor. Jesus says. Whom I will send to you.

From the father. The spirit of truth. He will testify. About me. Well. How does he testify. About Christ. It's not in a vacuum. It's not.

Separate from. Our testifying. No. It's. It's as we testify. About Christ. There is this. Inner. Testifier. In the hearts. Of sinners. Listen to this man.

[ 17 : 16 ] Listen to this woman. She's telling you. The truth. About Jesus. The spirit. Testifying. Along with. The disciples. Testimony.

Making our words. Come in more than just words. But in power. In the Holy Spirit. And with deep conviction. People will not be saved.

By merely seeing us. Love one another. Or by us loving them. The gospel is not. See how we love. One another. No. The gospel is. See how God.

In Jesus Christ. Is love. Poor sinners. Like you and me. Now seeing. Our love. For one another. And seeing. And experiencing. Our love for them.

May win. A hearing. For the gospel. It may. Be the soapbox. On which. We can. Present. The gospel. And they'll say. This is something. Worth. Listening to.

[ 18 : 08 ] Because. Their lives. Are demonstrating. Something. That I rarely see. So love. And unity. In the body. Of Christ.

May commend. The gospel. But they do not. Replace. The gospel. The gospel. Is a message. To be conveyed. In words. A message. About Jesus Christ. And so it must come.

In words. But it must come. In more than words. Or else it just goes in. And it comes out. And that's why. The spirit of God. Is coming. To be that other. Testifier.

In the heart. To convict. And to convert sinners. A supernatural power. So in chapter 16. Jesus says.

I told you. I'm going away. And you're sad. You ought to be glad. You ought to be glad. Why? Because I tell you the truth. It's for your good. That I'm going away. Because unless I go away.

[ 19 : 02 ] The counselor. Will not come to you. But if I go. I will send him to you. And notice the encouragement. Of what he will do. When he comes. Even as we are testifying.

About Jesus to the world. Verse 8. When he comes. He will convict the world. Of guilt. In regard to sin. And righteousness. And judgment. But without.

The spirit's testimony. This lost world. Does not really know the truth. About sin. About righteousness. And about judgment.

So how will the Holy Spirit. Do this? It's as we witness. About Christ. As we talk. About man's sin. About Christ's righteousness. About God's judgment.

He'll be the inside witness. And that's how. We love lost people. Now let's not miss. These three aspects. Of our witness. We want to look at each one.

[ 20 : 01 ] If the spirit is sent. To do. To bring conviction. Of sin. And righteousness. And judgment. Then surely. We need to be talking about. Sin. Righteousness. And judgment.

So we'll look at each one. First of all. Sin. John 16. 9. He will convict the world. In regard to sin. Because men do not believe in me. Sin.

So again. I say. If the Holy Spirit. Has been sent. To convict the world. About sin. Well then. We must be talking to people. About their sin. oh now here we have a problem because people don't like to hear about sin and I don't want to be negative I just want to love them I just want to tell them about God's love suppose your well is polluted with cancer producing chemicals known to have killed people and I know it but you don't and I don't want to talk to you about it because you know people just don't like to hear about polluted water supply it could upset them could ruin their day maybe even their week and once they knew about it well they'd have to do something about it and that could get very costly and I don't want to be the bearer of bad news

I just want to love them so I keep silent now you see right through that you say John if you really love them you would tell them because love seeks the good the best of the loved one and you got me there you're right I've got to tell my neighbor his water supply is polluted with dangerous chemicals I can't say well what he doesn't know won't hurt him no what he doesn't know might kill him and if we're talking spirit in the spiritual realm and they don't really understand their problem of sin what they don't know might damn them and surely will damn them unless they know about it so people have some sense that something's wrong it's like a car that was meant to ride on four wheels and one of them's missing something's wobbly here something's wrong here but but people might not know what it is that's wrong we were made to live with God and in fellowship with God never meant to live for a second outside of fellowship with Jesus Christ and

God the Father God the Son God the Holy Spirit but sin has separated us from him and something's not right something's not right in my life and so people can know something's wrong but not know that it's their sin that the greatest problem in life is sin that it's their sin that separates them from God it's their sin that brings the punishment of death it's their sin that will bring the even greater second death of hell into their everlasting experience so the most lovingly thing to do is to tell them about their sin and its cure the most loving thing to do is to say what God's prophet Hosea said in Hosea 14 verse 1 return O Israel to the Lord your God your sins have been your downfall why is all this why is everything out of kilter and out of your sins have been your downfall

[ 23 : 49 ] I dare say that most people in the world today don't know that their sins have been their downfall and it would be hatred for us to know it and not tell them we must if we love the lost tell them your sins have been your downfall sin is the problem of every lost person it's the greatest problem now sin's not a popular topic it never has been never will be and conviction of sin is not a fun feeling it never has been it never will be but talking about sin is absolutely essential in loving the lost they need to know their lost before they can be saved and if they do not hear the bad news they'll have little interest in the good news now we're told that over a million people have died from COVID-19 this year and let's say that I have a cure no bad side effects no gimmicks a real cure and I've had it for a year yeah I had it last October and I could have taken out all kinds of advertisements all over the world and sold it for a reasonable price \$50 for a whole series of treatment that will knock out the coronavirus the COVID-19 how many would have been interested in my cure and bought it well probably few if any at all and why is that because last October nobody had the coronavirus nobody had

COVID-19 they didn't need it and oh what a difference a year makes my cure was met with yawns of indifference but not today why what's different same same drug same ads but now everyone's clamoring for it why because we're told that millions and millions and millions of people today have COVID-19 and so they need it without the bad news there's no good news and so people must know of their sin problem if the cure of Jesus is to bring anything more than a yawn and a knot of the head that's precisely what the Holy Spirit has come to do to convince people of their need of Jesus by convicting them of their sin their great problem and so that being the case that sin is what sends people to hell because of these things the wrath of God is coming to skirt around the issue of sin is not love at all but hatred and so we do it we do it humbly we do it respectfully we do it lovingly but we must talk about sin and nothing more clearly reveals the world's sin than not believing in Jesus that's what he says in verse 9 that the spirit will convict them of sin because men do not believe in me

Jesus said I'm the way the truth and the life no one can come to the father but by me you're not fit for God you're not fit for heaven you're defiled you're unclean you can't go to heaven you can't get to the father unless you come through me and what I've done to cure the sin problem people don't believe that they didn't believe that he said whoever believes in me will not perish but have everlasting life but if you don't believe in me you will perish and unless you repent you will all perish and that got him crucified they didn't believe on he came to his own and his own received him not they refused to believe they refused to come to him that they might have eternal life and if you haven't trusted in Christ to save you from your sin you too still have not believed and that is the greatest demonstration of your sin do you mean that God the father out of love gave up his own son and sent him and delivered him up to the cross where he crushed him with his own wrath that sinners might be forgiven and you haven't received him do you mean the son of

God became man and went to the cross and there received the punishment our sins should have deserved should have received and would have received and you say no thank you no thanks it's not a small sin to not believe savingly to not receive this savior come from heaven and that's what the holy spirit will come and convict people of he will convict that you've been just happy to live without this Jesus you've been content to live without him without receiving what a sin and the spirit of God will show your guiltiness of sin because you've not yet believed on him well there's no salvation without a conviction of sin and awareness of why you need Jesus and that's why the spirit has come so we need to talk about sin so that the spirit might convict of sin secondly the spirit will come Jesus says to convict the world of in regard to righteousness because I'm going to the father where you can see me no longer now the world had the righteousness visit them in the person of

Jesus Christ but they didn't believe in Jesus righteousness no they accused him of being unrighteous they accused him of being a lawbreaker a troublemaker stirring up problems breaking God's commands they said he was in league with bells above the chief demon he's serving Satan they accused him of being a blasphemer because he claimed to be God a liar a deceiver of the people a guilty sinner you know what he deserves bang bang bang the cross that's the world's estimate of Jesus not righteous wicked criminal getting what he deserved well they were never more wrong were they he was the righteous one he was the holy blameless and pure one and Jesus tells his disciples that the Holy Spirit when he comes will convince the world of their guilt in regard to righteousness because I'm going to the father the spirit will show the world they got it wrong the spirit will show the world he's no sinner but he is indeed the righteous one and how does this come about well the world thought the world showed what they thought of Jesus by nailing him to the cross and then

[ 31 : 21 ] God showed what he thought of Jesus by raising him from the dead and by receiving him into heaven and putting him at his own right hand upon the throne that rules the universe the world said wicked God said righteous son deserving of the worship of the nations of every heart and the Holy Spirit was sent to convince the world that they've misjudged him they've thought less of him than what he really was in a big way that he is the righteous one the righteous one there's none righteous but him and he's still convincing people of Jesus righteousness he's bringing people up short they think Jesus is not worthy of their lives they think he's he's a good teacher perhaps but he's not God I don't need him so I'm not interested in him they undervalue

Jesus they think less of him than what they ought and the spirit comes and says oh you're so wrong there's he is the only one righteous and he was tempted in every way like we are and yet he was without sin and therefore he's qualified to be the substitute on the altar of Calvary for other sinners you see if he had one sin if it's true that he's not the righteous one and if he just sinned once in thought word or deed well then he's disqualified for saving us his death has no merit for us he's dying for his own sin he's paying for his own sin problem and has nothing left over for my sin problem oh but if he's the righteous one if he's the spotless without defect lamb of God then his blood can purify an innumerable people who trust in him he's the righteous one he has the righteousness that you need in order to get into heaven a perfect righteousness righteousness and the spirit comes and convinces the world of that that you need to be found in him not having a righteousness of your own that comes from keeping the law your best efforts at law keeping but a righteousness that comes from

God Jesus came from God and a righteousness that becomes ours through faith in Jesus Christ not by our works of righteousness that's what the spirit convinces people of and so an awareness of their sin oh I've got this sin problem is then followed up with an awareness that Jesus is the righteous one and therefore his death has infinite merit to save any sinner who comes and trusts in the savior this is the work of the holy spirit and all to encourage us you see in our mission and so if the spirits come to bear and convict of Christ righteousness and surely if we love sinners we'll be telling them about true righteousness that's to be found in Christ and then lastly judgment he he's he's convincing the world of their guilt in regard to judgment because the prince of this world now stands condemned verse 11 how is it that you you know there's a day of judgment coming how do you know that that one day there's a day of reckoning when when you alone must stand before your maker and be judged well you know it because

God told you you know it because he loved you enough to tell you about it you know God could have kept it secret God could have just not said anything about what happens after death and then we die in the next moment we wake up to reality there is a day of reckoning oh oh I'm completely unprepared that's why he told you ahead of time while there's still time to prepare while there's still time to repent and trust in the only savior sinners isn't it love to have told you about the coming judgment judgment and dear Christian as hard as it might be to talk about a coming judgment we too need to see that if we love the lost we'll talk about judgment day teachers in her English class and she's teaching English and students are messing around throwing paper wads at each other they're not coming to class prepared they're not reading their assignments doing their homework no not at all and then one day the teacher says at the beginning of class get out a piece of blank a blank piece of paper and a pencil we are having an unannounced test and your whole grade for the year will hang on what you do with this test and immediately the protests come well you never told us oh I would have studied



I would have prepared if I had known there was going to be a test well do you see God could have done that to us but he didn't because he loved us so much that he didn't want us showing up unprepared he wanted us coming in Christ his son where there's no condemnation and so he told us ahead of time prepare for the coming day of judgment it's appointed unto man once to die then the judgment be sure you don't come with any sin unpunished be sure it's already been punished or God will have to punish you for it there's only one place you see to have sins punished outside of hell and that's outside the hill of Jerusalem on Calvary the middle cross where God judged his own son and punished him and and the proof that the

[ 37 : 44 ] Holy Spirit will point to that there's coming a day of judgment for the world is that there Jesus judged both the world and the prince of the world you see what what he says here in verse 11 that the spirit will convince the world of their guilt in terms of the judgment because the prince of this world now stands condemned well who's the prince of this world it's Satan isn't it and there was a prophecy clear back in Genesis 3 15 that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent even while the serpent would bruise the heel of the woman's seed and now he's here and in John chapter 12 and verse 30 just before Calvary Jesus says now is the time for judgment judgment on this world now the prince of this world will be driven out Jesus is referring to his own death on the cross and there on the cross Satan was judged he was crushed he was defeated he was disarmed he was made a public spectacle of so if

Satan the prince of this world is condemned then all of you who are following are also condemned if he doesn't escape all of you who are still following Satan's lies you too will be condemned and that's what the spirit will convict people of there's no way that you're not going to be judged by this God he's judged your champion your master and because you're following him he'll judge you so loving the lost means telling them the truth about their sin about Christ's righteousness about God's judgment now that's not easy but who said anything about easy wasn't easy for Jesus to love sinners and sometimes love is not easy sometimes it takes supernatural spiritual energy to love we've been seeing that and that's why we refer to the grace of love because

God almighty God enables us to love like he loves that's supernatural that's nothing easy that's a God size problem and a God size solution but he sent his own Holy Spirit to be on our side convincing the lost of these things as we speak of sin and righteousness and judgment and can make your words ring true in the hearts and minds of the lost so let's love them with the gospel let's tell them the problem let's tell them of the!

that their sin separate the righteous sinless one and qualified to be their substitute and because God so loved this world that he gave his son that whoever does believe upon him savingly will not perish but have everlasting life he bears God's judgment upon sin for all who are his people come to him and believe on him receive him have you have you repented of your sin repudiated that life of going the way with your back and come and trusted in him to save you by his blood and righteousness that's the message of the gospel now this promise of the coming spirit to convince the world of its guilt in these three ways was soon proven just some 50 days later when

Peter is in the same Jerusalem where they killed Jesus and he stands up on the day of Pentecost and he preaches Christ and he preaches about his righteousness and he preaches about their sin you killed the righteous one you killed the prince of life but God raised him from the death God had a different view of him than you and now he's on the throne the throne of judgment Peter was preaching the spirit of God was also preaching in the hearts of people and the Bible says they were cut in their hearts now no preacher's words can cut hearts they can reverberate in the ears and that's all we can do but the spirit of God can cut the heart pierce the heart and that's what happened as Peter preached to the ears the spirit of God was preaching and the forgiveness of sins and 3,000 people did just that they fled to

[ 42 : 58 ] Jesus they trusted in him they turned they repented of all their past thoughts of Jesus their past deeds and they turned and they received him as their savior and lord and they were saved and added to that little band there in Jerusalem just as Jesus said you will testify and the spirit of God will testify as you speak of sin righteousness and judgment later on in Acts chapter 24 the apostle Paul once Saul of Tarsus Christian killing man that was converted and now preaching Christ he now is being judged and he's brought before governor Felix and Felix listens to him and he discourses on righteousness self control and the judgment to come righteousness that's necessary for heaven the righteous

Jesus your lack of righteousness self control and the judgment to come that will balance the books and the Bible says that as Paul was speaking to Felix that he trembled he was afraid so much that he trembled evidently the Holy Spirit was doing some cutting on the heart that he saw he wasn't righteous that he didn't have this self control he had sin instead of self control and he's headed to judgment and he's not ready and he's trembling and we say wonderful that's what Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would do as we testify he will testify but you know what Felix did he didn't do what the 3000 did he said enough enough no one here anymore I'll listen more at a convenient season a more convenient season and of course you know there never came a more convenient season and he perished in his sin he was convicted by the

Holy Spirit but he was not converted it's a sad thing I've heard more than one person say that they're hanging their hat that they're a Christian they're ready for the day of judgment because when they sin they're convicted conviction is not conversion those who are converted will be convicted and that conviction will drive them into the arms of Jesus where they will be saved but many people are convicted of sin that only harden themselves against it and will not go to Christ that they might be forgiven and Felix is one of many that we meet in the scriptures and one of many that we sadly see in our world I'm convicted of sin I must be Christian Felix was convicted so much that he shook but he wasn't converted come to Christ that's why conviction is there it's meant to drive you into the arms of Jesus and he never turns one away just like he never turned one sick person away but he so if you come to

Jesus he will heal the waywardness of your heart and he will forgive your sins the entire army of the Arameans came and surrounded the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel they besieged Samaria they were cutting off all of its food supplies in the city and the result was a serious famine and food was so scarce that a donkey's head sold for two pounds of silver I don't think there's a lot of meat on a donkey's head and yet it sold for two pounds of silver and the city was slowly being starved to death women were beginning to eat their children a gruesome strategy of war slow starvation boxed them in cut off their food supply well just outside the walls the army Aramean army was out further but just outside the gate were four lepers and you know why they're outside the gate they're under quarantine they're lepers they can't live with their families and society so they're right outside the gate and one day they got thinking why why stay here till we die

I mean if we go into the city the famine is there and we will die if we stay here we will die let's go surrender to the Arameans and if they kill us we die but if they spare us we live there's our one chance at survival and so once it got dark the four lepers started going out sheepishly toward the Aramean camp and they got to the edge of the camp and they found no one there you see God had put a sound into the ears of the whole entire army a sound of chariots and horses and they thought oh no the Israelites have hired foreign nations to come and they're coming against us and they got up in the night in a panic and they just fled for their lives left the camp untouched all of their stuff was there so here come the lepers and they open the first tent they start gorging themselves in the food and they found silver and gold and clothes and they went out and they hid it and now they came back to the second tent and they're starting to eat and gather the things and then they stopped they stopped dead in their tracks and they said to each other we are not doing right this is a day of good news and we are keeping it to ourselves so they headed back to the city gate of Samaria and shouted to the gatekeeper the Arameans are gone and they've left everything behind and they went out and everyone had food to eat now there's more to the story than that that's really not what the story is about what I'm going to how I'm applying I'm simply using it as an illustration there was a lesson here about God's word will be fulfilled when he said food will be had at a low cheap price and people said there's no way two pounds for a donkey's head and you're saying by this time tomorrow that it'll be sold for pittance even if God opened up the windows of heaven it could not happen one man said the steward said and that man was trampled to his death he didn't believe the word of

[ 49 : 57 ] God so there's other lessons there but but what I want to say is that our world's perishing and they're perishing for a lack of the gospel they don't understand their greatest problem is sin they don't understand that Jesus has a righteousness to give to all who come and trust him and they don't understand that without that righteousness judgment for them will be damnation and we sit here each week and we were stuffing ourselves with the gospel and we go home and we're stuffing ourselves with the gospel and if that's all we do folks then we have reason to be jabbed in our hearts and to say you know we're not doing right this is a day of good news and we're keeping it to ourselves oh we dare not keep it to ourselves love must overflow the banks of ourselves and and into this world we have the greatest story to give to the nations and to our nearer neighbors the greatest love story ever of

God so loving the world that he gave his one and only son to die in the place of sinners that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life there's no condemnation now for those who are in Christ Jesus oh world of lost sinners get into Jesus Christ and be saved well let's let's tell them the great love story and let's tell them each of its parts of sin and righteousness and judgment and tell it lovingly that the sinners might be saved just like us we challenge each other in closing him oh church arise this is the mission and the spirit of God has been given to help us let's cast ourselves upon him even as we sing oh church arise stand with me as we sing