

# Judgment At The House Of God

By Ken Wimer

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## **Shreveport Grace Church**

2970 Baird Road  
Shreveport, LA 71118

**Website:** [www.shrevegrace.org](http://www.shrevegrace.org)

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I would like you to look with me in your Bibles to Isaiah chapter 39.

An unusual title, perhaps, to this message, but nonetheless so and that is: Judgment at the House of God.

Israel having that temple in that land prided themselves in the temple to the point of thinking that no matter what they did, no matter their apostasy, no matter their rebellion against God in their hearts, that they were a blessed people. And they looked to that temple as a comfort, the fact that it was there.

It is like so many people today in religion that have this view of once saved always saved. I made my profession. I can go out and live in the world however I deem necessary, but my church is always there to receive me back. And they drive by and see that big building, see that steeple. There is somewhat of a conscience soothing thought in their mind that no matter what, you know, I am saved.

Let's bring it right into this building. People sitting here that every time this message is preached you nod the head. You say, "I am saved. I am good. I am in a place where the gospel is preached. At least I am not over in one of those other places." And your confidence is in a doctrine, your confidence is in a knowledge that you feel that you have and yet having all of that may still be under the judgment of God.

So let's read that with this thought, because as time goes on nothing really changes. Men's hearts are the same and unless the Lord is pleased to give us hearts that truly are Christ's and eyes to truly see our sin and our need and our worthiness of condemnation and eyes to look to Christ alone, it may well be that God's judgment passed through this house and even as it was in Israel of old that that blood has not been shed for you, Christ's blood. Then certainly you will know nothing but condemnation.

Here in Isaiah 39:

At that time Merodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered. And Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed them the

house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not. Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country unto me, even from Babylon.

Then said he, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that is in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.

Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD of hosts: Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days.<sup>1</sup>

How often we take for granted the special mercies of God in our day to day lives. I am talking particularly about temporal mercies, things such as a job or health, home, family, things that many times people will take for granted until they lose them. And then all of the sudden the reality strikes that these things are but mercies that the Lord gives us. And just as he gives them, he can so easily take them away.

But there are also spiritual mercies that we tend to take for granted.

Look down in your lap right now. What are you holding? You are holding a Bible. Probably still the King James version, the number one selling Bible in the world. I don't know if you know it nor not, but for every Bible sold, royalties are paid to the Queen of England.

But you think about how easy it is to procure one today and yet how little we—I am not talking about the world—but we read it, how little we value it.

Imagine a day when not everybody had a copy and you had to go to a place where it was read whether you agreed or not with the interpretation, such as it was in the days of Christ. People had to go to the synagogues to hear the Word read and endure many false interpretations. But the Spirit of the Lord would nurture and bless them through the Word. And yet today we take it so for granted.

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<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 39:1-8.

Or even the salvation which is in Christ alone. Well, we have a privilege of hearing week in and week out. There are some of the Lord's dear people in places right now that don't have this privilege that we do today. They are alone. They get up. There is nobody to fellowship with. And if you sit down and talk with them as I had the privilege to do, you will learn something of the yearning of their heart, that not even a CD, not even a DVD suffices. They will tell you it is like taking vitamins, but it is not the meat. It is not the same as meeting with the Lord's people where Christ is exalted.

Yet how we take it so for granted.

You know, I have said this to some of you that there may be a day when you show up and there is a for sale sign on this property. The Lord has taken away the land. He has taken away the preacher. He has taken away the Word.

How valuable is it to us, how important is what the Lord has given us to us, the fellowship of the saints, the times of worship? And all of these things we tend to take for granted until they are gone.

I have been in situations where it has been nothing but my family. Some of you have.

You know, when our Lord first brought me here to Shreveport there were families meeting individually in some homes because there wasn't a place that you could attend that you felt comfortable with and that, you know, exalted the Lord Jesus Christ. And I am thankful for the 15 years the Lord has given me here with you. But, you know, time passes on. And we don't know tomorrow. We don't know what the Lord has purposed of each of us. So let us always be thankful. Let us always remember one another. Let's always remember those that don't have this privilege, that are the Lord's and uphold them in our prayers.

But the thrust of this chapter here in Isaiah 39 is exactly to tell us that what may be today, may not be tomorrow. You know, and I tend to think, oh, that is five, 10, 15 years down the road. No it may not be tomorrow. It may not even be the rest of this day for some of us. And therefore the importance, the seriousness of hearing the Word.

You know, as blessed as Hezekiah was in his lifetime to accomplish the work that he did in Israel in destroying the idols, tearing down the high places and in drawing attention to the importance of the temple and of the worship there, even in the face of a very strong enemy of that day which was the Assyrians, yet the Lord was already preparing another enemy. Those Assyrians came and took out the 10 tribes of the north and spared Hezekiah and the two tribes in the south. And maybe some of the people thought that, well, boy, we dodged a bullet there.

But unbeknownst to Hezekiah at that time the Lord was already raising up another nation, Babylon, which would come and which would enter Jerusalem and do worse devastation than the Assyrians ever did because they would destroy the temple. Sennacherib and all his efforts could not reach Jerusalem. God put a wall up and chased him home. But in

time Nebuchadnezzar would be raised up and would come and take out the temple, take out Jerusalem and remove that people into captivity for 70 years.

And this is where we begin to see where it is so easy for us to be lifted up in pride in times of blessing, in times of comfort, in times when maybe we don't have some perceived enemies and yet we don't know what the Lord will do. Such was the case here in verse one with Hezekiah.

Now you might read this innocently and think, well, what was wrong with that?

“Merodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, [notice] king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered.”<sup>2</sup>

And when he sent letters, this came through dignitaries. This came through high level officials. So it wasn't that he just happened to have a courier that appeared one day with a scroll thanking him and a present.

It says in verse two, “Hezekiah was glad of them.”<sup>3</sup>

How easy it is for our hearts and minds to be quickly turned with flattery, because when you think about what his happening here, here is Babylon which is every bit as much an enemy as Assyria and Hezekiah rejoicing in that attention, rejoicing in that flattery. It is like we have, perhaps, many friends who are religious and hate the very gospel that you and I believe, hate it, hate the Christ that we believe. And yet if they can find an opportunity to flatter you and to thank you and to send you gifts, in the reality what they are doing is saying that we are just as good as you are, because your separation from them is like a sword in many ways. They sort of think, well, you think you are better than we are, or, as they have said, “Do you think you are the only one that is saved?”

And so they use ways and means as they can to show you that they are just as blessed even though they don't believe in the Christ or the God in whom you believe and are blessed to believe and know.

And Hezekiah got sidetracked here, because at the very way this is written it was that “Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices.”<sup>4</sup>

The whole tenor here is that he was lifted up in pride as if his hand had something to do with this. And what it was was compromise.

The Scriptures say, “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 39:1.

<sup>3</sup> Isaiah 39:2.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Galatians 5:9.

And that is what happens when we begin to cater to men and rejoice in their flattery.

You know, I think one of the most difficult things for a preacher of the gospel in a mixed crowd is when even those who oppose the message kind of flatter you and tell you what a good word that was. You hear it a lot of times at funerals. You will hear it a lot of times at weddings when there is a mixed congregation. People will say things to appease you because in their heart they really hate what you said. But they have got to be nice and they have got to show kindness.

And we have to be careful. You know, even our Lord was when it says that men followed him, but he did not commit himself unto them, because he knew their heart. He knew the nature of men. He knew of what manner they were.

And, you know, our one purpose in life is not to feed off of men's smiles or be affected by men's frowns, that the Lord would give us a heart, no matter what, simply to give the honor and glory to Christ and not take the precious things. I think here of the Scriptures where it talks about casting your pearls before the swine, not taking the precious things that men, natural men don't understand and will easily take and crush or turn and twist, not take those things and just cast them before him, but simply to look to the Lord alone as our strength.

And in this matter of pride, which we all have, number one standing right up in front of you. The Lord has to deal in our hearts. He will exercise our hearts. He will... this is where I believe that the title judgment at the house of God, the Lord will cause his own to be exercised by those things that would otherwise lead us astray and chasten us with them in order to bring us back again to himself.

If you will look with me in Revelation chapter two, these letters to the seven churches, these were the principle churches that were in Asia Minor in that day, all founded on the gospel. And here is where, again, we are reminded not to take anything for granted, not to presume that simply because a congregation was raised up on the true gospel of Christ that that will continue to be so through the years, through the generations. It may be that the Lord has raised up Shreveport Grace Church just for this hour and that 10, 20 maybe even five years from now there will be a man standing in this pulpit that does nothing but preach free will.

You say, "Oh, that will never happen."

Look at history. You know, look at Israel. If it had been announced, which it is in the latter part of this book of Isaiah, the first part had to do with Assyria. That wasn't even enough to shake men up. When 10 of the 12 tribes were taken away to captivity, it is like cattle. Everybody that, you know, when they see the butcher truck pull up and a few of their own hauled off they kind of watch the truck going down the road and then what do they do? They go back to eating in that field.

And that is what Israel did because as the Lord announced in the rest of these chapters how Babylon would be that very enemy that you allowed in your house, that you thought well of, that you received their gifts and received their flattery and the pats on the back as people will tell you, “It is nice that you go to church.” And you feel good about it that, hey, I am saying something which, you know, we agree. And I can go there and they can come here and just really we are just meeting in different places.

That very enemy will be the one then to come in and take over by what you allow, what you permit.

And in Revelation chapter two you can see these commendations here was Ephesus. You think about Paul writing the letter to Ephesians. You think about his gathering the elders of Ephesus when he thought it might be the last time he would see them in Acts 20 and, you know, giving them words of warning that from among them the wolves would arise. And here in Ephesians two the angel or the messenger to the pastor would be a better way to translate that, perhaps, because angel means messenger, of the Church of Ephesus, verse one, “ write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks,”<sup>6</sup> those were the churches.

“I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil.”<sup>7</sup>

You see, that is where Hezekiah went blind. Rather than seeing Babylon, these messengers that came to him as enemies, he received them.

“And thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.”<sup>8</sup>

In other words, that has been your tradition. That has been your custom.

“And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.”<sup>9</sup>

But here it is, verse four.

“Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.”<sup>10</sup>

In other words, why is it that we meet? You think about what our first love is. John says what it is in 1 John 4:10.

“Not that we loved God, but that he [first] loved us.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Revelation 2:1.

<sup>7</sup> Revelation 2:2.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Revelation 2:3.

<sup>10</sup> Revelation 2:4.

To leave that is to begin to forget why it is that we even know Christ, why it is that we can even be considered to be his children. There is only one reason. He first loved us. That is the first love. And that he gave himself to die, to pay the sin debt that sinners such as we might be called the children of God.

Now how do these things begin to fall apart? Well, you get tired of the battle. I will be the first to tell you. I get weary of the battle, weary. But do you know what? I will never ever, as God gives me grace, every compliment or support or give in to any person whether in this congregation or out there, wherever they are who will deny the glory to the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

And I will tell you that sets you against a lot of people, a lot of friends, a lot of acquaintances. So be it. And I am telling you, unless you have that persuasion, you will be the next one to float down the river.

Now this sounds like a parent talking to kids and the kid is looking at him and saying, "Oh, boy, what has got him upset? It can't be all that serious."

Listen to the Word. Listen to the Word.

"I have somewhat against thee."<sup>12</sup>

You know, it is like someone once said. If you stand against everything except for that one area where the enemy is attacking, you have lost the battle. You can fortify over here. You can fortify over here. You can talk about, you know, that Christ is God and get all the amens. You can talk over here about how salvation is of the Lord, get all the amens. We can say it is by grace, amen. It is in Christ alone, amen.

But then when the enemy begins to attack in a subtle way even in ways that we as a congregation have experienced over the last several years from acquaintances and people that we have known, we have loved, we have trusted, that I have had stand in this pulpit. And yet today are preaching a doctrine that makes the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ a corruption.

You don't think that is difficult? But I would rather stand alone than to identify with anybody or continue to receive letters or gifts from their hand when they clearly are standing against what God has declared in this Word.

This matter of how it is that sinners are justified, it is not just a trumpet that I am sounding, but it is a persuasion that the Lord has given me that that work is accomplished through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ alone. That is where satisfaction was accomplished in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ alone. There I stand. And I trust there

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<sup>11</sup> 1 John 4:10.

<sup>12</sup> Revelation 2:4.

you stand. These are areas where the Lord is going to test us. And he tests his people That has been shown from history. And here the warnings are clear in the Scriptures.

“I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.”<sup>13</sup>

You begin to think in your weakness, well, maybe it doesn't really matter so much. Maybe we can get along after all. Maybe I can, Hezekiah thinking, maybe by schmoozing with these Babylonian envoys and receiving their thanks and their gifts that all will be well. And it was vital enough to where the Lord sent Isaiah to stand against the king and tell him, “Hezekiah, you are dead wrong.”

That is a tough mission there. Go in before the king and tell the king, “You are dead wrong.”

But the Lord sent him and Isaiah declared the Word of the Lord.

Here in verse five of Revelation two, “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works.”<sup>14</sup>

It is not sending him back to works, but you think about what the first work was when the Lord Jesus Christ opened your eyes and showed you you were lost and showed you your need of Christ. You bowed. You owned your state of sinfulness before the Lord and you cried unto the Lord and you looked at the one place knowing yourself to be a sinner to the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And that is what the Spirit of God in the Word is directing these to do.

“Or else...”

Here it is, judgment at the house of God.

“Or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”<sup>15</sup>

You know, the Lord will chasten his people with the very thing that they allow. Isn't that the way we do it with our kids? You know, you keep giving them instruction. They keep pulling one way. You give them more instruction. They pull one way. And so what do you do? Turn them loose.

The very thing they are after and want and feel that you stand in the way, when you say, “Ok, go and then they begin to live the consequences of that sort of lifestyle. That is the way that the Lord used to deal with them, to chasten them.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Revelation 2:5.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.



So it is with congregations. You get enough people. I read somewhere where all McDonald's needs to change its menu is that 10 percent of its customers request it.

You might think it takes 50, it takes 60. Ten percent. If they get enough requests in, they are going to put it on the menu.

You know, as you sit here and I am looking at this small congregation, but I am thinking of other congregations where the Lord gave people over to their desires. They began to loath the manna. They began to say, "The message is too narrow. Give us a king like the other kings."

That is what Israel did. They looked around.

You know, I have prayed to the Lord for a heart never to be persuaded by the number of people that attend.

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."<sup>16</sup>

That is my satisfaction. I pray the Lord keep me there. I pray that I never ever become influenced by the size of a congregation. I have been in a big congregation where the gospel hasn't been preached with an awful lot of misery. I am thankful for the morsel of bread that the Lord has put here in Shreveport and for those that he has taught by his grace that they are sinners. And I have often said even if but for one sheep, just one, that is the Lord's, I will stay and preach for one. But beware of the leaven. Beware of the compromise, because you deal with a lot of people that I don't deal with. You hear things I don't hear. There are influences. Their persuasion is on your mind. There are questions. All of these are designed to break you down. But if the Lord sought you, of the one vital thing which is Christ and Christ alone and what he accomplished there at Calvary for sinners such as we are, you will never be moved.

"To whom shall we go?"<sup>17</sup>

But the Lord will... he will send judgment. He will send affliction. He will send trial into the midst of his people just like Hezekiah was to face. Now he thanked the Lord that it wouldn't be in his day.

You say, "Well, that sounds a little bit selfish."

There in Isaiah 39 and verse eight, "Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Matthew 18:20.

<sup>17</sup> John 6:68.

<sup>18</sup> Isaiah 39:8.

But I, you know, I put myself in his place. I hope I am not alive to see whatever change may come to this congregation. I pray that I be not the reason. But some of you may be. Some of you may be part of that next generation where they say, “Well, this church was begun. We have got to keep it going. What we need to do is just find a man to stay in the pulpit. We can keep the lights on and the doors open.”

Some of you may be here to have to make that decision. Does it matter who stands here? A lot of congregations the Lord will test. They will leave them without a man. And families will have to gather and different men among the congregation are going to stand up and read the Word and comment as they can. But pretty soon the men get tired of that. They say, “We need somebody to preach.” And they go out looking, shopping. And they get somebody that is just close, but not quite it. And they think, ok, well, at least it is close. And there they go.

The trail of history is littered with such congregations. And the reason being because men will not accept that maybe God has removed his hand. And so they try to force it to stay in business when long ago the Lord removed his blessing.

If you look in 1 Peter chapter four verse 17 here in verse 16, of course, this whole chapter has to do with things that are not worth suffering for. And most of what we suffer for are a direct result of our own foolishness. But in comparison Peter here is talking about being reproached for the name of Christ. And I know some of you know what Peter is talking about, because you are sitting here identifying with Christ in this message when you have got friends and other places that have continued to pull at you and ask you why you don't come over and join them. And you haven't.

Now I say that is the grace of the Lord keeping you. But... and that is what Peter is talking about here, suffering reproach for the name of Christ.

“If you do,” verse 14, “happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.”<sup>19</sup>

That is an evidence that God has blessed you. I like it when men will, because of this gospel, because of the name of Christ and you are identifying with it, poke at you, maybe make fun of you, show a little antagonism, show a little fire against you.

Well, it shows your standing for something. And here it says, “On their part he is evil spoken of.”<sup>20</sup>

That is the very Christ that you worship is evil spoken of, “but on your part he is glorified.”<sup>21</sup>

The very thing they contest is your glory.

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<sup>19</sup> 1 Peter 4:14.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

“But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men’s matters.”<sup>22</sup>

That is the suffering that you bring on yourself.

“Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed.”<sup>23</sup>

You know, Christian, it is like we say American. It is one who belongs to America. He is a citizen Christian, one who is truly Christ’s.

“... let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.”<sup>24</sup>

That they know enough about what the Lord has taught you that you will not leave them alone. When they ask you, tell them. You don’t compromise. You don’t water it down.

When someone says to you, “What is this, again, that you believe, that God doesn’t love everybody?”

You are not going to say, trying to pacify, “Well, there is a sense in which he does.”

You just go straight to the answer, “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”<sup>25</sup>

Have you ever read that in Romans nine? Ask somebody that. You don’t have to defend it. Just state it.

“What is this that you believe that Christ didn’t die for everybody?”

Well, Christ said, “I pray not for the world,”<sup>26</sup> in John 17.

He told those Pharisees, “Ye are not of my sheep.”<sup>27</sup>

“I lay down my life for [my] sheep.”<sup>28</sup>

Tell then plainly.

Wherein is your hope?

When someone says to you, “Well, I still think there is some part of it that I contribute to...”

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<sup>22</sup> 1 Peter 4:15.

<sup>23</sup> 1 Peter 4:16.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Romans 9:13.

<sup>26</sup> John 17:9.

<sup>27</sup> John 10:26.

<sup>28</sup> John 10:15.

Really? The only thing we contribute is sin. And if you think you have any righteousness, Christ said he didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

You know, I have had some get upset at me and say, "So you are saying I am lost"?

And my answer there is, "I hope you are. I hope you are, because that is the only ones that Lord ever came to seek and to save, that which was lost."

People say, "Well, that is kind of in your face."

Well, you know what? It is a whole lot better telling them rather than compromise and entertain their souls on the way to hell.

And if you suffer of that, don't be ashamed. That is what Peter says here. Let them... let him glorify God on his behalf.

And look at here verse 17.

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God."<sup>29</sup>

There has to be a sorting out at the house of God.

"And if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"<sup>30</sup>

One preacher said that to truly exalt Christ every time the message is preached, there has got to be a verdict. There is no hung jury. You either are or you aren't. And like Elijah gathered the people and said, "How long halt ye between two opinions?"<sup>31</sup>

If you look over in 1 Corinthians chapter three, this is exactly the same thing that Isaiah was telling Hezekiah that there might be peace and safety now, but the day is coming when all of these things that you have thrown before your enemies and belittled, compromised in, will all be taken away.

Paul says here in 1 Corinthians three, "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."<sup>32</sup>

This is speaking to preachers.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> 1 Peter 4:17.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> 1 Kings 18:21.

<sup>32</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:10.

I recently received an email from somebody that gets our messages and bulletins and it was a complaint in the form of a question. Do you ever get those? Someone is asking a question. But they are really complaining. Their complaint was simply this.

“Every time I hear you all you do is talk about Jesus Christ and him crucified. And if that were the only message, why then we do we even need all the Bible?”

You know, why waste words, is what this person wrote, if it could just be stated in one simple sentence like you do.

Well, the answer to that is right here.

“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid [already], which is Jesus Christ.”<sup>34</sup>

Paul said in the first part of chapter two, “I determined...”

It wasn't that he didn't know other things or couldn't have preached other things, “I determined.” It is a determination, “not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”<sup>35</sup>

And if you have not been given eyes to see Jesus Christ and him crucified through these 66 books of Scripture in every page and every verse, then you are blind and you need that the Lord teach you, because I know how he has taught me by his grace.

There is no other foundation that is laid than that is laid which is Christ Jesus.

“Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire...”<sup>36</sup>

There is the judgment that the Lord brings upon his house.

“And the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.”<sup>37</sup>

The reward is being able to see those that are true to the Lord rejoicing the preaching of this message.

“[But] if any man's work shall be burned...”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:11.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:2.

<sup>36</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:12-13.

<sup>37</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:13-14.

<sup>38</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:15.

What is that talking about? That is talking about the wood, hay and stubble. That is talking about people that came in for a while and rejoiced in the message and perhaps followed the preacher for a while, but then kicked up their heel just like Judas Iscariot did with our Lord, lifted up his heel against him and went out and hung himself, because that is the only alternative, to turn up your heel to Christ and him crucified is being left to yourself and knowing nothing but condemnation.

And it says, “If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss.”<sup>39</sup>

It is not easy to see people go away.

“...but he himself [the preacher] shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”<sup>40</sup>

How is he saved? He is delivered from presumption. He is delivered from pride. He is delivered from thinking, “Look at all of these people who are hearing me.”

The Lord will take care of that. He will weed them out, keep weeding them.

You are not going to find many followers where Christ is exalted. That is just the way the Lord has purposed our day. I am not saying in some seasons the Lord didn’t mightily bless. He sure did the apostles in the book of Acts, but I am talking about in our day.

But don’t despise the things... the day of small things if Christ is preached. You know, if we are truly beggars—which I am—just being given a morsel of bread and knowing that it is the bread, satisfies my soul. If I find some other beggars and they don’t have another piece of bread, I am just going to tear off a piece and pass it and say, “Here. Here is how the Lord has blessed me.”

Away from all the pomp and circumstance of religion in this day in this world.

Is that a price too high to pay? I know many that can’t tolerate it. They have got to be where the action is. They have got to be where it is the latest and greatest. All the did you hears or have you read the latest? I just want to plug my years, you know? Been there. That is what the Lord delivered me from.

But give me somebody that will show me Christ and teach me of him to know myself as a needy sinner and him to be all. May that ever be our desire.

All right, brother Mike.

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.