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Turn your Bibles with me over to the book of Nehemiah, chapter number nine. Book of Nehemiah, chapter number nine. The book of Nehemiah, chapter number nine. I do want to congratulate Pastor Ralph and Valencia, as they did give birth to their child over this week.

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Please keep both mom and dad in prayer. Baby was just a tad bit early. I guess Raul couldn't stand to see baby brother move ahead of him. But with that being said, keep both of them in prayer as they are getting stronger every single day.

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Pray for their strength physically, pray for their strength emotionally. They are happy that the baby is here all is well. But continued prayer is always something that we desire for everybody as they continue to move forward with this new addition to their family.

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Amen?

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Amen. Amen. Nehemiah chapter number 9. We're going to begin our reading in verse number 38. Nehemiah 9, 38. And the scriptures record for us, because of all this,

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we make a firm covenant in writing. On the sealed document are the names of our princes, our Levites, and our priests. Father, we come on bended knee. Father, just thinking about how the Word enriches our lives, how we're able to know you, and how we're able to see ourselves.

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We thank you, Father, for the sweetness of the gospel. We thank you for the instruction that leads us in righteousness. We magnify your goodness and all that you bestow upon us. So we're as simple as a body, not disconnected from our head, but seeking, Lord, to be the limbs that you have called us

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to be in the world so that men and women may know Jesus and be saved by the glorious gospel and the blood of the Lamb. We love you. We thank you. We ask your hand, Lord, to bring comfort where comfort is needed.

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You are the God of all comfort, Lord. To bring hope where hope is needed, for we know that we are waiting for the blessed hope. To keep us standing in truth, and Father, to be proclaimers of it for those who have yet to come to know it. Father, in every way, shape, or form, we just desire to love you, and in doing so, to serve you. This is the prayer of your church, and we ask in the mighty name of the Lord Jesus Christ we pray

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amen to be seated I pray that the word delivered last week through the leading of the Holy Spirit matured us in some theology if you would remember theology is just a fancy way of saying the study of the nature of God since God's people those who've been called by his name started to turn back into repentance, they began to read from the book of the law. And as they began to read, we noted how they began to pray.

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And as they began to pray, they began to remember the goodness of God. Now remember, this is one of the longest prayers in scripture. And as Levites prayed, they proclaimed God's goodness not only in creation, they spoke about his goodness in the choosing, providing, the patience,

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even in the chastisement, and in the deliverance of Israel in short This prayer taught us something about God's nature and that he is good not because of what he does but because of who he is Therefore anything flowing from him is good Not because it's beneficial or looks good in appearance as we said last week, but because his nature is good Therefore everything stemming from him is the same always hear people say God is good And then somebody will say all the time,

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and then all the time, God is good, until hardships come. And then no one wants to hear that echoed. God is good. Well, God is good. Well, God is good, as we see here, even in the suffering that he allows

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to take place in our lives. Remember, it was the Lord who led Israel and who allowed Israel's enemies to come upon them, to allow them to go into captivity, to endure suffering as they rejected his word and killed his prophets.

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Yet in all they endured, God was still good. In fact, they came to understand the very reason they were enabled to turn back was because of this amazing goodness. Listen to Nehemiah 933. Yet you have been righteous in all that has come upon us,

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for you have dealt faithfully, and we have acted wickedly in other words they're saying listen we haven't been right and everything you did was right even though it didn't look right or feel right to us we acted wickedly you remain faithful verse 34 our kings our princes our priests and our fathers have not kept your law or paid attention to your commandments and your warnings that you gave them even in their own kingdom and admit your great goodness that you gave them and in the large and rich land that you set before them,

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they did not serve you or turn from their wicked works. Behold, we are slaves this day in the land that you gave to our fathers to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts. Behold, we are slaves, and its rich yield goes to the kings whom you have set over us because of our sin.

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They rule over our bodies and over our livestock as they please, and we are in great distress." They're remembering that land was theirs flowing with milk and honey but Israel just couldn't seem to get it right and every time they turned around or should I say turned from God they found themselves either being afflicted or they found themselves being ruled over by others and even now as they're

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in this land there's still those who are all around them and they're recognizing it. So even though God is faithful they're feeling this distress, if you would. And as they read from the book of the law, as they look back over God's dealings with their forefathers, they still came to the same amazing conclusion.

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God is good. Now, this is recapping last week as we move into where we're going this week. You see, verse number 38 in the Hebrew Bible is actually the first verse in chapter number 10. And so what looks like the conclusion of one chapter

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is actually the beginning of the next. And you'll see as we walk through chapter number 10 how that verse walks in complete agreement with what Israel is about to affirm. Let me read the verse again. Because of all this, we make a firm covenant in writing

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on the sealed documents are the names of our princesses, our priests, our Levites, and our priests. Nehemiah is saying that in light of God's goodness, which is on full display in his dealings with Israel, which is now being remembered through the book of the law, they witnessed how their fathers turned from the Lord repeatedly, doing what was right in their own eyes, from Moses to the book of Judges is what we see covered

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in this prayer. How they rejected and killed the prophets, and instead of repenting and turning back to God, generation after generation, they kept doing the exact same thing. It was their practice. That's why verse 37 ends with them saying, we're in great distress. Not just simply because of the people that are around them,

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but they found themselves doing the same thing over and over again. However, their affliction was a result of a loving father offering correction to his children. God's love for Israel was never in question as his great grace is seen through his goodness Even in Israel sin the Lord didn't then

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Nor does he now treat our sin the way it deserves to be treated Beloved as the Prophet Isaiah proclaimed the Lord gave them beauty for ashes Who did not get what they deserve neither do we? It was through the knowledge of this truth that brought about revival in God's people They were being made witnesses of God's faithfulness his compassion his grace his mercy his perfect love in the land of the living God never forgot his promise to Abraham the covenant he made with him and all of his descendants and they were living proof of this truth

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Love is the Levi's caused them to look back as they prayed. He did so so they would be enabled to look forward as they returned to true worship of the Lord in spirit and in truth. This is why they said, because of all this, because of everything prior to this,

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because of all that we've seen, because of all that you have done, because of all this, we make a firm covenant in writing. The people desire the Lord to know, we've seen your goodness through your amazing love. We've seen it through your faithfulness.

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And now we want nothing more than for you to know our desire is to live for you, to stay true to you in all that we do. This we covenant. The word covenant speaks to a binding agreement. It's different than a contract worth 50-50. The covenant places the focus on each party to live out what they covenant to do.

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So I want you to get this picture right because back in 932 they praised God Listen now therefore our God the great the mighty and the awesome God back in Levitic in number. Excuse me in Nehemiah 932 Now therefore our God the great the mighty and the awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love You know the Lord could have easily made an end to Israel. After everything they did, he could have easily just put an end to them.

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But he didn't. But he was faithful. He was faithful to his word, faithful to his covenant. And now Israel is turning back in repentance. And we see their desire now to reaffirm this covenant which the Lord declared concerning them.

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They will be my people, and I will be their God. You know that refrain is echoed throughout Scripture, they will be my people and I will be their God. God is a covenant-keeping God. Please don't ever forget that. I don't care what you may be going through personally, the God that we serve is a covenant-keeping God. In spite of what we may be enduring, in spite of what we may be going through, we have to remember He is faithful. Everyone's

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sitting in here, there's things that come to mind that we wish God would move on or we wish would be different or would change. When we begin to look at who God is, we have to trust that how He's moving and the way He's moving is right and operating according to His good and perfect will. That's the God that we serve. His goodness is on full display. And as they began to pray although they were looking at their disobedience. They couldn't help but see his goodness Displayed to his kindness kindness is just merely an outworking of goodness

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This is why Paul says in Romans chapter number two verse number four that God's kindness is meant to lead us to repentance That's what was happening here Now they began to read they knew what they deserved and they began to see what God was doing the temple was restored now The wall was rebuilt like why are you treating us in this why do you love us in this manner when we have turned so much away from you listen we need to do a better job sometimes of remembering how good God is instead of

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always thinking what he didn't do or wondering why he has it moved in what we want him to do that's the picture that's being painted here now listen I understand that Paul says in Philippians 2 13, he says forget those things which are behind and reach for those things which are ahead. Forget those things which are behind and reach for those things which are ahead. But I want you to understand something, when Paul is writing this, he's speaking to a

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backwards look that has the wrong perspective. You see, we can look back and remember everything that went wrong. Remember all of our sins, all of our failures, everything that we wish we would have done differently, all the disappointments and all the things that will hinder us in our walk with Christ. But when we look back and begin to see that in spite of my sins, in spite of my faults, in spite of my insecurities, in spite of all that I am, that God is faithful, His grace

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is sufficient, it begins to do something for us. We look back to see the goodness of God in graciously loving protecting and leading us and it's here that we'll remember his faithfulness in the past it gives us confidence to walk in the present and it guides us and leads us in the future. This is what stokes the fire. People ask me why do you how can you stay on fire for God always I'm not always on fire for God. God's fire is just always on in me.

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I can't help but remember that I'm not deserving of anything, but yet he does everything for me. I'm not talking about everything I want. I'm going through things as I stand before you right now. I'm talking about he gave me everything that I need.

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Talking about a kid who didn't know that sometimes I look back and I remember my mom telling me that, listen, as we pulled out of Chicago, your biological father was looking at you in a window. And your grandmother said,

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are you sure you're just gonna let him go? I didn't know that my father wasn't my biological father till I was 14 years old. That's when I found out that truth. And so I looked at how I was at 14, then by the time I was 17, I was something else.

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And from 17 to 23, I was a dude, you did not wanna be around, I did not wanna touch. And then from 23 to 30, forget it, all bets are off. I lived with my favorite person me myself and I and that's how I lived but God he kept being merciful I didn't get saved I got arrested I didn't get saved I got drunk I didn't get saved I began to have

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children and children and children I began to just live for whatever pleased me. Yet God took this guy and all of a sudden he says, listen, I'm gonna dust him off. I'm gonna put this breadcrumb here because he saw in his father what it means to actually do the right thing.

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And so I think if he sees it, I know if he sees it, because God doesn't think he knows, he's gonna pick it up. So I pick up one thing. And then I begin to realize that I can't be irresponsible. These kids are depending on me.

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So I got to change my lifestyle. So then I start to change what I do. Then I start to change how I act. Then all of a sudden I said, I need to be in the presence of my children. I can't be this absent.

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I don't know nobody thanking me for taking care of the kids that belong to me. It's the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard. And we do it all day, every day. But he's a great man. He takes care of his kids.

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They're his kids.

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He's supposed to take care of them. So stop congratulating people for the things that they're supposed to do. And so here we stand in this place, right? And so all of a sudden, start going down this trail and all of a sudden here I am and I have my kids and I'm moving forward

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And all of a sudden I got to do this thing called work for a living Then I start holding a job then I start being responsible. Then I'm here with my kids a Single mom a single dad you want to talk about learn how to braid some hair I can braid hair with the best of them Jack and so here I am going through this process And then I meet my wife and then God gives me this great job and the guy continues to move me through But hold it. I'm not serving him

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I'm still just moving through I think that I've arrived at this level of maturity. I think I did something I think that all of a sudden I got good at what I was doing and then when I reached the pinnacle of what I thought Was success God just simply whispered in my ear and said how the heck do you think you got here? You didn't deserve it. You did nothing to earn it and either you're the luckiest man in the world And there is no such thing as luck or I've been moving things for your good in spite of who you are So when I say I look back so I can look forward

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That's what gives me the confidence to move even though things around me aren't right right now Even though I have pain on the inside right now Even though I could just stand in front of you and cry for hours right now I can't stay here because he was too good to me there. He's gonna be good to me here He's gonna be good to me in the future. This is the God that you serve This is a picture that he's trying to paint and this is what Israel was remembering

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So beloved we have to look back but with the right perspective And this is what was happening with the people they began to see something and they began to turn towards him God's goodness will always bring you to a place of decision. God's goodness will always bring you to a place of decision. And Israel had come to that place and they desired nothing more than to reaffirm their covenant with the Lord to worship him. Now here's what I love. This wasn't an agreement simply made by spoken words and a handshake.

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They wanted to write it down so as to clearly establish the direction of their lives and then hold it. Then they wanted to attach their names to the agreement. It wasn't just lip service, like, hey, man, yeah, yeah, I

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got you.

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You talk to your buddies. Yeah, yeah, man, you know, you were working the car. It's 8 AM. All right, man, I got you. And 9 o'clock, he's still ain't there. They go, what happened to you?

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Well, man, I got caught up in something. No, they wanted to write something down and they wanted to affix names to it for a reason. They desired nothing more to reaffirm this covenant with the Lord to worship Him. This wasn't simply something they just decided to do. It was a true mark of genuine repentance. Let me tell you this, you want to know how you genuinely repented when it when when renewed obedience ensues you know you've repented

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when renewed obedience ensues in other words you begin to obey the very thing you weren't doing listen if you just repented and renewed obedience obedience doesn't ensue you just feel guilty you'll do it again tomorrow this is the picture and this is what we were seeing with them so often we hear people cry for revival but I wonder how willing are we as a body of Christ to sit down and Re-evaluate our priorities in light of the worship and service a lot of our worship and service of the Lord in other words

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We're crying out for revival, but we don't want to just nothing We want God to make us alive while we're still doing the same thing to keep us dead And so in other words if we want revival and remember you have to first be alive in order for revival to come. You have to first be the believer. But as believers, there's those moments where we feel like our fire just goes down

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just a little bit more, just a little bit more. But if you allow God to continue to lead and guide you, God will put people in your life that will spark a fire. I can sit in this room right now, as I see Eric sitting back over here, as I see Gabriel sitting right there. I see Mario over there. As I see Brandon, I don't see

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Brandon. Brandon where he at? As I see Brandon sitting over here. Here's the picture right there. It goes right back there. As I see these four guys I've encountered over the last year plus, but there's something about their fire for God when you see them, right? If they ain't wearing a hat that says Jesus, they're talking about Jesus. They ain't talking about Jesus and wearing a hat about Jesus. They're praising Jesus. They're teaching Jesus. All they want to do is be surrounded by Jesus. God will put people around you that you didn't expect. So just when you feel like your fire is starting to just a little

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bit, He puts people around you who ignites the fire, right? But here's where you have to be. You have to be in the fight. You have to be in the place where God can ignite the fire. That's not to say that the people around here right now haven't sparked me, or Curtis hasn't sparked me, other people haven't sparked me. That's not what I'm saying. I'm saying that different people spark me in different ways That's a part of being involved in the body of believers

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And so there's this picture that's taking place this revival that's happening right now And so I'm asking you as you hear the rest of the sermon Are you willing to reevaluate your priorities kiss you if you're not it's going right over your head Because again, we're all in need of revival, which means there's something in my life that God's saying hold it Let me do a work in you that'll continue to cause that fire to burn hotter and hotter I don't care how mature you are in Jesus

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God is always doing a work in you for you for his good and his glory And this is the picture that we have to make sure that we understand and that we see This is why when I see this covenant and their willingness to sign it. I Love what Paul says in Romans 12.1. I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies

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as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. That word spiritual, logically, is where we get our word logical from, pertaining to the reasoning faculty. It means it's reasonable and rational.

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Paul's saying our sacrifice is to be intelligent in contrast to those offered by ritual and compulsion. Vine says it like this, it should be in accordance with spiritual intelligence of those who are new creatures in Christ and are mindful of the mercies of God.

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The Israelites desire to put the book of the law in practice. Here's how they're gonna do it. By recognizing Romans 1, Romans 12, 1 and moving to Romans 12, 2. Do not be conformed to this world then, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind that by testing you may discern. What is the will of God?

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What is good acceptable and perfect back to that renewed obedience? It's only possible as the mind is being renewed so here these men set And they thought to draw up this agreement, and they understood that they were going to be making a vow Listen as a kid my dad would always teach me to be a man of my word. Let's talk about that just a brief minute. You see a covenant means nothing if it's not kept. A covenant

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means nothing if it's not kept. And let me just drop this. If you go to Genesis 15, after God makes the promise to Abraham, he's gonna make him a great nation. And then Abraham says, listen, in Genesis 15, I still don't have any kids yet. The only servant I have is the closest thing to me is Eliezer, the servant in my house. And of course, God reaffirms his covenant with him and then God puts him to sleep. And

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in the course of him putting him to sleep, you have this moment where what would happen is for people to cut a covenant in his time, they would take carcasses, they would kill them, they would set them apart from each other, and then they would walk between the carcasses, thereby symbolizing the covenant cut between the two parties. Here's the problem. When you read Genesis chapter number 15 something happens Abraham is asleep So when the torch passes between the two carcasses who is he cutting the covenant with God said listen

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I'm cutting the covenant with myself You want to know why because I am that I am and anything I need to be I will be when I need to be At how I need to be at where I need to be in the way I need to be it in other words. I'm putting it all on me. That's what God was saying He that's why he says I'm faithful to my covenant, because it doesn't involve you, it only involved me.

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And so now we get this picture, right? Because now he enters into a covenant with us. And what I mean by that is now we have an opportunity to begin to say, Lord, I want to be able to walk according to your will and according to your ways. So it's important that we understand

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that when we begin to say, Lord, I'm going to do something, Numbers chapter 30, verse number two, if a man vows a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind him by a pledge, he shall not break his word. He shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.

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Let me slow down just a minute, because a brother

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can get so fired up I'm done before I even get started. Think about what's being said. If a man vows a vow to the Lord, not between me and you. It's to God. What's worse, an oath to bind himself by a pledge. He shall not break his word. He shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth. Listen, I'm not sure we always understand the importance of keeping our word to the Lord. In fact, I think we sometimes feel compelled to make promises to God out of a sense of devotion to Him.

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Can I tell you what the Lord desires? For us to love Him, to walk humbly with Him, and to live justly, Micah 6a. So what am I saying? Am I saying we shouldn't make any promises to the Lord? No, what I'm saying is before we make a vow to the Lord,

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we do well to remember Ecclesiastes 5. When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it Free has no pleasure in fools. Stop. Don't say it if you ain't gonna do it Don't be foolish Man, I got you on that knowing dog on. Well, you have no intention at all whatsoever The picture is listen if you're going to say it do it, but if you're not gonna do it, don't say it

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He says pay what you vow. It is better that you should not vow than you should vow and not pay it. In other words, it's better for you just let's say I can't get you on that right now. We're good. I can respect that versus hey I got you and then all of a sudden the person is nowhere to be found. You see as they began to read the book of the law I'm sure it became apparent that their forefathers made promises to God they did not keep. You know a perfect example of that can

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be found in Exodus. You remember Israel's confirming their covenant with God, right? So in Exodus 24 3, Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the rules and all the people answered with one voice and said, all the words that the Lord has spoken we will do. I like that. We got you. Verse number seven, then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people and they said, all the Lord has spoken, we will do and we will be obedient. Now, if you're familiar, Moses then went to go meet with God for about 40 days.

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And while he was gone, we will do became well, we will. Well, we don't know what way yet well this is what we gonna do and they built a golden calf while God is saying put no other God before me make no graven images it went from we will do to well well I think this is what we probably should do notice how quickly it changes Israel would make a vow to the Lord and break it make a vow to the Lord and break it. Beloved, we should never make a promise to God that we'd have no intention on keeping. Can I tell you something? Never

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make a vow out of obligation. That's not how you come to Christ. You come to Christ because His love begins to do something on the inside of you. So God's not asking you to make promises obligation because you will soon break them. Well sometimes I listen to people on their walk with Christ and I hear them saying I need to do this I need to do that I need to work on this I need to work on that don't get me wrong the things that most people are talking

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about that they need to do are things we should do but it's not a need to it's a want to and you have to trust that if you're in Christ he will bring you to the want to he will bring you to that place. Listen, sometimes we come to the place where we first say, I need to be here. I get to be here. No, I want to be here. It's a process, right? And God is taking us through this process. And so we have to make sure that we understand that when we're talking to God, we're not trying to cut a deal with Him. It's not like you said, okay, Lord, if you do this, I will do that.

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That's not the God you serve. And this is what He's trying to get the people to understand. Beloved, as they began to sit down to cut a covenant, it wasn't because they were obligated. It was being birthed out of God's love. Do you remember when Jesus was telling the disciples that his time had come?

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They will all fall away.

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What did Peter say? Peter said in Matthew 26, even though they fall away, I will not. Jesus, knowing Peter's heart, in Matthew 26, 34, he said, truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.

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What did Peter say? Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you. And all the disciples said the same. You know what's interesting? God wasn't asking him to vow to go to the cross to die with him. That's not what he was asking for. That wasn't what he was requiring of them. Listen, not in a sense to what they were

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thinking. So quickly we want to jump in and say this is what I'm gonna do because I think this is what God's asking me. God said, I didn't ask you that. Walk with me. Trust me. I asked you not to go to sleep but you didn't vow to stay awake. And so I want you to get the picture because we begin to make these vows that God's not asking us for. And here's what I really found interesting. They were vowing, they were willing to vow to follow Jesus to death, yet when the hour came they all scattered. However, after the coming of

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the Holy Spirit and as they obediently and willingly served the Lord out of love, they all suffered martyrdom with the exception of John. So isn't it interesting? They wind up dying a brutal death, but they didn't vow to do it. It came as a result of their willing obedience and love for God, yet when they were vowing to do it, when it became obligation, when the moment came and the check came, they weren't willing to pay it. This is the picture. And so when they

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sat down, they wanted to make sure that they understood that we need to make sure we understand that listen, if we're going to make a vow, we need to keep it. So when we present our bodies as a living sacrifice unto the Lord, it's never a result of the promises we make to him

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that matures us in our Christian walk. It's only as we believe in the promises of God and act upon them that we mature in our Christian walk. You remember Jephthah, the judge, he was driven out by his brothers because he was a son of a prostitute. When the Ammonites were gonna come up against Israel, they went after him because they knew he had a band of merry men with him, and they figured they

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could come and fight for him. So they go to get him, and the elders, they brought him, and they said, listen, if you come and fight for us, Jephthah says, well hold on, I'll come and fight. If you make me a leader over the people of Gilead, I'll come and fight for you. So they gave their vow. They said, listen, if you come, that's what we'll do. And so he comes and he begins to speak

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to the king of the Ammonites and the people of Gilead, but he had no success. The king refused to back down. So at this point in Judges 11.30, this is what we read. If you will give the Ammonites into my hand, then whatever comes from the doors of my house

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to meet me when I return in peace from the Ammonites who will be the Lord's. And I will offer it up for a burnt offering. So Jephthah crossed over to the Ammonites to fight against them. And the Lord gave them into his hand.

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0:30:34  
And he struck them from Aor to the neighborhood of Minneh, 20 cities, and as far as Ebo-Kamir with a great blow. So the Ammonites were subdued before the people of Israel. Then Jephthah came to his home in Mizpah. And behold, his daughter came out to meet him,

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with tambourines and with dancing. She was his only child. Besides her, he had neither son nor daughter. And as soon as he saw her, he tore his clothes and said, alas, my daughter, you have brought me very low, and you have become the cause of great trouble to me.

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0:31:01  
For I have opened my mouth to the Lord, and I cannot take back my vow. Now listen, we're not about to go through this, did he offer his daughter as a living sacrifice? What should she do? The section of the scripture, that's not where I'm going here's what I will say the Lord didn't

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0:31:17  
ask him to vow anything at all this was something he felt the need to do rather than trusting that the Lord was leading him Deuteronomy 23 21 says if you make a vow to the Lord your God you shall not delay fulfilling it for the Lord your God will surely require it of you and you will be guilty of sin. You shall be careful to do what is past your lips, for you have voluntarily vowed to the Lord your God what you have promised with your mouth." Beloved, our words and

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what we say matter. If we make a vow, we need to honor it. We have to guard our heart against making vows that the Lord hasn't asked. We have to guard our heart against seeking to please him by saying we're going to do this or that. His desire is for us to be living sacrifices. It's here we live out his good and perfect will.

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0:32:17  
So, beloved, when you open your mouth to speak, make sure it's something you plan on keeping. Now, I want you to understand that this was the mindset of Israel as they were writing out this agreement. And they knew that if they opened their mouths to the Lord, there was no turning back. That was their desire. So when you get to the first several verses in Nehemiah 10, what you see are 80 some odd

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of men who put their John Hancock on the line agreeing to devote themselves to living out God's Word. You know something is serious when you're willing to sign your name on the dotted line and that's what these men did. These are the people who called for the book. Now they desire nothing more than to stand on it regardless of the people around them. It wasn't just these men who signed it in chapter 10 verse 38 of Nehemiah says this the rest of the people the priest the Levites the gatekeepers the singers the temple service and all who have separated themselves from the people of lands of the

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Law of God their wives their sons their daughters all who have knowledge and understanding Key on that phrase all who have knowledge and understand if you remember back in chapter number eight the priest taught so as the people would have understanding. This is important because this is what led to the agreement. It wasn't based on emotion, it was based on what they came to understand. They truly came to understand the goodness of God and they desire to live for him. Revival had truly come and we know this because they separated themselves from the people of the land and unto the law of

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God. There was no compromise here. Men, women, sons, daughters, we're not talking about little children everyone with understanding line up to say they devoted their lives unto the Lord and to him alone and this is what they vowed when I read Nehemiah 10 28 again and through 29 the rest of the people the priest of Levi's the gatekeepers the singers the temple service and all who have separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to the law of God, their wives, their sons, their daughters,

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all who have knowledge and understanding, join with their brothers, their nobles, and enter into a curse and an oath to walk in God's law that was given by Moses, the servant of God, and to observe all and do all the commands of the Lord our God and his rules and his statutes. Beloved, as believers, we understand we're to come out from the world, meaning we're to live in the world, but we're not to live like the world. Make sure you understand that.

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0:34:55  
We live in the world, but we're not to live like the world. We're not walking around as those who are so much better as if to say, I'm superior. But we're different in regards to who we now belong to and who we have become. So why 2 Corinthians 6, 14 says,

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do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers, for what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness. We're to pattern ourselves after light, because we no longer live in darkness. So let me ask you a question.

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As a follower of Christ, if such a document were to be written and made public through the news, social media, would you sign it? Would you be willing to say, Lord, I covenant to love and live for you and you alone? Would you be okay with putting your signature on there and then knowing that everyone could see it? See, the idea here is wholehearted devotion, because sometimes people don't even know you go to church.

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I'm talking about fixing your name to something in saying I stand for everything this book says. All of it. When it talks about homosexuality, all of it. When it talks about sexual immorality, all of it. When it talks about there being one God, all of it. When it talks about there's only one gospel, that means that everybody who claims to be a Christian isn't one. When I'm standing in the room with the Jehovah Witness, when I'm standing in the room with the Mormon, when I'm standing in the room with a person who is Catholic,

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you want me to keep going because I can keep going. It means, are you willing to sign it? That doesn't mean I don't talk to the Mormon, I don't talk to the Jehovah Witness, I don't talk to the Catholic. That's not what I'm saying at all.

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0:36:36  
It doesn't mean I think I'm better than them. It means I know I'm different than them because I know who I belong to. And my desire is that they belong to him as well. So are you willing for somebody to write out a document, a dossier if you would, like some fancy words, and you affix your

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0:36:54  
signature to it and everybody can see it, including when you go to work. Now all of a sudden people looking at you a little bit different and the cubicle across the way. They see you in a different light. Is that person really devoted to that? I even have an even better question. Would they be surprised to see your name there? Oh, come on, that ain't Will's name.

11  
0:37:22  
He was with us at the spot last night.

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Please tell me that ain't Will's name there. Would they be shocked to see your name? Or would they say something like this? Shebaniah and Adonai. Yep, I figured them dudes were a little bit different anyway.

10  
0:37:39  
Would they be?

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0:37:40  
Would they look and say, well, that's what I expect? Beloved, we're called to live according to the laws, law of God given to Moses. And while we know today the law was never given to save, it was given to keep them until Christ, who was concealed in the Old Testament

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0:38:02  
and revealed in the New Testament. Beloved, we understand that they were called to live according to the law, but now we are called to live according to Christ. So we have to make sure that we understand this. There is no separation in that that no longer matters.

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0:38:19  
Remember what I said, types and shadows in the Old Testament, it was always pointing to the coming of the Messiah from the beginning, starting in Genesis 3 15 so Jesus wasn't an afterthought he was always coming and so we get this picture right that because of this we're called to live a lifestyle of holiness which simply means

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separated unto God but as children of God we don't have the same values the same views or the same goals as the people in the world. That's the difference. You say, hey man, you know, you don't seem like you're interested in this next promotion or this next this or in these stocks. Why don't you seem interested that I don't have the same views, the same goals, the same values that they have? I'm looking for something different.

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0:39:06  
I understand I'm a pilgrim. This is not my home. I'm a citizen of somewhere else. As the writer of Hebrews says I'm seeking for a homeland that's not here and I understand where I'm now going This is why first Peter 1 14 says as obedient children do not be conformed to the passion of your former ignorance But as he who called you is holy You also be holy in all your conduct since it is written. You shall be holy for I am holy quit telling people You're not holy

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0:39:34  
Quit telling people you're not a saint

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0:39:36  
Let me make sure you understand the words only mean set apart unto God If you are saved you are a saint If you are saved you are holy that don't mean the plate don't ever get dirty and sometimes we need to look at our plate But let me tell you who cleans you Let me tell you who's the one who says listen, you're already clean But occasionally we need to go ahead and get that off

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0:40:06  
My wife and I we stopped yesterday to get some dinner At a place and we're driving through and we're driving. I was like, yeah, I like eating over here. It's not my side of town So we both look at each other. We say, okay, we're gonna stop so we stop Going this place. We're sitting there first thing. I sit down. They give me some food, it's just ice cold. I'm like, what the heck is this?

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So then, you know, is everything okay, sir? And I'm like, uh, yes. You know, I usually don't complain, but like, I mean, where'd you guys get this bread from? Like, the Wonder Company? Like, across the street.

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So can a brother get a hot bun? And so they go get it, they go get it, so we got you, back to we got you again, all right. And so then I go to grab a plate and I pull the plate out and I'm looking and I'm thinking, did I eat off this plate already? It's got stuff all around the outside of it. So then I'm looking at my wife and she said that I look, she's got a napkin laying across her plate. I said, well how come you ain't looking out for

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a brother? You didn't tell me you put a napkin on your plate, but you just left me hanging, right? And so, you know, I'm looking, so I'm like, uh, she said, that's why I put a napkin on mine. I was like, you could have put a napkin on mine, but nevertheless, I don't eat from the plate. So then I move the plate aside. So then we continue to go through the meal

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and just nothing was good. And so finally, the lady comes in the end and she says, so how was everything?

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And I was getting ready, oh, good.

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And I said, no, Peter, like none of it. I was like, what? And she usually doesn't say anything. And she was like, well, she starts listing all the things that were bothering me. No, that were bothering her.

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All right, she just put me on full blast, all right? And so I sat there, and I was like, no, we're good.

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We're good. We're good.

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So the manager, she said, well, I'm the manager. So she leaves. She comes back, she said, anything we can do for you? I said, nope, I'm good. I'm good. Listen, the server was phenomenal.

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So make sure you don't fall back on the server and so she was phenomenal So here I'm gonna give you $20 off your next meal. I was like I won't be eating at this location and so And so here's the thing things can get dirty, and that's what I need us to grasp right things can get dirty But understand that when you're in Christ He's clean. He's cleansed you but repentance is ongoing right in the life of a believer And so they'll be those moments where you pull off that

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0:42:28  
plate and it won't look right but beloved God is calling us because he has already made us right we have to come to understand that the book of the law what they were looking at they had a desire now they were fixing their names to this document they were saying we want to pattern our lives after the word of God listen we live in a place where we're afraid to be different. Conforming is easier. My granddaughter was invited to a birthday party

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over the weekend. She's not a great swimmer. She's nine. And so the battle ensued because grandpa don't swim at all. And so here's the idea. It's like, hey, I'm gonna need you to wear a life vest.

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And she looked at me, man, like I slapped her across the room. And I said, so then my daughter's looking at me because I can tell she's paranoid. And so she wants to put it on me to make her wear it. And so she comes in and I said, okay, let's sit down and talk about it.

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And she just got this look on her face. I said, well, grandpa just wants you to be safe. You know, you're going to this place. She was going to Great Wolf Lodge or something like that. And so, so she's going, so I long, I'll go look at it.

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Oh heck no.

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So then I'm like, so now I'm thinking you need to wear one, right? So I'm looking at height requirements, I'm breaking out the tape measure, I'm measuring her to see how tall she is. She's just over 48, I'm lying and saying

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she's just under 48, I didn't lie, all right? And so I'm trying to figure this out. So my daughter's like, what we gonna do?

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We?

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What you gonna do? And so she goes into the room, so the next morning she wakes up, she says she is mad. She cried all night. I said, why?

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0:44:04  
Because none of her friends will be wearing one. See, she wanted to look like everybody else. And so I called her into the room and I said, listen, this is about your safety, right? This isn't about what you look like. It's about being safe in the things that you're going to do.

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0:44:20  
It's amazing how we're so quick to pattern ourselves after the things of the world, even at the risk of our own lives. And so I found it interesting. And so she agreed to wear the life jacket. It only cost me $100. $50 up front, $20 when she left, and $30 when she gets back, all right?

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That was Grandpa's way of doing it. When you're a parent, you can just say, you're doing it because I told you to. When you're a grandfather you say, look how much it's gonna cost? 20, 50, what's it gonna take? It cost me a hundred, all right? She's shrewd, all right? Shrewd, so if you guys run into her watch out, all right? And so the picture is I

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0:45:04  
marveled at how she wouldn't listen. Now she's nine, right? She'll be 10 next month. Some of us who are 40, 50, 60 years old, been serving the Lord for a long time, still looking at people around and we don't want them to see what we're wearing. We don't want to stand down, let alone

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put our name on an agreement that says that we hold to everything that this book says. Listen, we're OK with looking like Christ at Wednesday night Bible study and Sunday morning service, just as long as we're not going to look like Him any other day of the week.

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0:45:39  
Israel's devotion wasn't simply to the law as a rule book. It was to the God of the book. So this is why when Nehemiah records, they entered into a curse and an oath to walk in God's law that was given by Moses, a servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments

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of the Lord our Lord and his rules and his statute. This wasn't about devotion to Moses Listen to what he says he talks about the God of the word They were vowing to do what God had written Now listen If I can't bring this to an end, I want to look briefly inside this agreement if you would

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0:46:17  
Here's what the people vowed to do verse 30 We will not give our daughters to the people of the land or take their daughters for a son. The first thing they did was reaffirm their desire to not intermarry. But this wasn't a race thing. It was a faith thing. See, the other nations served other gods. Remember in Numbers when Balaam was trying to tell the people how to get Israel off kilter because God wouldn't allow curses to come upon them. He said, this is all you got to do. He says, all you got to do is bring them

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into a land with somebody else. And they will sleep with those who are not of Israel. They will intermarry. And so we have in Numbers 25, 1, while Israel lived in Shittim, the people began to whore with the daughters of Moab.

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0:47:04  
These invited the people to the sacrifice of their gods. And the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel yoked himself to Baal of Peor. Get this picture listen all they simply did was bring them into a land and that the flesh does what the flesh does when we're acting in disobedience and they linked them but they didn't just link themselves to them ladies guys

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I say this you ain't never gonna change a man let me help you okay you will You will never hold on

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0:47:39  
Make sure I'm in the camera Daughters ladies women

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0:47:43  
You will never ever change a man I know that that's always the prevailing thought that at some point in time. You know well. You know he's got good qualities You know well, you know he's it. Let me help you Never a man will change when God changes him And if you accept him where he is, he certainly ain't changing for you Understand that's what it takes

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0:48:12  
It's god that's at work. We always think that we can do something. I told you the kind of guy that I was But when I met my wife second date third date, I can't remember what it was. Let's just say we went on a date, went back to my place, and then some stuff ensued. And so, okay, some other girl knocked on my door. And so, I'm putting all my business out here today, okay?

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Listen, I was only dating her for like two weeks. It wasn't like we were in a serious relationship, so calm down, all right? No rings were exchanged, nothing was happening, and I wasn't a believer, all right? And so, I'm just putting it out there, all right?

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Nothing wrong with transparency. So long story short, somebody knocked on the door. It was somebody that I used to know. I didn't remember now. She said, who is it? I said, I don't know who that is.

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And then they knocked again and she said, who is it? I said, I don't know who that is. Then they said, Will. And I said, must be the upstairs neighbor. And so she was like, you know the upstairs neighbor like that?

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And I said, well, you know what, from time to time, I help him carry stuff in. And then she said, Will, open the door. She said, well, why is she trying to come in? I said, that's a really good question. I'm trying to figure out why she's trying to come in too.

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So I'm sitting there, and the next thing I know, I said, well, one thing's for sure, she ain't coming in. And all of a sudden, I heard a keys jingle, and I remembered she had a key. And I said, yeah, it wasn't good. So that night, I obviously got a little crazy.

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0:49:39  
I knew Jeanette for like two weeks. And so she said, take me home. Get in the car, drive home, it's quiet. And so you know when you're back there out in the day, when you're in the street, you think you got the right line.

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So you just waiting for it. You're waiting for the argument to ensue because you know you can clean it up. They get mad. Drive all the way there, she says nothing. Leans over, kisses me on the cheek, and says,

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you could be a really good guy. Please don't ever call me again.

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0:50:11  
OK, slow down.

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And I remember driving off, and I kept thinking to myself, don't call me again. I'm waiting to be cussed out, told off, slapped, whatever. She did none of the above. And I drove for about 15 minutes. It was in my head. I was thinking to myself, hmm, I don't know if I've been this way before. And so I tried to remember where she worked. So I drove another 45 minutes to find a job.

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So I found a job.

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And then for the next 12 days, I sent her a dozen roses every day. One, two, I was like, look here woman, I ain't brother ain't got that kind of money. And two, three, five, eight. Hey man, can I get $20 off your dog

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0:51:03  
and he sends roses a day. And so 12 days go by. And on day 12 the phone rings She said can you stop my brothers think you work for a mortuary? She said I'll go out on a date with you one more time that was almost 30 years ago and so I Didn't tell you that because she changed me

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As I was talking about my children God was doing a work in me through the people around me. And he was drawing me in a way that I hadn't seen before. And he was doing a work on the inside of me. And he kept doing that work over and over and over again. So the picture, right, is that when we look here, they knew how to throw them off by bringing them around, bringing the sons around

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other women so they would intermarry, so then they would be turned away. Except in this particular case, I wasn't turned away, I was turned towards. And so God's desire is that we hold true to Him. And so we're not seeking, again, neither one of us were believers at the time. And so what I'm saying is that listen, you don't seek to change somebody You have to let God do the work in that person. That's just completely side note What we see here is that temptation is all around us to throw us off of the path that God has us on and Satan has

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0:52:38  
No problem with using the guy or the woman to throw you down the wrong path. So they had made up their mind They made up their mind. They would not give their daughters to the people of the land not happening We're not even opening the door We want to be devoted to God you want to know where it started personally Talking about their daughters They weren't fooling themselves

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0:53:02  
Believing themselves to be devoted publicly while not being devoted privately can't tell you it starts in your house before out your house It starts in you before it even starts in your home. Remember, even Solomon was led away by his wives. So I want you to get this picture right, because this was next level devotion. You mean to tell me we're only gonna marry

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0:53:21  
within this circle? Absolutely. We will not give our daughters to marriage to anyone who does not believe in the book of the law and the God of the law. We would do well to remember that.

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Now, it's apparent at this point that people began to realign their priorities, according to the revealed word of God. They didn't start with what was going on outside their homes, just what was going on outside their homes. They began to not only go in their home,

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but they began to look at the things going on around them. They were willing to live solely for God, according to his will for their lives. There's many of the conversations about what we should do as a Christian nation, but what are you doing in your Christian home?

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Why don't we start there, before we start talking about what's going on on the outside. Next, verse 31, and if the people of the land bringing goods or any grain or Sabbath day to sell, we will not buy from them the Sabbath or on a holy day.

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And we will forego the crops of the seven year and the exaction of every debt. Now the application here is a little bit different for us because we're not called to rest on the Sabbath as a matter in which they were. However, the people were affirming

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that if foreigners had came selling goods, they wouldn't violate the Sabbath In other words, here's the principle for us Don't put your business before your God You might think well, hey, hold on a second, you know, I can come up if I just do this on this day If I put this off on this day Well, why don't I just go ahead and do this?

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0:54:42  
And what they began to understand is that listen that doesn't come before God their top priority is him you know how quick we are to put off our service to the Lord so our businesses and careers are more successful and then we justify it it's amazing how we place our preferences over God's priorities and then say God's stamp is on it we have to remember to put first things first Israel was reevaluating all their priorities against the revealed will of God what Jesus says in Matthew 6 33, but seek first the

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0:55:15  
kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you. As this agreement is being described from verses 30 to 39, verses 30 and 31 talk about the renewed commitment in their homes, in their renewed commitment in their business dealings. However, the majority of this agreement focuses on their renewed commitment to the house of the Lord, to God. Numbers 1032.

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0:55:44  
Listen, I'm going to read all the way through to the end. We also take on ourselves the obligation to give yearly a third part of shekel for the service of the house of God, for the showbread, the regular grain offering, the regular burn offering, the Sabbath, the new moons,

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the appointed feasts, the holy things, and the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel and for all the work of the house of our God. We, the priests, the Levites, and the people have likewise cast lots for the wood offering to bring it into the house of our God.

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According to our father's houses, at times appointed year by year to burn on the altar of the Lord our God, as it is written in the law. We obligate ourselves to bring the first fruit of our ground and the first fruit of all fruit of every tree year by year

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0:56:20  
to the house of the Lord. Also to bring to the house of our God, to the priests who minister in the house of our God, the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, as it is written in the law, and the firstborn of our herds and of our flocks.

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0:56:31  
And to bring the first of our dough and our contributions, the first of the fruit of every tree, the one in the oil, to the priest, to the chambers of the house of our God. And to bring to the Levites the tithes from our ground, for it is the Levites who collect the tithes

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0:56:42  
in all our towns where we labor. And the priest, the son of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive the tithes and the Levites shall bring up the tithe to the tithe to the house of our God, to the chambers of the storehouse.

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0:56:53  
For the people of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the contribution of grain, wine, oil to the chambers where the vessels of the sanctuary are, as well as the priests who minister, and the gatekeepers, and the singers. We will not neglect the house of our God.

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0:57:12  
Listen, having submitted to God's Word Separating themselves from the ways of the world Making God their top priority They now speak about the commitment to provide for the work of the house of the Lord nine times in These verses the house of the Lord is mentioned so it's clear what the emphasis is

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0:57:29  
There is support for the work of the Lord It's one of these moments where things can get uncomfortable. However, let me be clear. This isn't a clever sermon written in devise so we can talk about giving. We've been in the book of Nehemiah for several months.

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And as our practice is, expository preaching. That is, we walk through a book, line upon line, and precept upon precept. And as a result, we not only preach the things that bring us great joy, we also preach those things that can bring great conviction.

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0:58:03  
I have one simple question. Does how you handle your finances reflect your devotion to the Lord? Does how you handle your finances reflect your devotion to the Lord? I want you to think about this for a second.

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This is what they agreed to. We also take on ourselves the obligation to give yearly a third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God. I love how they said the responsibility to give falls on us, not the church. Make sure you understand that. Where the responsibility lies, love it, we've been blessed to never pass around an offering basket. To never say, hey this is the time of

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0:58:47  
offering. To begin to talk about it and people after they come for a little bit of time, they always ask somebody that question. They'll pull them to the side, and kind of pull them, and say, hey, you guys take offering? Ask the question.

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0:59:00  
Yeah, yeah, yeah. Where is it at? You see that basket way in the back, in the corner?

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It's about that big. It's right there. You guys want to talk about it Well, let me go back to what I what I just read I believe they said we take on ourselves the obligation to give

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You see

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0:59:21  
When we were at that restaurant yesterday, although I wanted to get up and not pay When you go sit down to eat You're not thinking you're not paying for it. You know the minute you walk into the restaurant and sit down You know your obligation is to pay then I walk around saying now just remember sir. You're gonna pay for this when you leave

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0:59:39  
No one does that just reminding you of your obligation

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0:59:42  
Debit Visa Vasta card No one does that right and so no one's reminding of your obligation. You know your obligation so let me ask you as Men and women who have been bought by the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Did your checkbook reflect that? It's a hard question answer because we say well have so many other things that are going on you mean the things you keep calling God to help you with

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1:00:10  
Does your giving reflected I'm not talking about amount because that's where we go I'm talking about consistency Faithfully as a part of the covenant you've entered into that you're gonna worship him in spirit and in truth Beloved we can say that God doesn't God doesn't need my money. No, but SRP does So does the leasing agency So does the water company God doesn't need it, but the people

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1:00:52  
who run the different things, they do need it. Here's what I come to understand. I've never had to ask for it. And the reason being is because he always provides. You wanna know why? Because what I pray is that when you walk through the door,

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1:01:04  
you're eating and I'm not the one feeding you. The Holy Spirit is. And as you're continuing to feed off the Word of God, just like you would in any restaurant You know that listen, what do I need to give? Now listen, I'm gonna put a kiosk a 25% tip 30% gratuity. I'm joking. All right, I Want you to get the picture?

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Cs Lewis said this I don't believe one can settle how much we ought to give I'm afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. I don't believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I'm afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. 2nd Corinthians 9 7 says each one must give as he has decided in his heart not reluctantly or under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver. When you read through those verses what you see is they gave proportionately, consistently, and sacrificially.

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Their hearts were in it. You want to know why? Because they knew they were given to the house of the Lord, to the work of God. This is why it ends by saying, we will not neglect the house of God. So let me ask you a question. Have you?

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1:02:29  
Have you been neglecting the house of God? Hold it. We didn't start with giving. Have you been neglecting the house of God and separating yourselves? Have you neglected the house of God in giving yourselves to the world? Have you neglected the house of God by not turning to the Word of God by not living according to all that he has written And finally have you neglected the house of God in giving?

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1:02:57  
Listen you might answer yes to all or just one, but here's the beauty of revival and repentance Today everything can change See that's the beauty of a relationship with Christ There's nothing worse than attending church on a regular basis and then standing before God to hear him say, depart from me, I never knew you.

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1:03:26  
Beloved, we're being called as children of the Most High God to do just as we see Israel doing now, renewing our minds, understanding. See for them, they understood according to Deuteronomy that if they did not do, curses would be upon them because of their disobedience. So well, praise God for Galatians 3 13, freed from the curse of the law, but you're not free from the chastisement of your father. And if you

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1:04:03  
are a son or daughter of the Most High God, let me tell you something it can feel just the same way

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1:04:06  
See sometimes we just need to be reminded

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1:04:08  
That listen, yeah, it's a little bit difficult, but these men and women Said give me the document. I Need to make sure my name's on here Give me the document. I want to make sure I sign it. Hey, can somebody make sure I get a pen? No, no, I don't want you to sign. I want to put my name there I want to put my name there. We want to know why because there's nothing in Scripture that's written that doesn't matter

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1:04:33  
Those names may mean nothing to us Can I tell you something if the Lord saw fit to record them? They mean everything to him The question is would your name be there? Because there's a place that we're all praying that our names are written Except guess what you get an opportunity to write your name on this one You don't get an opportunity to write your name on that one

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1:04:58  
Only he does

4  
1:05:00  
The question is Will it be your name?

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The question is will it be you? My prayer is that this is somewhat convicting. It's convicting me as I was going through it. My prayer is that that conviction does something, though. It doesn't make us feel guilty. It stokes a fire on the inside of us.

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1:05:22  
Because in spite of all of what I may lack in doing, God's still been good to me because I'm sitting here right now. He's still been faithful to me because I'm here right now. He saw to it that my needs are met, that I'm not out tossed hither to and fro. I'm still here which means God is good and because of his goodness I'm gonna continue to move forward. So my prayer is when you

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1:05:51  
leave here today you're not discouraged, you're encouraged and I want you to go home and I want you to write something down on a sheet of paper and you don't have to size show it to a soul but fix your name to it and put it in a place where only you can see it and every time you look at it you said that's right I'm a son of the Most High God and I'm standing with him every step of the way and I fix my name on this and I don't care who sees it I said you can keep it

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1:06:18  
to yourself but if you want to put it on the dashboard of your car and knock yourself out on your desk at work people walk by said did you write that up? What does that say right there? And they look at it and say, you signed that?

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1:06:29  
Yes, I did.

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1:06:32  
Beloved, please hear me. Please hear him. He's calling for us to stand. The question is, will we?

7  
1:06:41  
Stand with me.

2  
1:06:42  
Father, we come before you, and I

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1:06:46  
don't want to offer a trite prayer of words

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1:06:49  
that are repeated over and over and over again.

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1:06:51  
Lord, we need for you to remind us. That need is great, but I know the reminders are plentiful. Your goodness hit his past before us And we can see it in our rearview mirror

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1:07:11  
As we stand here today Lord

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1:07:13  
We want to be just like those Israelites who began to look at the book of the law and began to see you Lord Jesus we have need of so many different things, but the greatest need we have is to know you, is to love you, and is to be used by you to proclaim the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. Father, you know what we all have need of personally. And I'm asking, Father, for you to be attentive to those very needs. Not according to our will, but give us the courage and the hope to trust in yours.

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1:08:07  
To know, Lord, that you never leave us nor forsake us. To know, Lord, that heaven isn't this figment of our imagination, but is the home that you're calling us to. Until such time, Lord, we pray that our love, our compassion, our mercy, Father, is not ours But just the mere surrendering of ourselves to you so it can be seen by you through us But we pray that we are taking the gospel to our neighbors to our family members to our friends

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1:08:39  
That our lives father are patterned after jesus that we're willing to live wholeheartedly Through the precious holy spirit that resides within us that we don't fear being the believer but that we trust in the believer you called us to be that we don't obey out of obligation but will move forward out of love. I thank you for this local body of believers thank you for the church I pray for Ralph and Valencia Lord and precious son to continue to strengthen day by day and remind us all Lord

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1:09:16  
That you are good All the time you are good This is the prayer of your church in the mighty name of your son the Lord Jesus the Christ we pray And let the body of Christ say amen hug somebody before you leave In the valley I will lift my eyes to the one who sees me there.

2  
1:09:36  
When I'm standing on the mountain I didn't get there on my own. When I'm walking through that deep end of the... you. you you

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1:09:54  
. you you. you you

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. you you. you you

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. you you. you you

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. you you. you you

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you

Transcribed with Cockatoo