

Proverbs 1

Sunday 9/15/2013

Well, if you have your Bibles this morning, I want to invite you to turn back to the book of Proverbs. As you know, we have been coming to the book of Proverbs, and we are going to finish up Chapter 1 today. You will remember last week we talked about verses 20 through 23, where it talked about wisdom crying out. I showed you from that a number of things that I think not only will help you from last week, but will even help you understand today's message a little bit better because they kind of go together.

I showed you, first of all, five places that we need to proclaim the wisdom of God, which obviously is in the form of the Gospel. Five places that it talked about that we are to be a witness to. Five places that made it very clear that we are to proclaim the wisdom of God.

Then we saw three basic types of people that you are going to have to deal with in this life as you proclaim the Gospel. We looked at them and we talked about them. The Bible talked about simple ones who love simplicity. It talked about scorers who really love to scorn. And then it talked about fools.

Then I showed you in verse 23 three great New Testament doctrines on salvation and finding God that are found in the Old Testament. I showed you about repentance, and I talked to you about conversion, and talked to you about the Holy Spirit of God when He begins to teach you in your life after you become truly saved.

Today we want to close out this chapter with our next set of paragraph marks. As you know, we have been kind of taking the book in sections by the paragraph mark; that is the best way to study it. I want to look at the next set in Proverbs 1:24-33. Here is what it says:

Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:

I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;

When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.

Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:

They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.

Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

Let us pray. Father, we ask You today to take this message and touch our hearts. We do love You. We thank You, Father, for all that You have given us and for all the things that, Lord, You have provided for us. We thank You for our church, for its stand on the Word of God. We thank You for the men and the women in this church that love You and love the Book. Lord, side by side with me in the ministry, we do the things that God has called us to do. We ask You to take this time now. We give it to You. We ask the Holy Spirit of God to look deep inside us, and if there is anything in our hearts and our lives that may keep us from getting and receiving and laying out the Word of God today, that we would put it under the blood, that we would come to You clean, that we might be able to proclaim the wisdom of God and the truth of God. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

I. The Unpopular Truth

There is no doubt about this: this passage is probably, I think anyhow, the most terrible place in all of the Bible for an unsaved person. And yet you will find today that you never hear this preached anywhere. You could not go across this country; you could probably go across this world in churches this morning, and I doubt very seriously if you will find anybody that ever preaches on this today in any church.

There are a couple of reasons for that. We talked about it Thursday night. The first reason is the fact that most pastors cannot preach, or at least they will not preach. We live in a world where everybody wants to be taught. We live in a world where we teach because teaching is not offensive. We live in a world where we can say things in teaching that will not offend people. But you cannot preach without offending people; it just does not work. We live in a Christianity where nobody wants to be offended today. That is the first reason.

The second reason is that preaching on subjects like this really does not fit in the mix of 20th and 21st-century Christianity in this Laodicean world that we live in. A message like this is so devastating and terrible to the refined senses of most Christians who have long ago gone to sleep and let the world around them just simply die and go to hell. There is no place for it today.

Besides that, people do not want to hear preaching on hell today. That is why you never hear it. You have churches that run 2,500, 3,000, 5,000 people. Do you know how they build those churches? I will tell you how they build them: they build them by never preaching a message like you are going to hear this morning. You cannot preach the Word of God. You cannot preach on something like this in the day we live in and build a huge church; it is just impossible.

Preachers today—people today do not want to hear preaching on hell. They do not want to hear about eternal damnation. They do not want to hear about the wrath of God. They do not want to hear about the condemnation of God on the lost. Everything today is positive. Everything today is, "You are okay, I am okay." Everything today wants to be painted with a rosy-colored picture that everything in life is 100% positive. We praise Christ, but we do not preach Christ. The tragedy of that is that we never understand or never figure out that real biblical praise is in the preaching of Christ, and we do not do that. Negative messages have no place today in our

churches, and messages like this that I am going to preach today went by the wayside a long time ago.

I think one of the greatest examples of that, just to give a context of it, is Billy Graham. I have no disrespect for Billy Graham whatsoever, and I have no argument with him, but I think he represents what I am trying to say today. When you go back to when Billy first started to preach in 1947, I have seen some of those sermons, and, brother, I mean he has got 50,000 people, 30,000 people, and he is literally preaching the paint off the wall. He is talking about God's judgment. He is talking about eternal damnation. He is talking about the fires of hell. Boy, he is putting it to them.

Now in the 2000s, 2010, 2012, in the latter part of his life, after the neo-evangelicals got their claws into him, after somebody convinced him that the real key was to have great crowds, and the only way today you could have great crowds was to cut down the hard preaching, he no longer is sure there is an eternal place called hell. That is an incredible place to come to in your life.

II. Invitation Versus Consequences

Last week in Proverbs 1:20-23, we basically had, if you remember, an invitation to find God in His salvation through the Gospel being declared. There are many passages like that in the Bible. Proverbs 1:20-21 last week talked about the Gospel being preached in five different places where people are, and we saw that we are to cry out with God's wisdom.

We saw in Proverbs 1:22 the three people groups that the question is asked of them: "How long? How long are you going to stay the way you are? How long are you going to be simple in your simplicity and not really care about anything? How long are you going to remain a scorner in scorning the things of God? And how long are you going to remain a fool and put Jesus Christ off?"

Then we saw in Proverbs 1:23 a direct invitation to get saved. We saw in that a direct invitation for a man to get saved. We saw where He said, "turn," there was repentance. We saw where we talked about conversion, and then we saw where we talked about getting the Holy Spirit of God.

Today, Proverbs 1:24-33 deals with the consequences of what happens when a man stays simple. The text that we are going to talk about today shows what happens when a man or a woman stays being a scorner, stays being a fool, and rejects the wisdom of God. These consequences are terrible beyond belief. You never hear them preached today, and this may be a shock to some of your systems, but I have to tell you, if you were alive 100 years ago and you went into the Methodist church or the Presbyterian church, you would hear the same message.

A hundred and twenty years ago, when you went to the Methodist church, that guy took the paint off the wall and tore your hide off about God's eternal damnation. You did not like that, you went to the Methodist church, he did the same thing. You did not like that and went to the Baptist church, he did the same thing. Now you can find a church that will give you exactly what you want to hear. Now you will find a church that will make it real easy for you to be comfortable.

The last thing you want to do when you come to church is leave comfortable. That is the last thing you want to do. In fact, I will take it a little bit farther: you do not want to be comfortable at all when you are there.

Now I know we have nice padded seats and it is nice air-conditioned here and fans are going and it is real comfortable, but my goal today is to turn up the heat a little bit. My goal today is to get you to the place where you leave very uncomfortable. My goal today is if you are lost and without Christ, that maybe you will get saved. My goal today is if you are saved, that you will get your head out of wherever it is at and realize the world is dying and going to hell, and we are the only thing that in many cases stands between a man going to heaven and a man going to hell. It is just that simple.

These consequences are terrible beyond belief, and it is simply the day that you meet a holy God covered with your sin. Look at Proverbs 1:24-25 here; I want to kind of set it up before we get to the actual passage here. He says in those two verses:

Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:

You see in Proverbs 1:24 that God has called men. The Bible says, "The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." You cannot get saved on your own. No man seeks out God. I have talked to people all my life and asked what they were doing in their religious life and trying to do, and they say, "Well, I am on a search for God." You never find God that way. You know what? You do not have to search for God. God finds you. You will never find Him by you looking for Him. The Bible says, "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." He will find you. He will find you.

He says here He called a man, and then the Bible says that He stretched out His hand to that man, and then it says that that man rejected Him. Take Proverbs 1:29-33. There are people all around you, all their life, that reject God's Word and they hate everything that God says, everything that God tries to do. You meet them all around you in life, and yet many of them go to church every Sunday morning. You do not have to just be out in the world to hate the things of God. I have met many a preacher. I have met many a person who said they were saved that had no use for the Word of God, no use for the things of God. They talk about it, but in the practice of their life, they deny everything that the Bible says that they should be.

The Bible says in Proverbs 1:31 that they are going to be filled with their own devices and eat of the fruit of their own labor. That is Galatians 6:7, the fact that we reap what we sow. An unsaved man who rejects God, listen to me now, an unsaved man who rejects the instruction of God, rejects the reproof of God. He hates the knowledge of God, and he slaps God's hand when He tries to touch him. He shuts the door when God calls to him. It is going to come back to you. Brother, that is going to be someday. The old-timers used to say that when you reject the light of God that God gives you, it becomes the lightning by which God judges you. There is a lot of truth in that.

I want to bring you a message today on Proverbs 1:26-28. This will not be as long as I normally preach because, as we normally go through Proverbs, there is a lot to lay out. But when you have a message like this, the philosophy is a stick, jab, and get out. The message today is not something you want to prolong. I do not have the energy to go an hour and a half on something like this, and you do not have the energy to listen to it for an hour and a half. It is that simple. No, no, when you preach messages like this, they are shorter than when you just get into Proverbs and I am laying things out. When you get into a message like this, it is a slash, jab, cut, and get out. It is what you want to get in, do the damage, and then get out and let God do the work in your own heart. That is what we are going to try to do today.

I want to bring you a message today that I first heard in 1972 at a church camp down in Chautauqua, Ohio. Chautauqua was run by the Akron Baptist Temple, and I had just been a guy newly saved, and we went down to camp there, and it was a senior high week. That was high school kids, from about 14 to 18. The service was in a tent. I will never forget that night, a man who is dead now, been dead for many, many years, but he was a great preacher and believed the Book. His name was Lester Roloff.

Lester Roloff preached that message that night in his tent. Boy, I will tell you what, Lester was a great preacher. I think the greatest message I ever heard him preach one time, other than this one, was he had a message named "And the Mule Walked On." It was about the death of a wicked man named Absalom, how he got his hair tangled in the tree. He was a great preacher. He was killed in a plane crash going back and forth to preaching about two or three years after I heard him preach this message.

It was in this huge tent that they had at this camp. He got up to preach, and in the middle of that sermon, a tremendous thunderstorm rolled in. I mean, the lightning crashed, the thunder banged. I mean, the rain came down, and old Lester, he never missed a beat. The lightning crashed and the thunder boomed, and that thing was ripping the sky apart like God Himself was coming down to that meeting. Old Lester never missed a beat. In the middle of that thing, toward the end, the wind got so strong that it picked up the tent, and half the tent collapsed on all the crowd. Through the screaming of the kids, fearful, and through all the counselors trying to gather their kids and try to get all the things together during that terrible storm, old Lester just kept putting it to them, boy. He preached right through that thing. We had 200 kids saved that night. The message he preached was right out of Proverbs 1:26-28, what I am going to preach to you today on the laughter of God.

III. The Laughter of God's Condemnation

Now it says in Proverbs 1:26-28, and I might add that I will never do justice to it as Lester did, but I will give it my best shot today.

I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;

When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.

Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

Now I have to admit, I have to tell you, I put myself into the mindset of most Christians today. That is so hard to imagine, God laughing at somebody's calamity. I have had people in Bible study over the years not understand how this thing works. Some of them have a problem with it. I am sure that most Christians today, if you talk about, simply without explaining it, God laughing at somebody going to hell, I mean, come on, "Jesus, Lover of my soul." I mean, come on, we teach people to love unsaved people. Sure we do. I teach you to have a burden for the lost. Sure I do. What if God loses burden? Does God not love them anymore?

I mean, I teach you to pray for unsaved people. The Bible says we should. We talk about the love of God. We talk about the compassion of God. We talk about the longsuffering of God. We talk about the mercy of God. And yet, when you read a passage like this, I understand it is really hard for many Christians to grasp this concept. Today, when we live in Christianity, it is not about what we know, it is what we do not know. We certainly do not know much about God and the Word of God. If I am convinced of anything today in the world that we live in, I am convinced that most of God's people have no clue who the God of the Bible really is.

I believe they are saved. I believe many of them are. But I believe when it comes to understanding the God that saved you and the concept and the circumstances around Him saving you, you are oblivious to it. You are as lost as a goose in high weeds, man. You cannot grasp the concept.

Proverbs 28:5 says that evil men understand not judgment. That is so true of unsaved people. Unsaved people look at 9/11 and they do not understand that God's judgment on America had fallen that day. God's judgment on America is going to continue to fall. They do not understand that all through the Bible—I do not know why they do not get it. Oh, yeah, I do. They do not read the Bible anymore. All down through the Bible, God judges the nations that were once His that reject Him by other nations. That is being attacked by the Muslims. There is no different than Israel being attacked by the Midianites or the Babylonians or the Assyrians.

Yet that verse says that evil men understand not judgment. But they that seek the Lord understand all things. You would think God's people would get it, but they do not. They do not. But I want to tell you this morning, and on the authority of the Word of God, there is coming a day when all that is going to end. This idea that "Jesus, Lover of my soul," it works now. But there is a day when God, who gives you the light and you reject that light, that that light becomes the lightning that God judges you with.

There is coming a day that all that is going to end. I am telling you right now, on the authority of the Word of God, it is going to be the most terrible day in the history or the future or any time in the history of man. It is the coming day of God's judgment. It is the coming day. Yes, a day when God will turn His back on an unsaved man and laugh as he is condemned to the lake of fire.

He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

Now, I notice down there at Psalms 2:5 it says, "at that day he is going to speak to them." I wonder what He is going to say? It says He is going to vex them in His sore displeasure. I wonder what He is going to do? Yet people do not like to think about it. There will be people that will hear this message and they will say, "Well, I do not believe that." Yet, what do you do with that? It says God is going to laugh at somebody's calamity. God is going to have them in derision. Do you know what derision means? It is a terrible situation to be in. Instead of them right now, when we cry out to God and cast all your care upon Him, for He cares for you, in that day somebody is going to cry out. He is not going to answer them. He is going to turn His back on them. That is rough. That is hard. I understand it. I understand it.

IV. Four Types of Laughter

So I can set this thing up a little bit, let me tell you, to tell the truth in the Bible, we are going to talk about the laughter of God today. We are, but truthfully, to put it in perspective for you, there are four types of laughter found in the Bible. I do not know if you know that or not, but I am going to give them to you today in the process of this.

1. The Laughter of VictoryThe first one I want to talk about for just a moment, as we work our way up to the one we are going to preach on today, will be the laugh of victory. This will be found in Psalms 126:1-6. When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them.

The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.

Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. If you do not know what this one is, this is a laughter of heaven. This is the joyful laughter, the victorious laughter, the victorious shout of the happy soul, you and me, saved by God's grace, and now we have overcome everything. Right now, when you got saved, you overcame the world. You can be happy about that, and you can laugh about that, and be glad about that, but you are still in this world. Tomorrow, even though you are saved, you are going to have to face all the filth and all the ungodliness and all the brokenness and all the heartache that this world brings with it. But I want to tell you something. There is coming a day when my Savior comes back and takes me out of this world. There is coming a day when He is going to come back and lift me out of this cesspool, and He is going to set my feet on those golden streets of heaven, and He is going to deliver me, and I am going to overcome, and I am going to walk down the street, and I am going to sing, "Free at last, free at last, free at last." I am going to be free from everything this whole world had for me. I am going to laugh, and there is going to be some shouting going on, and we are going to be slapping each other on the back, "Best God, we are going to be home to heaven." That is a laugh of victory, see? That laugh is going to ring down through the corridors of heaven for all of eternity. There will be no weeping and wailing in heaven. Do you know why? Because there is no time for it because we are laughing too much. We are

having too great a time. We are talking about the day God overcame, and we overcame through Him, and now He is taking us from this place, and forever we will be with Him. Oh, that is the day. That is the laugh of victory. Heaven will be filled with this laughter.

2. The Laughter of Skepticism The second one is the laughter of skepticism. This will be found in Genesis 18:12, where you have the story of Abraham and Sarah. Sarah was told that God was going to give her the promised child. You have to remember that Sarah, or Sarai at that point, had not changed her name yet, she is about 87 years old. Most 87-year-old women do not have children. Sarah was told by God—Abraham was in his 90s, and most guys in their 90s do not father children—and she is told, and she overhears God saying, "I am going to give you a child." The Bible says she laughs within herself. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? That is the laugh of skepticism. That is the laugh you hear with some of your friends who, when you tell them what God is going to do or what He has done for you, they laugh at you. They do not believe it. Later on, when she is confronted, she tries to lie her way out of it and say, "Well, I did not laugh," but, oh no, the record was clear. The account was written down. And the Lord says, "Nay, but you did laugh." This is the laugh of skepticism about God. This is the laugh that you hear with your friends at work about God and who He really is, about the Bible. "Is it really the Word of God?" This is what you get on your History Channel when you watch the movies. These are the "Bible Solved" shows. You turn it on because you think you are going to learn something about the Bible. All they do is take a miracle in the Bible and show you how it was not a miracle, that it was just something that happened naturally. That is all it is. That is all it ever is. This is the one where they laugh about the skepticism of the King James Bible being the Word of God. They make fun of you because you can believe it. They used to call us "hillbilly Christians" because we believe this old Book. They used to say, "Well, I know it was good enough, the King James Bible was good enough for Paul and Silas, it will be good enough for me." They used to say, "Well, the Bible, you believe the Bible parachuted down from heaven written on a golden typewriter." As a matter of fact, I do. That was the skepticism. They are so skeptical. Moses, I watched one of those things on the History Channel one night, just for pure entertainment. It was not the fact that Moses really crossed the Red Sea; it was the fact that Moses crossed the Sea of Reeds. It was not the fact that Jephthah really killed his daughter; that is a mistranslation. "Why would God let a man really kill his own daughter?" He did. John the Baptist did not really eat those bugs, locusts, that you see flying around in your backyard. No, he ate a plant called the locust plant. Yes, and you have grounded it up and been smoking it for 20 years now. I had a professor one time who was a philosopher and he was a counselor. He said, "I believe the Bible is truth, but I do not believe the Bible is all truth. I believe there is truth outside the Bible." "There was not really a universal flood in Noah's time; it was a local flood." "Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 really did not take place; there is no such thing as a gap." "Oh, there is no such thing as a real legitimate creation; it was theistic evolution where God created it all, but then He set evolution in process and it went over from there." "Oh, the Genesis 6, we are not the sons of God, we are not fallen angels. How stupid is that? They were the godly line of Seth marrying the ungodly line of Cain," the skeptics.

3. The Laughter of Sinful MerrimentThe third one is the laughter of sinful merriment. You will find this in Ecclesiastes 7:2-3.It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.

Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.This is the laughter that echoes from the office parties, the pool halls, the beer halls, the locker rooms, the penthouses, the beach parties, the frat parties. It is the dirty jokes, the dirty pranks that make fun of everything that is not funny. It never ceases to amaze me in America, not 24 hours after some tragedy befalls America, you can go to late-night TV on Saturday Live where one of those clowns and they are making sport of it and making fun of it. It is fun spelled S-I-N instead of F-U-N, and America is literally laughing her way straight to hell. Somebody said one time, "The laughter of today over your sinfulness will be followed by the wailing and the weeping and gnashing of teeth of tomorrow," and that is so true.

4. The Laughter of God's CondemnationThe last one here is the one we are going to preach on today. We are going to settle in now, and this will be our text, Proverbs 1:26-28, the laughter of God's condemnation. Psalms 2:4.There is an old saying in the world that really comes from the Bible. We hear it all the time growing up, we hear it all the time as we want to get even with somebody, and it is always used in that context, and you are all aware of it. It is a simple little phrase that says, "He that laughs last, laughs best." In the world, the world thinks that when you get the last hand in something, you get the last say in something. When somebody does you wrong, how many times have you said to them, "Well, you go ahead and laugh now, but just remember, he that laughs last, laughs best." That comes from the Bible.There is another saying that you hear out there, people say it all the time when you try to tell them something, they will simply say, "That will be the day." Both of those phrases come out of the Bible concerning God's judgment of unsaved people, and it is the day that God shows up.

V. The Day of God's Judgment

That day is talked about and found in Revelation 20. We want to turn over there quickly and read Revelation 20:11-15. This is the day that He is talking about. When somebody says, "That will be the day," this is the day he is talking about. When somebody says, "He that laughs last, laughs best," that is what he is talking about, what we are going to look at.

He says in Revelation 20:11 about this great terrible judgment:

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

As I said, this is a really hard chapter for most Christians today to grasp the scope of it all. But the implications are that God will return all the rejection. God will return all of the things back to you that you have done to Him. The implications are that God will return the rejection that a man, good or bad, has heaped on God all of his life by rejecting His truth, and boy, is it going to be a problem.

Boy, do they laugh at God now. They talk about the fact that there is no God, "Ho, ho, ho." I remember when Nietzsche, the great atheist, I remember one time back in his time, he lived back in the 1800s, when he came up with the great concept that "God is dead." Everybody embraced that. Everybody laughed, and I remember when he made that statement in front of all the philosophers, they all stood up and applauded and cheered and they laughed.

I do not know who did it or when it exactly happened, but after he was dead and they had buried him, somebody walked by to put flowers on his tombstone, and some Bible-believing Christian snuck in there because Nietzsche had said, "God is dead, Nietzsche." Some born-again, obviously Christian, snuck into that graveyard and wrote on his tombstone, "Nietzsche is dead, signed God." Brother, that is exactly what it was. He died, God is still alive.

"The Bible is just a book of fairy tales, ho, ho, ho." "The Bible is a book like any other book." "God loves everybody." "They are all God's children." "Christ is the illegitimate son of a Roman soldier." How many times have you heard that? "Christ really did not die; He just fainted on the cross, and they put Him into that cave, and the cool cave of 60 degrees revived Him." It is called the swoon theory. "Christianity is for old folks and kids." All the Bible colleges and the making fun of the Bible, making fun of God, making fun of Christians who believe the Bible.

Well, my friend, that will be the day. That will be the day that He laughs, and "he who laughs last, laughs best." That will be the day when He comes back and He takes charge and He sets the record straight. Look, you idiot, Proverbs 1:24 says He called you, He died for you, He stretched out His hand to you, and you slapped it away. You laughed at His church, you rejected His counsel, you laughed at His Son, you laughed at His holiness, you laughed at His Bible, you laughed at His commandments, you laughed at His principles of life, you made fun and sport of His people. Now you stand before the assembled universe, and He is going to return the favor.

You do not actually think you are going to go through your life making fun and laughing at a holy God, either by openly doing it or by doing it in your life by disobeying the Word of God and doing your own thing, and retribution is not going to come back. He says that He is going to repay all of the devices. Do you know what those devices are in the book of Proverbs? The Bible says there are many devices in a man's heart. Those devices are all the things that you put into your heart that get you around Jesus Christ, and in that day, they come back to you.

Now you stand before the assembled universe, and He will return the favor, and He will laugh at you and your calamity.

I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.

A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

That is the day. That is the day we are talking about. That is the day where every unsaved man, every unsaved woman, is going to stand before God and give an account, give an account. It is real simple when you think about it. When you look at the text here, the unsaved man's response to the Gospel invitation is six things in our text. Look at it:

5. In Proverbs 1:24, a refusal.
6. In Proverbs 1:24, an indifference.
7. In Proverbs 1:25, the effort to make the Word of God of none effect in your life.
8. In Proverbs 1:25, to turn it down flatly and definitely.
9. In Proverbs 1:29, to hate and despise it.
10. In Proverbs 1:30, to hold God and His invitation in total contempt. That is it.

So you know what God does? No big deal. So then at the Last Judgment, the last day, God's day, God returns to the sinner six things also found in the text. Look at it:

11. Proverbs 1:26, you get fear.
12. Proverbs 1:26, you get calamity.
13. Proverbs 1:27, you get desolation.
14. Proverbs 1:27, you get destruction.
15. Proverbs 1:27, you get distress.
16. Proverbs 1:27, you get anguish.

Oh, but I can hear it. I hear it from the peanut gallery again. "Oh, God is such a loving God. What about His mercy? What about His love? What about His compassion? How could a loving God do such a thing?"

VI. The True Nature of God's Love

Well, let me enlighten you. You do greatly err, not knowing the Scriptures. Let me help you. Let me help put it together for you. The love of God, you want to talk about it, do you? Good. Let us bring it up to a modern 21st-century ecumenical council deal. Let us dialogue. Let us share some things. Let us have an exchange of ideas here for a second. Let us have an experience. Let us have an ecumenical movement. You should have two of those a day to be a regular Baptist anyhow, so let us just stay with it for a second.

Do you know what the love of God even is? Do you really have a clue? We talk about the love of God. You hear it all the time from preachers. You hear all the time about how much God loves you. You hear all the time about God is love. You hear all the time about the love of God. Do you really understand from the Bible what God's love is?

God's love, the love of God, is not God loving the sinner, but the love of God is simply God pouring out His wrath on His Son on the cross for you and me. The love of God is the day God turned His back on His Son so that He would not have to turn it on you and me. The love of God is the day His Son cried out, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" And God forsook Him. That is the love of God.

It is not that God loves everybody and God loves you and God loves me. The love of God, to find, is God pouring out His wrath on His sinless Son for sinners like you and me. That is the love of God. Why did He forsake Him? For forsaking for you and for me. That is why.

I think about it all the time. I close my eyes and I think about it from that sixth to the ninth hour when He hung on the cross, when all hell came to Him. I look at God up there in heaven looking down at His Son. God said about His Son, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him." God looked at Him and said in Psalms, "He is the apple of My eye." God looked at Him and loved Him because He was everything that God wanted. Abraham wanted his son, but, oh, when God had His Son, He loved Him so much. He had sweet fellowship, perfect union, perfect fellowship.

But, oh, God sent His Son down to die for you and me. They took that sinless Son of God, the only Man who never did anything wrong to anybody on this planet, and yet why does nobody want anything to do with Him? They took that sinless Son of God and they whipped His back. They put the cat-o'-nine-tails to Him. They beat Him. They spit in His face. They pulled out His beard. They laughed and mocked and made fun of Him. Then they put a 250-pound wooden cross and made Him drag it down the road to Golgotha's Hill. Then they took nails and they put them through His hands and His feet. They hung Him up there, and then they mocked Him and they said, "If Thou be the Son of God, come down off that cross." They humiliated Him. They stripped Him naked and they made fun of Him.

From the sixth to the ninth hour, the judgment of God fell on Him for me and you. When I look at that in my mind's eye, I think there was a time when He cried out, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" I think the hand of God was absolutely ready to wipe out planet Earth. I believe God was filled with it. I believe His wrath and indignation. I believe that He raised His hand to send 100,000 angels to wipe out the planet Earth. But as He put His hand up, He cried out and He said, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." God was ready to wipe out this planet, and His Son said, "Father, don't do it. Bob Alexander needs a Savior. Kevin needs a Savior. Bob Greg needs a Savior. Everybody down there needs a Savior. God, Father, don't do it." The hand of God was stayed.

I think of the story that I heard that happened back in the 50s down in Steubenville, Ohio, of a man that ran the drawbridge that allowed the ships to go up and down the Ohio River there in Steubenville. His job was to sit up there in that little house and raise that bridge when the ships went through. Then he put it down, and the trains would go across. One day his little boy wanted to go to work with him, like all little boys wanted to go to work with their dad. His dad took him to work, and they sat there all morning long. When the ships came down and blew the horns,

they would raise the bridge, and they would go by, and he would put it down, and the trains would go by.

Well, they were out there, and he had a little break, and he was walking and showing some things, and he heard the phone ring, and he picked up the phone, and it was the dispatcher. He said, "There is a bit of misplacement here. You have got to make sure the bridge is down because there is a passenger train that is going to come through, and we missed it on the plotting chart, and it has got to be down." He looked up, and the bridge was up because the ship was starting to come down through it. He ran back up into that little thing, and his little boy ran next to him, and as he crawled up into that cabin, he turned around and he knocked his little boy over, and the little boy went into the Ohio River.

He looked down there, and that little boy, a true story, looked down at that little boy as he fell into the water, and he started to go down, and about that time, he heard the whistle of a train coming, a passenger train with 400 people on it, and the bridge was up. He looked at his boy, and he looked at the train, and he looked at his boy, and he looked at that train, and in a split second, he got back up there, and with tears running down his face, he put his hands on those levers, and he pulled that lever down, and that bridge went down, and 400 people went across that bridge and never knew. The body of his little boy washed up about three days later down in the Ohio River. He gave the life of his son that 400 people who never even understood what happened went home that night to their families.

Oh, I am telling you, there was a day, there was a day when God's Son looked up to heaven and said, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" And God turned His back on His Son so you and I could go to heaven. Can you reject that? Do you turn your back on that? Oh, the love that drew salvation's plan, oh, the grace that brought it down to man, oh, the mighty God that God did span at Calvary by letting His Son die on that cross. That is the love of God, you incredible fool.

The Bible says that God cannot even love an unsaved man without the cross.

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

If you are unsaved here this morning, you are as good as in hell with a door locked and the key rusted up and the key thrown away. The only way God can love us as unsaved people, and love me as an unsaved man, and love you as an unsaved woman before you got saved, was by looking at you and me through the death of His Son on Calvary's cross. That is all. He has to look at us through the screening of the blood, and that is the only way He can love us. And you reject it, you mock it, you make fun of it every day of your life. When you reject that, my friend, you are done.

Now, what have you done with it? That loving shocker of God turning His back on His Son so He will not have to turn it on you and me. You reject it. You mock it. You disdain it. You use that holy name as a cuss word. You take that holy name into your filthy lifestyle and your jokes and your commentaries. You take it and you trample it under your feet, and you laugh at God and all

that He has done for you. Well, there is coming a day that He who laughs last, laughs best, and now He is going to laugh at you.

There is a day coming when you call for Him, and He will not answer. He is going to be done being your errand boy. There is a day coming when you will seek Him, and He will not be found. You rejected Him as your Savior. Now He stands there to be your Judge, and He rejects you.

VII. The Hilarious Judgment

Do you have any idea what the laughter of God is really all about? Do you, do you? I mean, do you really think God is laughing because you are going to hell? Do you really? God's people today are so far from God in the Bible and understanding who He is. It is incredible.

When you know the Bible, you know Proverbs 28:5: "Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things." When you know the Bible, you have to admit that day is going to be quite hilarious. I think that day will keep everybody in stitches. Because it is going to be the day that you as an unsaved man or woman have to try to defend yourself and your sin and show God in the assembled universe why you are as good as God's Son and deserve to go to heaven without His sacrifice. That is going to be a hoot. That is going to cause the assembled universe to break out in laughter. Talk about being funny.

The day you and I have to stand there, and you are an unsaved man, and you have to stand before God on that throne, all the assembled universe, and you have to declare to all of them why God's salvation was no good for you, and you are righteous, and you deserve to go to heaven, and you are better than His Son. Why, that whole universe will break out in spasms.

In the book of Zechariah, you have a picture of that day. Most Christians could not even find Zechariah if you put a gun to their head. It is a frightening picture, a horrible picture found in Zechariah 3:1-4. It is a picture and a model of what is coming for an unsaved man.

And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.

And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.

That is the day you got saved. But do you see that? Do you understand now that that Great White Throne Judgment? It is a courtroom. You have a Judge. It is God Almighty. You as an unsaved man or woman are going to be the defendant. You have a trial set. There is a sentence that is going to be imposed. If you are found guilty, it is going to be the lake of fire. On top of that, according to the fallacy, you have a prosecuting attorney standing right beside you. You have the devil. Zechariah 3:1 says the devil is at your right hand to resist anything you say.

You are going to start to declare how your righteousness is. Boy, the prosecuting attorney in that courtroom is going to stand up and show the real picture of who you really were and what you really said and what you really did. Every time you try to defend yourself and come up in this court before Almighty God, and you try to declare your righteousness, there is going to be one who stands at your right hand that knows every thought you ever had, knows everything you ever did, knows every move you ever made. He is going to stand there and he is going to resist you before Almighty God.

Now, I want you to notice that what an unsaved man does not have here is a lawyer for his defense. That would be Jesus Christ. Do you know why as a saved man and you as a saved man or woman will not be at this trial and never have to worry about this judgment? Have you figured it out yet? Do you know why us as saved people, we have a judgment we have to go to, but it is not this one. We will never be here. Have you figured out yet why we are not going to be here? It is easy. I have a great lawyer. I have a great lawyer standing on my right hand, and He makes intercession for me.

The Bible says in Revelation 12:10 that the devil is the accuser of the brethren. My lawyer got my case thrown out of court. My lawyer, He pleaded my case, and when I was guilty and when I was rotten and I was without hope, He stood up and took my place before the Judge. Every time the devil stands up and wants to accuse me, my eternity stands up and says, "I object! He is under the blood, Father." I know what God does. He throws my case out of court.

You need a lawyer. You need somebody that will take your defense because if you do not get it, you are going to be your own defense. You are going to be up against one of the sharpest minds you ever saw on this planet. On that day, you will have to defend yourself. You will have to try to prove to the assembled universe, the sons of God, the angels, the cherubim, the seraphim, and God Himself, how you are not guilty of sin. How these filthy rags of unrighteousness are not really there. How you are not guilty of sin, and you have the righteousness of Jesus Christ without ever taking His salvation. Quite hilarious. Why, if you were not in an eternal glorified body, you would die laughing.

You will stand there in those filthy rags of your unrighteousness, and you will plead your case. Most people think the Great White Throne Judgment is like a big set of scales where you show up and God puts all your good works on this side and all your bad works on this side. You want to weigh out somehow. If your good works outweigh your bad ones, you go to heaven. If your bad ones outweigh your good ones, you go to hell. It is not that way. He is going to put you in His hand and Jesus Christ in His hand, and He is going to weigh your worth. He is going to read your meter, baby. And you are going to be found wanting in the scales.

One by one, they will come. Every president, every king, every potentate, every queen, they will stand before God. They will make their defense. They will talk about how they did this, and their public service, and all the good things that they did. They will talk about how they defended other countries, and they helped people, and they dealt with the poor, and they did this—all to no avail.

One by one, they will stand before God. Every movie star, every rock star, every porn star, every judge, every politician, every fireman, every policeman, every nurse, every doctor, whoever rejected God and rejected His counsel. One by one, they will come. All the great philosophers, all the great theologians, all the skeptics, all the scorners, all the simple ones, and all the fools. One by one, from the president to the bum on skid row, they will stand before God and plead their case with the devil at their right hand to destroy them as their prosecuting attorney.

The Bible says, Revelation 20:11, "And I saw a great white throne, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away." When I think about this, I imagine a throne so big that it covers the whole size of the universe. There He is, there He sits on the throne. There is the Ancient of Days. There are the eyes of a burning fire. There is the sinless Son of God. There is the hair white as snow. There is the Ancient of Days that stood, and Daniel talked about it.

Now the judgment is set. The books are open. There He is. The only One that could have saved you. The One who died for you. The One who stretched out His hand to you and called you. And you rejected. And the only One who could make your defense. Now you own it. You are on your own. Now you stand alone.

Now He turns His back on you because there was a time when He turned His back on His own Son for you, and you thought you were too good for that, and you rejected and you laughed your way right into hell. Well, now it is His turn to laugh, and "He who laughs last, laughs best."

You will stand there guilty before Almighty God. Every statement of how you were a good person, every statement of how you had this foundation to help all these kids get education, or you were a Shriner, or you were a Mason, or all the good deeds you did, and all the things you did in church, and all the simple alibis you have and why you rejected the Holy One, will be met with laughter. Laughter of how any sinful man could ever compare himself to God's holy Son. What a joke! That, my friend, is the essence of the laughter of God.

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

Listen, you will either do it now where He is a God of love with an outstretched hand, or you will bend that knee in that day as a sinner defending yourself. You accept Him. It is not a matter whether you accept Him as Lord or you do not. It is just a matter of which place you do. You will do it in that day as He stretches out His hand of judgment against you and says the most terrible words ever spoken anywhere in the history of the world.

Remember Psalms 2:4-5? He will laugh, and He will speak to them in His wrath. This is what He says. Here it comes. The most terrible words in all of the Bible, the most terrible words in all the human language.

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

You will stand there in that throne. You will plead your case. Brother, at that point, when it is hopeless and you realize that you blew it, you realize that He died for you, He stretched out His

hand for the first time in your life, you are going to realize what you did not do, and you will bow that knee there in that throne, and you will bow that knee and you will say, "Jesus Christ is Lord." You can bow it now. You can trust Him now. But in that day, when you do not do it now, you will do it then, and you will bow your knee and you will say, "Jesus Christ is Lord," and you will stand up, and God will take that power to hold you down, and down you will drop to that lake of fire.

That lake of fire may be 10, 20, 30,000 light-years below where you are at. You will fall through space, tumbling as that lake of fire gets closer and closer and closer. All the way down through that fall, you will hear the laughter of God's condemnation. The laughter that God wanted to give you as the laughter of victory. But you now were bent on taking the laughter of condemnation. You will be laughed at because of the fact that you thought you were better than the One that died for you. You will be laughed at because you actually thought that your righteousness could merit something with God.

The most devastating, blasphemous thing that you could ever say or ever think is the fact that you are righteous and could match up to God's Son's righteousness. By that fact, then God just wasted His Son on that cross. I have had people tell me, after they have been saved, and they say, "Well, I have been baptized." I said, "Baptism does not save you." I said, "Did you ever stop thinking about this? If baptism saved you, why did God have His Son die on the cross? Why did He not just tell everybody to get baptized, you idiot?"

I have had them say, "Well, I am saved. I go to church." Well, if that is how you get saved, why did His Son have... Do you understand the agony that He went through? Why did He go through that if all you had to do was join a church? None of those things will save you. No good works will save you. There is only one thing that will save you, and that is God turning His back on His Son so He will not have to turn it on you. And you are rejecting it. You are rejecting it.

I am telling you, this day is coming. You know what? The most terrible thing about hell, I think, is the fact that you do not have to go. I mean, if He forced you to go and you did not have a thing to say about it, you could always be in hell for all eternity and say, "Well, I was forced here. I did not have..." But the Bible told you in Matthew 25:41, He says that hell was prepared for the devil and his angels. It was never prepared for you.

God never thought in His mind that you would take the love of Him turning His back. God thought that you were so tender when you understood the fact that He turned His back on His Son, so it would melt your heart and you would come to Him. It did not work that way, does it? Some of you are so hard and so cold. Some of you are so indifferent. A lot of that goes back to the preachers that stand in the pulpit and do not preach messages like this anymore. They just preach those nice, soft messages that are very smooth and very clean and very unoffending, and then you go out of there not understanding anything about the death of Christ and thinking you are okay.

God thought for sure you would take His hand. God thought for sure you would come to His call, accept all that He did for you, take His counsel. But when you do not, you own it. It is all yours. The most terrible laughter in all the Bible is the laughter of God to your condemnation, versus

the most sensational laughter in all the Bible and history, man, the laughter of victory. "I am home." A place for all of eternity, we will sing, we will shout, we will laugh, all to the glory of the One who loved me and gave Himself for me. Forever I will be with the One who died for me. What a day, what a glorious day that will be.

Tabby played the song today, "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound, that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now I am found, was blind but now I see. When we have been there 10,000 years, bright shining as the sun, we have no less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun." Now that is something to shout about. That is something to laugh about. Home to victory. The laugh of victory or the laugh of condemnation. But the choice is yours. Every head bowed and every eye closed.