

The Minor Profits - Malachi Chapter 01

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[0 : 00] Well, if you will open your Bible to the book of Malachi, or as I heard one brother call it, that great Italian prophet, Malachi, we will begin a consideration that will, I think, encompass probably four sessions. This will be our first. I want to remind you that our last session for the men's class on Tuesday will be the Tuesday immediately before Thanksgiving.

And that will be, I think, maybe the 24th, something like that. And we're going to take a break, because I do not anticipate being available very much. I'm going to take some long-awaited vacation, and we'll be out of town. I hope to visit my brother in Ocala, Florida, and spend some time with him and some other folks down south. So we will resume, and we'll let you know plenty of time in advance, but it will be in the year 2021, and we will take up a study that will be something that you have decided you want to study. That's what we're doing now. We're studying the minor prophets, because it was your suggestion, and we kind of took a vote, and that's what you all settled on, was the minor prophets. So that's why we undertook them. I want you to be thinking about this now, if you will, over the next few weeks, and be prepared to make a pitch for whatever is of your interest or concern, or that you would like to see the group undertake for study when we resume next year.

And we'll be thinking about that, and we'll get, we'll try to get an answer to you before we dismiss in our last class to let you know what we'll be undertaking. But for right now, we are looking at the very last of the minor prophets. He is one of three that is referred to as the post-exilic prophets, and by that we simply mean that he ministered after Israel had been released to return to the Holy Land. They had been captives of the Babylonians, and then the Babylonians became captive of the Medes and the Persians, and it was under the headship of the Medes and the Persians that they granted to the Jews the opportunity to return to the land that the Babylonians had taken them from. And these three prophets, consisting of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, all had their ministry after that return.

So Israel is back in the land, that is, as many as returned, which was really only about 20%. Keep that in mind, because a whole generation or two generations had passed while they were in Babylon.

[3 : 00] So the people that you have returning, actually they're not, some of them are not returning to Jerusalem because they were never there, but they are going to the home of their grandparents and their parents by way of being released from the Medes and the Persians, and most of them stayed there in the land where they were.

And by the way, this post-captivity or this post-exilic period we're talking about is during the same time frame when Queen Esther was described in the Book of Esther, so it's in that time period if you could focus on that.

And Malachi is really completely different from any of the other prophets because the writer, Malachi, is inspired to take a different kind of approach, different stance.

And what we're going to find is a kind of conversation that is taking place between the people of Israel who had returned and God himself.

And guess who is playing the major role of being both God who is speaking and the people who are answering? It is Malachi.

[4 : 23] And if you understand that, you can appreciate better the content and the arguments that are going to be presented because what this actually is is an expression and a talkback.

In fact, we could actually call it insolent sassing. Every parent knows what it means to have a sassy kid, somebody that argues with you, that talks back to you, that stands up to you, that kind of thing.

That's what's taking place in the prophecy of Malachi. And Malachi, God is charging the people with certain sins and vices, and they come back with the idea of, oh yeah, prove it.

Where do you get off of that? That's not true of us. It's argumentative. And the reason Malachi is doing that is because he senses that's exactly the kind of attitude that was prevailing in the nation at the time God raised him up.

In fact, it was a people who were steeped in legalism, in ritualism, in tradition with no real heart substance behind it at all.

[5 : 48] It is indicative of what our Lord said in the Gospels, speaking of God, saying, These people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

This whole prophecy of Malachi is a diatribe, if you will, against superficiality, religiosity, phoniness, and everything that goes with it.

And it is highly demonstrative of what we're dealing with today. So let's get into this. Verse 1, chapter 1, Malachi.

The oracle of the word of the Lord to Israel through Malachi. I have loved you, says the Lord. But you say, How hast thou loved us?

In other words, prove it. Oh yeah? You say you've loved us? How? We don't see your love. We don't feel your love.

[6 : 51] We don't sense your love. Make your case. It's a talk back. And Malachi is taking both parts. And then if you come down to verse 2. A son honors his father.

I'm sorry, verse 6. A son honors his father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my respect?

And the Lord of hosts says to you, O priest who despise my name? But you say, How have we despised your name? In other words, they are actually charging God with taking a false position. But God is charging them with taking a false position. And it's up to us as the readers to find out who is really involved with the false position.

And the third time this is uttered. And it's found in verse 7. You are presenting defiled food upon my altar.

[7 : 56] But you say, How have we defiled thee? In that you say the table of the Lord is to be despised. And we'll look at these in a little more detail later.

But I want you to see there are seven such instances like this that's taken place. And the fourth one is found in chapter 2 and verse 17. You have wearied the Lord with your words.

What's your response to that? Yet you say, How have we wearied him? In other words, prove it. We're not guilty of that. What are you talking about?

How we've worried him. And the Lord says through Malachi, In that you say, Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord. And he delights in them. Or where is the God of justice?

And the fifth one is found in verse 7 of chapter 3. From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them.

[8 : 58] Return to me and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. But you say, How shall we return? In other words, the charge is that God is making unreasonable demands of them.

And they are just in fulfilling all of their responsibilities. And if anyone is to be blamed, God is. Is this not somewhat reminiscent of the attitude people have today towards the Almighty?

In other words, what Israel is saying is, It's not my fault. This is blame shifting. And upon whom are they shifting the blame?

Upon God himself. In what way have we wearied you? Everyone who does evil in the sight of the Lord. And he delights in them.

Or where is the God of justice? And then the sixth one is found in one that probably most preachers are familiar with. And most churches are familiar with.

[10 : 02] Although I can't say that we have a great deal of involvement with it here at Grace. But, Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me.

But you say, In other words, Your response to that is, How have we robbed thee? In tithes and contributions, You are cursed with a curse.

For you are robbing me, The whole nation of you. And then God goes on to make the argument.

And the last one, The seventh, Is found in verse 13. Your words have been arrogant against me, Says the Lord.

Yet, Your response is, What have we spoken against thee? So, This goes on all throughout the book. It is a tit for tat, A back and forth expression.

And Malachi is right in the middle, Taking the part of God, And making the accusation, Taking the part of the people, Because he knows what their response is. He lives among these people.

[11 : 03] He talks with them all the time. He presents divine truth to them. And he is readily available in knowing what their answers are, And what their attitude is. That's what the whole book is depicting.

Actually, There is no book in all of the Bible, Old Testament or new, That sets forth, The principles of hypocrisy.

More than the book of Malachi. And the hypocrite, Of course, Is simply someone who is one thing on the outside, And another thing on the inside.

It is a play acting. It is putting on the front. And of course, These people were good at that. So let's begin, If we may, With chapter one. And we'll start taking some of this apart, Because it is a very telling kind of book.

I have loved you, Verse two, Says the Lord. But you say, How have you loved us?

[12 : 03] Well, now, God begins with the beginning Of the expression Of his love for his people. And he answers with, Was not Esau, Jacob's brother, Declares the Lord.

Yet, I have loved Jacob, But I have hated Esau, And have made his mountains a desolation, And appointed his inheritance For the jackals of the wilderness.

Now, This needs to be understood Theologically and doctrinally, Because God does not hate In the way that we think of hating. What he is simply saying here, In effect is, He is ignoring Esau.

He has taken, He has taken Jacob, And this is the original man, Jacob. He has taken him, And blessed him, With undeserved favor, While at the same time, He literally ignored Esau.

If you read the account About these two men, It readily becomes apparent That Esau was the hedonist Of his day. Esau was the guy, Who was the strict materialist, He cared nothing for spiritual things, Birthright, Smirthright, Yeah, Give me some of that soup, You can have the lousy birthright, What's going to, What's it going to do, A hungry man, You know, So, He took the soup, And he ate the porridge, And he forfeited his birthright, Which, Actually, I don't want to get into this, Unless you want to bring it up By way of questioning, But, Actually, The birthright, Was supposed to go to Jacob anyway, That's something that most Christians Do not understand, Because they think that Esau was the one who had the right To the birthright, Because he was the firstborn, Never mind the fact that he was probably born Maybe 60 seconds Before his brother Jacob, And that made him the oldest, And he would have inherited it naturally,

[14 : 01] But that's another issue, And I don't want to get into that now, But this, Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated, It's the same kind of expression That our Lord used, When he said, He who does not come after me, And hate his own mother and father, Etc., Is not worthy of me, All that is saying is, That no one, And the scriptures make this, I think, Very clear in all the rest of the Bible, No one is saying that you're supposed To hate your parents, And that's not what it's teaching, Unfortunately, That's what some get from it, And they accuse Jesus of teaching something That is uncivil, You know, But all he is saying is, As a matter of comparison, The ultimate individual in your life Is to be your God, Not your parent, Not your mate, Not your child, It is to be, You shall have no other gods before me,

And there are people put, Who put human gods before him, Doesn't all the time, Happens all the time, We're good at that, You elevate individuals, You make an idol of them, You worship them, You can do that with your own children, You can do that with your parents, Or with your mate, If you make your mate, Your God, Woe be unto you when your God dies, Fellas, Keep that perspective in mind, Some of us here, Have learned that by experience, And I remember, At my first wife's funeral, When Jed Rosenthal preached the sermon, I stood to make a few remarks about Barbara, To whom I'd been married for almost 50 years,

And I said something to the effect that, I want you to know, While it is true, My wife has died, She has passed on, But my God has not, And that makes all the difference in the world, Love your wife, Go right ahead, And adore your wife, And dote on your wife, But don't make your wife your God, Because she's not always going to be here, And neither are you, Joe, If you make God first, You will be showing more love, To your wife, Than you know how, That's true, If you put God first, Absolutely, That is true, That is true, And, While she is living, Let me just inject this, On behalf of the little ladies, While she is living,

If you want to put God first, In a different way, How do you go about doing that? The best way you can put God first, Is by doing what he says, And you know what he says? Love your wives, As Christ loved the church, That's how you put God, In his rightful position, Is by loving your wife, And no, You're not loving her, Above your love for him, But you're loving her, In obedience to him, And Jesus said, If you love me, If you love me, Keep my commandments, Show it, Demonstrate it, Well, That's not my message, But let us get on, When he says, That he had hated Esau, He meant that, He literally, Had not intervened, On behalf of Esau, Like he had, For Jacob, And Jacob is going to be, The progenitor, Of Israel, In the sense that, It will be he, Who will produce, The twelve sons, That will become, The twelve tribes of Israel, And that is, That is another subject, In itself, And he says, I have hated Esau, I have made his mountains, A desolation, Appointed his inheritance,

[18 : 27] For the jackals, Of the wilderness, In other words, He's, It's kind of like saying, I'm really looking out, For Jacob, In a special way, Esau, Is on his own, That's what he's saying here, In other words, He's saying, Esau, I am treating, Just as everybody else, But I am conferring, A special kind, Of blessing, And promise, Upon Esau, I mean upon Jacob, And the reason he is, Is because, That's the perpetuation, Of the line, It didn't start with Jacob, Started with Abraham, Remember, The big three, Of the scriptures, Whenever the Bible, Uses the term, The fathers, Plural, It invariably, References, Abraham, Isaac, And Jacob, They are, The fathers, Of Israel, They are the big three, And it began, With Abraham, Out of, Ur of the Chaldees, Though Edom says, We have torn, We, We have been beaten down, And Edom, Of course, Is, Today, Edom is, Southern Jordan, Edom, Esau, Esau, The brother of Jacob, Is going to be, The father, Of the Edomites, And they are going to dwell, There in southern Jordan, In the mountainous area, It is where Mount Sir will be, It is where Petra, Is, It is where, Basra is, All of these biblical sites, It is where, Obadiah writes, About his one chapter, About the Edomites, It is the Edomites, Who when the children of Israel, Are coming out, Of the land of Egypt, And they approach the territory, Of the Edomites, Fathered by Esau, They send a delegation, To the Edomites, Asking permission, To just, Come through their land, Will not take anything, Will not disturb anything, Anything that is costly, We will repay it, All we're asking for, Is permission, To come through the land, On our way back, To the land, Of Israel, And the Edomites, The Edomites answer, Was nothing doing, They held a grudge, And the Edomites, And the Edomites, And the Edomites, And the Edomites, And the Edomites, And the Edomites, That grudge, Is still in place today, That grudge, Is still, The historic basis, For the conflict, That exists, Between the Arab, And the Jew, Today, And I told you before, About that meeting, At Camp David, When Jimmy Carter, Was president, And he arranged, For Anwar Sadat, And Menachem Begin, To meet, In Washington, Camp David, And Jimmy Carter, Was going to broker, The peace between them, And they both agreed, To be there, And they had, A little powwow, Carter got each, Of them together, Got each of them separately, Talked to them about, How historic, And how strategic, And how important this was, And he kind of gave them, Some fatherly advice, As to how to handle this now, When you two guys, Come together, And he got them to agree, That yes, Okay, We'll shake hands, But no kissing, Now that doesn't mean much to us, Because we wouldn't expect, The two men to kiss each other anyway, But if you are an Easterner, That is the only polite response, You can give, When you're meeting someone, You put your arms around them, And you, Kiss them on the cheek, On this side, And then you move around, And you kiss him on the cheek, On the other side, And he does the same to you, That still goes on, Today, In the Mideast, That's their way of greeting, We do it with just a handshake, You know, We men, We're not into kissing men, Well, Some things change, You know, We won't go there, But that's, Okay, Anyway, And that was, I told you, Remember, On time magazine, Time magazine, Had a, Full front page picture, On the cover, And it was, Anwar Sadat, Facing, Menachem Begin, Who was prime minister, Of Israel at the time, And the caption under it was, Jacob, And Esau, Meet again, Or Isaac, And Ishmael, Meet again, After thousands of years, What an electric picture that was, Amazing, Well, Of course, We know the Camp David thing fell through, But, Anyway, There's, There's some new rumblings about peace in the east now, As a result of, What, What President Trump's been able to do, What Joe?

[23 : 29] You said earlier, That God just sort of, Ignores Esau, That the word hated, You were just defining the word, What hated meant in the Bible, Yeah, But, If you look at the end of, Verse four, It says, A people always under the wrath of God, That sounds to me like, God actually is, Is doing

things negative against them, Not just to leave them alone, He's doing some, Uh, Bad things to them, All the time, The Esau's ancestors, Not just ignoring them, Well, You may, You may have something there, On the other hand, I, I, I can't dispute what you're saying, But I'm thinking more in general terms, And, In, In a real sense, This is what God has done, With the fallen world in general, It is only to those who are in Christ, That God has any special obligation, Or affinity, And he has an obligation, To those who are in Christ, Because, They are in Christ,

And the obligation is, I will never leave you, Nor forsake you, And he's promised a special place for us, Special provision, Special care, And certainly a special eternal home for us, That is not true of the rest of the world, All the rest of the world, All the rest of the world, Is living and dwelling, Daily, 24-7, Under a curse, The ground's cursed for our sake, Everything is cursed, Everything came crashing down, With the sin of Adam, And Esau is simply a part of that, Yes, And also, If you're not for Christ, Then, Then you're an enemy God, If you're not for God, You're his enemy, That's, That's somewhere in scripture, That's true, There's no, And so, An enemy seems like somebody you're fighting all the time, Yeah, You know, Somebody you're against, You're doing negative things to, You're shooting them, You're whatever, You're, You're, You know, You're aggravating them, Yep, And there is no fence to straddle, You're on one side, Or the other, And when you come to faith in Christ,

You simply move from one side of the fence, To the other side of the fence, But you're not sitting on it, Because there is no fence to sit on, He that is not with me, Is against me, So, Let's continue on with the text, Through, Though Edom says, We have been beaten down, But we will return, And build up the ruins, Thus says the Lord of hosts, They may build, But I will tear down, Or allow to be torn down, And men will call them, The wicked territory, And the people toward whom, The Lord is indignant forever, And they have, Committed a number of things, Specifically against the people of Israel, And they still are to this day, They still are to this day, The animosity that goes on there, And your eyes will see this, And you will say, The Lord be magnified, Beyond the border of Israel, And the second, A son, Honors his father, And a servant his master, That's just standard, That's the way it is, In society, Then, Says, Says Malachi,

In the part of God, Then, If I am a father, Where is my honor, And if I am a master, Where is my respect, Says the Lord of hosts to you, O priests, Who despise my name, And the word despise, In the original, Has an interesting connotation, It literally means, To look down your nose, At someone, In contempt, As though you are, A superior person, And they are inferior to you, And you, And you, Look down your nose, At them, And, Imagine, Taking that kind, Of an attitude, To the creator, And sustainer, Of the universe, But you know something, The pride, In fallen humanity, Knows no bounds, We, Who have absolutely, Nothing, To be proud about,

Can be proud, In a way, That is, Nauseous, To the almighty, Humility, Is something, That ought to characterize, Every single child of God, And the reason it should, Is because he realizes, The pit, From which he has been dug, And he knows, He has nothing, In and of himself, To commend himself, I am, What I am, By the grace of God, Any Christian, Who is walking, In pride, Is denying reality, He has absolutely, Nothing to be proud of, He has everything, To be grateful for, Let's move on, How have you despised, My name, You are presenting, Defiled blood, Defiled food, Upon my altar, But you say, How have we defiled thee,

[28 : 35] In that you say, The table of the Lord, Is to be despised, Or ignored, These are people, Who were very, Long, And strong, On formalism, And literature, And jumping through the hoops, But their heart, Wasn't in it, And it was, Sure mockery, It was just going, Through the motions, And fellas, In many respects, This is what, Roman Catholicism is, And in many respects, This is what, Modern Protestantism is, It is just ritual, It is going through the motions, It is doing this, Doing that, The liturgy, The finery, Everything that goes with it, And then, When they are, Out of the service, And out, In circulating, They revert to the, Same old self, They have a, They have a, They have a, Churchy kind of behavior, But when they get back out,

Into the real world, Whether it's the workplace, Or the neighborhood, Or whatever, Whatever they got at church, They leave at church, And they revert to the flesh, Once they get out, And it's dog eat dog, And the behavior, And the rancor, And the bitterness, And the arguing, And everything that goes with it, Indicating that, There's no real change there, There's no real honor to God there, There is just the show, That goes on, And it's, It's, It's nauseating to the Lord, When you present the blind, For sacrifice, Is it not evil?

What's that mean? That means, Only animals, That the priests, Had examined, And pronounced, Clean, And whole, And hail, And healthy, Those were the only animals, Acceptable for sacrifice, In other words, You give God, The best, But what were they doing?

Well, They've got a sick animal, It's on its last legs, It's going to die anyway, It may not make it for a couple, Let's offer that to the Lord, And that's the kind of thing, That went on, It was an attitude, That put their own benefit, Their own welfare, And their own wallet, Above, Of what was to be, Given to the Lord, And this is just, Reflective of an attitude, They were just, Demonstrating outwardly, What they were inwardly, And God is sick of it, And Malachi, Is taking them to task, Because he sees this attitude, All around him, Everybody is reflecting this, And he is calling them out, And of course, They're argumentative, Because they deny it, No, That's not true of us, No, We this, We're that, We're something else, But he's got their number, He's lived with them long enough, He's walked among them, He knows who they are, He knows what they stand for, He knows what they neglect, He knows their passions, All the rest of it, And they're very uncomfortable, For the position, He's putting them in, And do you know, This goes, With that idea, Of speaking, The truth, Because, I think it was, I think it was, I think it was Vance Habner, Says, When you hurl a rock, Into a pack of dogs, The one that yelps, Is the one that got hit, And that's exactly, What we've got here, And these people are, Yelping, And you know something, Here in the good old, U.S. of A, There is, A segment of our society, That is a perfect reflection, Of this, And the moral of that story is, Nothing has changed, This is not something, That is just, True, Of those, Ungrateful Jews, It's something that's, Equally true, Of ungrateful, Gentiles,

[32 : 34] This, That Malachi, Is describing, Is not a Jewish problem, It's a human problem, This kind of nonsense, Is lodged in the heart, Of fallen human beings, And it isn't something, To be applied, Only to Israel, You sacrifice, You present the blind, For sacrifice, Is it not evil, And when you present, The lame, And the sick, Is it not evil, Why not offer it, To your governor, Yeah, Give it, Give it to the governor, Of the feast, He doesn't want it, It isn't good enough, For him, But it's good enough, For God, That's what they're saying, And he is resentful, Of that, Would he be pleased, With you, Or would he receive, You kindly, Says the Lord of hosts, But now, Will you not, Entreat God's favor, That he may be, Gracious to us, With such an offering, On your part, Will he receive, Any of you kindly, Says the Lord of hosts, That is the governor,

Of the feast, Oh, That there were, Among you, There were one, Among you, Who would shut the gates, That you might not, Uselessly, Kindle fire, On my altar, In other words, It'd be great, It'd be great, If somebody, Would come along, And just, Close off the entrance, To the altar, So you couldn't even, Get there anymore, To offer your, Lame sacrifices, I am not pleased, With you, Says the Lord of hosts, Nor will I, Accept an offering, From you, For from the rising, Of the sun, Even to its setting, My name, Will be great, Among the nations, And in every place, Incense is going, To be offered, To my name, And a grain offering, That is pure, For my name, Will be great, Among the nations, Says the Lord of hosts, But, You are profaning it, In that you say, The table of the Lord, Is defiled, And as for its fruit, Its food, Is to be despised, You also say, My, How tiresome it is, And you disdainfully, Sniff at it, In other words, You're sick of it, And tired of it, And you bring, What was taken, By robbery, And what is lame, Or sick, So you bring, The offering, Should I receive, That from your hands, Says the Lord, But cursed be the swindler, Who has a male, In his flock, And vows it, Or promises, Or commits it, But, Sacrifices a blemished animal, To the Lord, For I am a great king, Says the Lord of hosts, And my name is feared, Among the nations, And then, Second chapter, He takes off, On the religious element, The priest, But before I go any further, I must get this in, Because it's such good content, I want to share it with you, Once again, It is from the pen, Of James Montgomery Boyce, But he is not only offering, Something of his own, He is also appealing, To the pen, Of G. Campbell Morgan, Who was one of the,

Great British commentators, In the 1800s, And I want to share this with you, Because it is so insightful, There is a sense, In which the attitude, Of the people depicted in Malachi, Is a mirror, Of our present secular world, For people today, Also want to measure God, By the standards of human justice, If they do not want to do away, With God entirely, And some prefer that, Yet Malachi, Hits even closer to home, Than this, He not only describes, The secular world of our age, But also the secular church, Of which we are all too often, Unfortunate examples, And I want to be sure, That you understand, This is true of Catholicism, And it's true of Protestantism, Neither have escaped it, And both of those together, Comprise in a general way, What the world refers to, As Christianity, One of the most helpful writers,

On Malachi, Is the late, Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, Who carefully links, The erroneous, And arrogant spirit, Of the people of Malachi's day, With the identical attitude, That prevails in so many, Alleged Christian circles, And G. Campbell Morgan, Was writing about the culture, And the people in his day, 1800s, What has changed?

[37 : 05] Nothing. Says he, These people are not in, Are not in, In open rebellion against God, Nor do they deny his right to offerings, But they are laboring under the delusion, That because they have brought offerings, They have been true to him all along.

Theirs is not a language, Of a people throwing off a yoke, And saying, We will not be loyal, But of a people, Established in the temple, It is not the language, Of a people who say, Let us stop sacrificing, And worship, But, And let us do as we please, But it is the language, Of a people who say, We are sacrificing, And worshiping, To please God, And yet he says, By the mouth of his servant, You have wearied me, You have robbed, And spoken against me, They have been most particular, And strict in outward observances, But their hearts have been far away, From their ceremonials, They have been boasting themselves, In their knowledge of truth, Responding to that knowledge, Mechanically, Technically, But their hearts, Their lives, Their characters, The inwardness of their natures, Have been a perpetual contradiction, In the eye of heaven, To the will of God,

And when the prophet, Tells them, What God thinks of them, They with astonishment, And impertinence, Look into his face, And say, We don't see this at all, To translate it, Into the language, Of the new testament, They have a form, Of godliness, But deny the power, That is precisely, What thousands, Of self-righteous, Church-going people do, They do not consider themselves, Irreligious, On the contrary, They think of themselves, As people whom God, In the very necessity, Of the case, Must approve, But whenever they have, A problem in life, If a job falls through, If a romance goes sour, If sickness or death, Touches someone close to them, Or even if they fall sick, Themselves, They immediately, Blame God, Holding him accountable, Moreover, People who think this way,

Are capable of living, The most corrupt lives, The last sentence, Of the quotation, From G. Campbell Morgan, Refers to 2nd Timothy 3, 5, Having a form, Of godliness, But denying its power, Religiosity outwardly, But denying its power, And what is its power?

What is its power? For I am not ashamed, Of the gospel of Christ, For it, Is the power, Of God, Through faith, Unto salvation, To those, Who believe.

[40 : 08] Do you realize, How much, Faulty role, And baloney, Is communicated, In our churches today, That is completely, Devoid, Of the gospel, This is the only thing, That will change lives, And remove them, From hypocrisy, To what it ought to be, Yes, Don?

Don? What you just read, And what you're saying, Is like an arrow, It's not pointed to the world, It's pointed to the different groups, Which are supposedly Christians, So you're not talking to, Atheists, Or anybody else, That's true, That's true, That's true, We're talking to those, Who ought to know better, We're talking of those, We're talking to those, You know, And I've admitted this, And I think, It's probably, Well known to you, Unless you're in complete denial, Every true, Born again, Christian, Has at the minimum, A touch, Of hypocrisy, In him, We all do, None of us, Live this thing, Called the Christian life, With any kind of, Perfection, For sure, We all have our, Flaws, And our faults, And our failures, And the one, Who is the worst,

The worst among us, Is the one, Who refuses to admit it, So let us, Let us hasten on, This is, This is good stuff, But we're, We're almost through, He says, Paul, In 2nd Timothy 3, 5, When he says, Having a form of godliness, But denying its power, And it is significant, That this biblical reference, Is from a chapter, Describing the most, Deficient morality, Paul is writing, In the notorious, Last days, Of this world's history, There will be terrible times, In the last days, People will be, Lovers of themselves, Lovers of money, Boastful, Proud, Abusive, Disobedient to parents, Ungrateful, Unholy, Without love, Unforgiving, Slanderous, Without self-control, Brutal, Not lovers of good, Treacherous, Rash, Conceited, Lovers of pleasure, Rather than lovers of God, 2nd Timothy chapter 3, Verses 1 through 4,

We read those verses, And immediately, Translate Paul's phrases, Into our terminology, The new, Narcissism, Materialism, Arrogance, Letting it all hang out, The generation gap, The new morality, Hedonism, And so on, It is a dreadful picture, But what makes it, Even more dreadful, Is the context, In which Paul places, This depravity, Paul, Is not writing, About the world, At large, The secular world, Of this, Or any other time, He is writing, About the nominal, Church, And describing,

The morality, Of those, Who have a form, Of godliness, But deny, Its power, Deny the actual, Gospel, And it's that gospel, That we are commissioned, To preach, It is that gospel, That is the only thing, That can actually, Change a life, But even if it is a life, That is changed, Through regeneration, There yet remains, In that life, What we call, The Adamic, Fallen nature, And that's what sets up, The context, That Paul describes, In Romans chapter 7, When he describes, This great struggle, That takes place, Within, Between the flesh, And the spirit, And it is, An ongoing battle, And fellas, All we are doing, When we, Grow spiritually, In the grace, And knowledge, Of Jesus Christ, It simply means, You are reflecting, A lifestyle, That is more consistent, With the spirit, Than it is, With the flesh, And those, Who do not grow, And do not mature, Spiritually, Stay, Bottled up, By the flesh, Their life, Is an ongoing, Spiritual,

[44 : 34] Disaster, You, Sometimes, You look at the person, And you see nothing, That reminds you, Of Christ, Or of truth, Or of righteousness, You see someone, Who, Who aligns with the world, And is far more, At home, With the world, Than they are, With the people of God, And that's either, Someone who isn't, Regenerated at all, Or, It is, A Christian, With a retarded, Spiritual, Mentality, So, I'm, Trying to, Watch my clock here, And I want to be out of here, By nine o'clock, So, You've got, A few minutes for questions, Or comments, Anyone?

Dan, And then, Don. Are the Muslims, Who are the Muslims, Who are the Muslims, Who are the Muslims, Who are the Muslims, Well, In, In here, Muslims, Didn't even exist, You know, Islam, Islam will not even, Come into being, Until the seventh century, And, Islam, From the portion of scripture, That we are reading, Here in, Malachi, And that, Malachi, Is a full, Twelve hundred years, Before Allah, Or not Allah, But, Muhammad, Before Muhammad, And Islam, Even came on the scene, That was in, The seventh century, Christianity, Had already been, Progressing for, 700 years, Before Islam, Ever came along, As founded by, Who are the descendants, Of Esau, The DNA, Who are you referring to?

Well, The descendants of Esau, Are the Edomites, They are the people, That live in Edom, That's southern Jordan, And, They are those, That I said, Would not give passage, To the Jews, When they came through, And, They, They were, And, They today, Are Islamic, They are Islamic, They are, They are Muslims, Today's Edomites, Today's Edomites, Are Muslims, They weren't Muslims then, When he was dealing with them, Because Islam, Hadn't even come into being, What they were then, Were just pure pagans, They weren't Jews either, Even though, They were descendants of, Abraham, Isaac, And Jacob, In order to be, Well, Esau, Being, Being the twin brother, Of Jacob, Is simply going,

A different way, He's going to be, What shall I say, He's, He's, He's, He's Semitic, No question about that, He's a Semite, He is a descendant of Shem, Out of Shem, Ham, And Japheth, He's a descendant of Shem, In fact, Most Muslims, Today, Most Muslims, Are Semites, They are Semitic, And Jews are Semitic, They have that in common, But of course, There's that animosity, And that bitterness, Between them, And it started, All the way back, With Esau and Jacob, So it is a fascinating thing, And remember, King Herod, King Herod, King Herod, Was one of the most, Evil individuals, Who ever lived, He was an Edomite, He was a descendant, Of Edom, And he was the one, Who was in power, When Christ was born,

[48 : 29] He was the one, That ordered the execution, Of the innocents, Two years of age and under, That was Herod the Great, Herod the Great, Was so evil, Was so evil, That he ordered his subordinates, To murder, I forget how many it was, To murder, A number of people, When he, Herod, Died, Because at his death, He wanted there to be, Great mourning, Throughout the land, Now fellas, We are talking about, An ego there, That is indescribable, Can you imagine, Somebody with that kind, Of mentality, Wanted to make sure, That there were, A large number of people, Mourning at his death, They wouldn't be mourning, For him, They'd probably be rejoicing, At his death, So evil he was, But they would be mourning, For all the others, And his attitude,

This, Have we ever talked about, Skewed logic, And warped thinking, And do you know, That this same Herod, Was an absolute, Architectural, Genius, He was responsible, For the reconstruction, And refurbishing, Of the temple, And the whole temple area, And even had, Stones, Those massive stones, Each weighing several tons, That are still available today, And in place at the western wall, Some of them have, The unmistakable, Herodian border, Around them, And these massive stones, Would have the, Outer, Three or four inches, Of border, All the way around, The stone, Edges, Sides, Top and bottom, Cut out, So that it would be,

Recessed and stand out, And it was about, Three to four inches wide, This band all the way, Around the exterior of the stone, And a couple of inches deep, And to this day, Those are referred to, In Israel as, Herodian, Stones, Because they were cut that way, At his insistence, That was part of the, Architectural, Appearance, That he wanted it to take, When these things were put together, Just a little bit of way, Of fancying up, Just a plain block stone, But, As evil as he was, In his, In his wickedness, He was a genius, In his architectural, And administrative ability, He was an anomaly, Obviously, He, Along with Hitler, Is going to have, A special kind of place, In whatever the opposite, Of heaven will be, For sure, Other thoughts, Or comments, Anyone, Yes, Don, Everything you, You've gone over through today, It just sort of struck me, As you're, Talking about it, I'm never going to make it, I'm always going to be, In a battle between myself, All the way along the line, I'm never going to be able to say, Man, I've got it done, I'm pure Christian, Never going to work, You're right, You're absolutely right, And the first one to agree with you, Would be the Apostle Paul, And he acknowledged, That he has this, This, This war going on, Within himself, Oh wretched man that I am, Who shall deliver me, From this body of death, I thank my Lord, Through Jesus Christ, Thank God, Through Jesus Christ, My Lord, He's given me the victory, With this, It's, Incredible stuff, It's just, Nothing, Nothing in the world, That can begin to compare, With the Christian life, And God has bestowed it, Upon those of us, Who so often, Live it, And act it out, So inconsistently, And you know what, He still loves you, With an undying love, That is amazing, That is, And, And, And this is why I say, When we, When, When something is brought, To our attention, Either, Comes to mind, Or someone else brings it, Maybe your wife, Brings it to your attention, Where you've been out of line, Where you've been un-Christlike, Where you've been difficult, Where you've, Engaged in something, You knew full well, You shouldn't have, There is always, Always, Always, Way back, To blessing, And, Forgiveness, And it's called, Repentance, Fellas, Repentance, Is not, Just for the non-Christian, Repenting of their sin, And coming to faith in Christ, You never, Outgrow, Your need, For repentance, And the reason for that is, Repentance, Is predicated, Upon information,

[53 : 34] And when you get information, You compare that information, With the position you already have, You already hold, And if it is contrary, To the position you already hold, You have to assess it, Which of these is right?

What I've always held, And what I've always believed, Or is this new information, I've received, Is that right? And if you conclude that it is, Guess what you have to do?

You have to change, Your mind, And say, This is what I used to think, And I acted on that basis, Now I know, It was wrong, And I discard that, And I embrace this instead, That is repentance, It means change your mind, And the only reason, You change your mind, Is because you have received, Information, Information, That prompts you to do that, If you do not, If you get the information, But you refuse to change your mind, That's called, Being, Unrepentant, And the children of Israel, Had a real problem with that, As a nation, They had a real problem with that, And, Of course it got them into trouble, And you know what?

We all have a problem with it, We all have a problem, We all, We all want our own way, We all want things to be the way, We want them to be, And, Let me ask you this, Is it possible, For someone, To repent of their sin, But still, Not become a Christian?

Absolutely, Absolutely, I'll close with this, I've told you this before, But it's the best illustration, I've ever heard of, These two men, Driving from Columbus to Cleveland, Were having this debate, This argument, Over the, The, The reality of Christianity, And this guy was a, Complete unbeliever, Said, No, I don't believe any of that, Religious hogwash, You know, But I understand you do, And I'd like to hear your arguments, You, You seem like such an intelligent guy, How or, Why would you fall for all that, Religious gobbledygook anyway, I'm talking about, Art Crawford, A physicist, And scientist, Par excellent, He's with the Lord now, And he proceeded to tell him, About the resurrection, Of Jesus Christ from the dead, How it wasn't, A story, It wasn't fabrication, It was real, It was true, It really happened, And by the time he got finished, They pulled in the parking lot, There in Cleveland, Or wherever they were going, This guy says, Looked at, Looked at Art, And he says, You know, I think you're right,

[56 : 17] In fact, You made your case, I believe you're right, Yeah, I think, Yeah, Jesus Christ, I guess he really did, Rise from the dead, He really did come back to life, And Art says, Well, I'm glad to hear you admit that, Because the evidence is there, And he says, And I, I assume now, You want to do something about that, You want to receive Christ as your Savior, Oh, No, No, I don't want to

do anything like that, I don't want to do anything like that, Art said, But you said that you believe that you, And he said, Oh, Yeah, Well, You've convinced me, I've changed my mind about that, I don't want to make any kind of a, Religious commitment, That would mess up my whole life, Now, There was a man, Who repented, But he didn't follow his repentance, And you know what, That guy is a lot worse off, Now, Than before he ever heard the message,

Because now he's got information that he's responsible for, Wow, You can repent, Change your mind, But not make the commitment, Paul, When he left the Ephesian elders there in Acts chapter 19, He parted company, It was a tearful, Tearful parting, And he said, You remember, How that night and day, I preached unto you the truth of God, And I preached and told men, That they should, That they should, Repent, Toward God, And exercise faith, In our Lord Jesus Christ, If you repent toward God, But you don't commit, Or exercise faith in Jesus Christ, You are left dangling, And more responsible now, Than you were before you heard the truth, So it's a dangerous thing, To have information, And not do anything with it, Joe?

I think the Bible tells us that, Everybody's responsible, To knowing God, That there is a God, And should have faith in, In other words, Everybody can be saved, Even if they don't hear, The gospel message, Of death, burial, Resurrection of Christ, Even if they don't hear that, They can still have salvation, And be saved, If they believe in God, Just like the old saints did, The old saints, Abraham, God, Jesus had to go on the cross, They never even heard about Jesus, Being able to go on the cross, And die on the cross, All these early saints, Moses, And Abraham, And all, So, But yet, They went to paradise, Waiting for that time, When Christ would die on the cross, For our sins, They were in paradise, In the center of the earth, And then of course, They went with him, To heaven, They were the captivity ones, That went with him, When Christ went those three days, With the prince, They went with him, They went with him, To heaven, And so, What I'm saying is, People now,

Like in a jungle, Or somewhere, That have never heard the gospel message, They still are responsible, For knowing there's a God, And believing in God, And therefore, You know, He's not speaking to them, Or maybe he is speaking to us, In ways, That we don't realize, That he's speaking, Since we have the message, We don't look for him, Yeah, There is a God, And so, Can't they, They will be saved then as well, If they believe in God, Well, All I know, All I know is this, We do not have the ability, To look into the heart, And mind of anyone, And see what they believe, Or what they are responsible for, Or what they are not responsible for, But I can assure you, The almighty has that ability, God reads the heart, And to me, It is enormously comforting to know, And I believe this with all my heart, That whatever the final state is,

Of anyone, Wherever they are, Whatever they are enjoying, Or whatever they are suffering, It will be, For them, Precisely, Exactly, Totally, As it ought to be, As it ought to be, According to, Whose sense of oughtness, Not yours, Not mine, But it will be in accordance, With God's sense, Of oughtness, So, The final analysis, For everyone, Will be absolutely, Appropriate, And I just can't have, Any argument with that, At all, Because God, Does all things well, And he does them, Right, [61 : 15] And there will not be, Anyone, Anywhere, Who will be able to say, This isn't fair, I don't deserve this, Nobody will be able, To say that, The revelation says, And Paul says, Writing, That every mouth, May be stopped, And everyone, Confess, That Jesus Christ, Is Lord, To the glory, Of God the Father, And even those, Who didn't own him, Will have to admit that, When the time comes, But for them, Of course, It will be too late, Hey guys, Thank you a whole bunch, For being here, And we'll be back, In our regular meeting place, And we'll be back,