

Valentine's Day, 2016

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Date: 14 February 2016

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- [0 : 00] At this time, we'll be taking a look at the description of love in 1 Corinthians chapter 13.
- And we'll be looking at the first seven verses of 1 Corinthians 13. If I speak with tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.
- If I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.
- And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.
- Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous. Love does not brag, and is not arrogant.
- [1 : 27] Does not act unbecomingly. It does not seek its own. Is not provoked. Does not take into account a wrong suffered.
- Does not rejoice in unrighteousness. But rejoices with the truth. Bears all things.
- Believes all things. Excuse me. Believes all things. Hopes all things. And endures all things.
- And by the way, if you would please, while we are in the neighborhood of 1 Corinthians, let us go back just a few pages, and consider what the apostle has to say in 1 Corinthians chapter 6, if you would.
- Back just a couple of pages. This great theme of love has been described as the thing that makes the world go round, and I'm not prepared to dispute that.
- [2 : 37] In fact, I want to solemnly affirm it. It is that which makes the world go round, contrary to what some people think. It isn't money. It's love. And here in 1 Corinthians chapter 6, let's begin reading with verse 9, and we'll see how the apostle Paul further describes the subject of love and what it consists of in the marriage relationship.
- Verse 9, 1 Corinthians chapter 6, Do you not know that the righteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God.
- And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of God.
- All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything. Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both of them.
- Let the body, yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord. And the Lord is for the body. Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through his power.
- [4 : 24] Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot?
- May it never be. And then in verse 16, Paul makes a statement that is, at least on the surface, very enigmatic.

But when you stop and think about it, makes a great deal of sense. And before I read the verse, I just want to say this. There is a whole lot more to a sexual relationship than the physical.

That's something that the world has never been able to appreciate, and probably never will. Yes, the sexual relationship is physical.

But it is so much more than that. And whenever someone is willing to settle for it being nothing but the physical, they really impoverish themselves.

[5 : 30] Verse 16 says, Do you not know? And he says that almost as if, Surely you know this, don't you? I mean, it is an expression, kind of a rhetorical question, that he is assuming everybody knows what he's talking about.

And I don't doubt that those in his audience of nearly 2,000 years ago did. And they understood that and the implications. But today, we don't.

And we are supposed to be the sophisticated, enlightened generation. 2,000 years removed from these people. And yet, the apostle is stating this as if it was a given in his day.

Do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot, a prostitute, is one body with her?

But isn't that the whole idea? Is that why he does it? Is to be joined to this foreign, female, physical flesh, is to be one with her, and derive the physical satisfaction that comes from it.

[6 : 55] Isn't that the basis for the world's oldest profession? Indeed it is. But there is something much more significant that takes place in that union that the physical does not address.

I do not profess to have nearly the handle on this subject or its implications as I would like. But I am satisfied that at least one of the things Paul is talking about here is that when two people are joined together in a sexual relationship, it isn't just physical.

And that's because human beings possess this thing called an immaterial spirit. And there is something else that is involved besides the body.

And it is the spirit, the emotions, the psyche, the whole package of what makes a human being human, both female and male. That's what Paul was getting at.

And that's the thing that this particular generation seems to completely disregard. For the vast majority of those who are engaged in some kind of illicit sexual affair or relationship, for them it is 100% physical, nothing more.

[8 : 24] Nothing personal, ma'am. It's just business. And that's all it is. And those who so engage themselves do so while impoverishing themselves and demeaning the female sex object that they are using and paying.

One who joins himself to a harlot, a prostitute, is one body with her. For he says the two will become one flesh.

Now there are two different ways in which the two become one flesh. And I'm not sure if he was talking about one or the other or possibly both. But when the male and the female come together in physical copulation and they are joined with their sex organs, they become, as it were, one unit.

Oh, there's still two. But the connection is made so that they are one. And if there is what we would call conception that takes place in connection with that, where the male sperm fertilizes the female egg, then there is a third party that is produced as a result of that union of the two.

And the two become one, not only physically as they are joined together, but the two become one in the offspring, the product that is realized from that physical encounter.

[10 : 13] So that between the two of them, they create a whole new human being. And that can also be the one of which he is speaking.

I want to explore this further, and it's going to be necessary for us to go back to Genesis, and then we'll be in Leviticus and Deuteronomy, because that's where the foundation for all of this is laid.

And it is absolutely fascinating. Genesis chapter 2. If you don't have a Bible, perhaps the person next to you has one, and we'll let you look on theirs.

You are a definite disadvantage if you do not have the Scriptures, because you just have to take my word for it. It says what I say it says. Genesis chapter 2 and verse 21.

So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept. Then he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place.

[11 : 16] And the Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib, which he had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. This was a greatly enhanced rib.

Brought her to the man, and he slept. He fashioned into the woman, and he brought her to the man. And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh.

She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. For this cause, a man shall leave his father and his mother, and they shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

That is, in the sexual union, and in the product from the sexual union. And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed. I suppose the only correction, if you can call it a correction, that I would suggest here, is that in the Hebrew, it does not say that he took a rib from the man.

We don't know exactly what it was. It just says that he took something from the side of a man, and I suppose it's possible that it could have been a rib, although at this time, with there being only two people that existed, Adam and Eve, and of course there's an old story that preachers love to tell, that Adam was really late coming home from work one night.

[12 : 59] In fact, he didn't show up until the wee hours of the next morning. And Eve was a little concerned, and having been completely exhausted, he laid down and went to sleep, and she snuggled up beside of him, and all at once she woke him up, and he said, Eve, what are you doing?

And she was caressing his side, and she said, huh? I'm just counting your ribs. Now, if you're a little slow to pick up on that person, the person next to you may be able to explain it, but you know, the Bible talks in a very frank manner about sexuality, and this is something that is absolutely puzzling.

We today are a generation that is probably more inundated with sex, sex, sex, sex, than any generation that has ever lived.

And yet, we have a compelling ignorance about what is actually involved in sexuality. And it absolutely intrigued me that thousands and thousands of years ago, people who lived during Bible times really understood it, and they had a much better handle on it than we do.

And yet, they had a sexuality that was respectful and guarded and all the rest, and today, it is anything goes. We've got recreational sex, we've got kids shacking up together in college dormitories under the approval of the college administrations.

[14 : 46] And this is supposed to be the new sophisticated, enlightened generation. It's pathetic. And there is no generation in humanity that has had more sexual dysfunction and more sexual disease and more sexual complications than this one.

We ought to have a better handle on this than any generation that has ever lived, and we have demonstrated that it's quite the opposite. It is just remarkable.

Let's go, if we may please, to Leviticus chapter 18. Got a couple of other Old Testament passages here. We'll be in Leviticus, and then we'll be a little bit in Deuteronomy.

Leviticus 18. The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, I am the Lord your God.

You shall not do what is done in the land of Egypt where you lived. God's just telling them, I don't want you living like those people lived there in Egypt. You're different from that.

[16:00] You're not to be like that. Nor are you to do what is done in the land of Canaan where I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes.

You, the Israelites, are to perform my judgments and keep my statutes, to live in accord with them. I am the Lord your God. So you shall keep my statutes and my judgments by which a man may live if he does them.

I am the Lord. None of you shall approach any blood relative of his to uncover nakedness. I am the Lord. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, that is, the nakedness of your mother.

She is your mother. You are not to uncover her nakedness. In other words, this is simply God's prohibition against incestuous relationships. And when the term is used, uncover the nakedness thereof, it is a euphemism for having sex with.

it means entering into some kind of sexual activity with this person. And God says, as regards all of those who are your blood relatives, that is off limits.

[17:11] You do not do that. And he put the kibosh on that right here and now. Now, in the beginning, it was not so. To answer the age-old question, where did Cain get his wife, he married a relative.

That is quite obvious. And by the way, do you not know, there's one of Paul's, know you not, you are all related. Everyone beside whom you are sitting is a brother or sister to you in your humanity.

We are all related. We are related to all the rest of the world. We all came from this common ancestor, Adam and Eve. We're all kin. Someone has observed that's why we fight so much.

We're all family. Makes a lot of sense, doesn't it? So here, a prohibition is enacted that originally didn't exist, but once the human race and the gene pool was up and running and multiplying, then God put a prohibition on this, and it is forbidden to marry those who are close relatives.

There's another fascinating passage that indicates they had a lot better handle on things than we do, and that's in Deuteronomy chapter 22. Deuteronomy chapter 22.

[18:31] And for time's sake, we'll just have to jump in with verse 13. If any man takes a wife and goes into her and then turns against her and charges her with shameful deeds and publicly defames her and says, I took this woman, but when I came near her, I did not find her a virgin.

Then the girl's father and her mother shall take and bring out the evidence of the girl's virginity. What in the world is that?

We'll look at it in a moment. The evidence of the girl's virginity to the elders of the city at the gate. And the girl's father shall say to the elders, I gave my daughter to this man for a wife and he turned against her.

And behold, he has charged her with shameful deeds, saying, I did not find your daughter a virgin. But this is the evidence of my daughter's virginity.

And they shall spread the garment before the elders of the city. So the elders of that city shall take the man and chastise him. And they shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver and give it to the girl's father because he publicly defamed virgin of Israel.

[19 : 57] And she shall remain his wife. He cannot divorce her all his days. But if this charge is true that the girl was not found a virgin, then they shall bring out the girl to the doorway shall stone her to death because she has committed an act of folly in Israel by playing the harlot in her father's house.

Thus you shall purge the evil from among you. Wow. So I want you to get the setting.

In the Jewish economy it was extremely important that neither the male nor the female had sexual experience before entering into the relationship.

The idea was that one was to preserve oneself in purity and chastity, save yourself for and to the one person to whom you would be completely committed for life.

Now you can see how that would be looked upon as an absolutely bizarre and for the most part an unacceptable concept for today. Yet they knew that there was something particularly sacred in this sexual act that could result in the production of offspring.

[21 : 32] They held it in a kind of reverence that this generation today knows nothing about. medically speaking, we are told by those who deal with these things, and I'm talking particularly about gynecologists, they are physicians who specialize in women's health and women's disorders and so on, and we're told that in the female, at the entrance or near after the entrance of the vagina, there is a membrane that is spread across there that is called the hymen, H-Y-M-E-N.

and that hymen remains intact, it's kind of like a shield or a membrane, but once the male penis, on the night of the marriage, when the marriage is consummated, when the male penis penetrates the vagina, it comes in contact with that membrane, the hymen, and it tears it, and this produces a small amount of blood which is usually visible on the marriage bed.

This is referred to as the token of her virginity. Now, it could happen, and I'm sure it did happen at times, when a girl's hymen could be damaged or ruptured through some other means apart from sexual intercourse.

I am told by those who are in a position to know that there are certain kinds of strenuous physical activity that a female may engage in that could result in the rupture of that hymen.

Or, there are certain medical kind of conditions in the female body parts that could result in that hymen being compromised and broken so that a certain amount of blood would be released, and it would have nothing to do with her having had sexual relations with anyone.

[23 : 50] It could be an illness, it could be exercise, it could be some kind of a freak accident, but at any rate, there would be the discharge of a small amount of blood. And in the event that this would happen in a girl's home and in her own bed and bed clothing, her parents would immediately take charge of that, and they would extricate that small amount of material that contained their daughter's blood when the hymen was ruptured.

Their maintaining that would be available to show to anyone who needed to know whether or not this girl was a virgin. And apparently what happened in this particular marriage is a scenario similar to what I've described.

This girl in question theoretically, I suppose, because it doesn't say that this is an actual situation, but it very well may have been, married and presented herself to her husband as a virgin, obviously assuring him that she had never had sexual relations.

He probably felt the same way. So, when they came together the night of the marriage for the consummation, and by the way, this is a very, very important thing, particularly in the Jewish setting.

It's something that we recognize takes place, but we don't make the big deal of it. In fact, they made such a big deal of it in the Jewish setting that it was not unusual at all.

[25 : 26] After the wedding ceremony and the vows were expressed and the rabbi had married them, then they would usually go to the father's house and very often, that is, the father of the groom, very often they would have kind of like a honeymoon suite or at least a room set aside for this young couple just married.

And here are all the guests gathered for the celebration, and they're all eating, whining, and dining, and dancing, and enjoying the wedding that has just taken place.

And now, the evening has come, and it is time for the consummation. And here, this new bride and groom walk hand in hand to the marriage chamber, and everybody is witnessing this.

They know exactly what's going to take place. They expect it to take place, and it's no big secret. True, they do it in privacy, just the two of them, and everybody waits outside for this marriage to be consummated.

And by the way, I don't know about other states, but I'm quite confident that here in the state of Ohio, at least, if a couple get married, express their vows, they have a wedding certificate, a license, and everything, church, justice of the peace, whomever marries them so that it's all nice and legal, but for whatever reason, they do not come together physically, sexually, and consummate the marriage.

[26 : 55] You see, that is the final act of the marriage. It's the sexual encounter. It's the consummation. That's what seals the marriage and makes it official.

If they don't do that, for whatever reason, they're not married. And any court, at least in Ohio, will grant them an annulment.

They don't have to get a divorce. It's an annulment, because as far as they were concerned, the marriage was never actualized. And without the sexual act that consummates it, it's just not a done deal.

So either one can opt out of the so-called marriage by demanding an annulment, and they were treated as if they were never married, just because it was not physically consummated.

But in this Jewish setting, the boy and girl would go into the marriage chambers, and everybody knows exactly what they're up to. After all, they've looked forward to this for a long time.

[27 : 57] I can promise you, the guy looked forward to it from the time he was about 12 or 13 years old. And in there, how long does it take for newlyweds to consummate America?

Probably not very long. And when they're finished, the groom comes out, the bride stays in there, the groom comes out, and guess what he's carrying?

He's carrying a piece of cloth that has blood on it, and he's waving it like this to the crowd. See? Everybody, see? And it's stained with blood, and everyone breaks in to applause, and there's a big clapping, because that was proof that the girl was a virgin.

In the case that is before us here, this man expected a blood-stained cloth when he engaged in the sexual relations with his new wife, and there was no blood.

And she said, well, I can explain, and he's not interested, obviously, in an explanation. All he knows is there's supposed to be blood, and there is no blood, so he files a legal kind of suit, and says she presented herself as a virgin, and she isn't a virgin at all, and the truth of the matter is, the guy was really speaking out of place, because as it turned out, the girl's parents had the evidence, they had the token of her virginity, and they were able to produce it, and the two of them swore to it, that this is that which was stained by our daughter when her hymen was broken, and she was only 15 years of age, and then, of course, that changes everything, so that's an entirely kind of different situation.

[29 : 48] Nonetheless, they had a handle on these things that we cannot begin to appreciate. God ordained that the ultimate expression of married love was to be experienced by the couple via sexual intercourse to be enjoyed in a physical, emotional time of euphoria, known as the climax, fitly named.

This climax, or orgasm, as frequently called, is God given and is intended for maximum enjoyment for the couple in married love.

life. The very act and anticipation of it, and the repetition of it, is one of the powerful engines that drives the desire to get married. It's to have sexual relations with the one married, and usually produce children born out of this physical copulation between husband and wife.

In fact, it's how we all got here. And by the way, this is nothing to be ashamed of, unless you're ashamed that you're alive, because this is the way you got here.

And this is ordained of God, it is perfectly natural, and this is the way it is supposed to be. The orgasm is a physical, sexual, emotional, psychological kind of experience or release that has no parallel in the world.

[31 : 15] There's nothing like it. And you would be surprised how many live just for this. And for them, it is just a physical thing and nothing more.

But they are short changing themselves from what it could be and should be. I well remember some things you remember so well because you're not able to forget them and you'd like to, but you can't.

And this, it's hard to believe, but this took place over 50 years ago. And as a fellow preacher, the man would certainly have my sympathy because I know how easy it is to misspeak.

and put my foot in my mouth. It's the more public speaking you do, the greater the potential for saying something you didn't mean to say. And that was the case with this poor man.

And we were in a church service on a Sunday morning and this pastor, whom I will not mention by name, out of professional courtesy. But some of you were there in that audience, you know what I'm talking about.

[32 : 17] and he was waxing eloquent from the pulpit and he was talking about the nature of the body of Christ. And the point that he wished to make was that the spiritual body of Christ was not an organization.

Now, our church, our church is an organization. You know, we have structure, we have elders and leadership, and we have a pastor, and we have a constitution, and we have bylaws, et cetera, and we're recognized by the state of Ohio.

So, it is an organization. But that which makes the body of Christ what it is, is the fact that it is an organism, not an organization.

It is a spiritual organism. And the poor man said, the body of Christ is an orgasm. And I looked at my wife, and she looked at me, and I said, he didn't say what I thought he said, did he?

And she just kind of raised her eyebrows. And anyway, we just suddenly let it go. Well, it wasn't two more minutes into his message, and here it came again. Another orgasm.

[33 : 34] And the teenagers started snickering through the audience. And people were looking around, looking up, looking, and here it came again, third or fourth time, orgasm, orgasm.

And I'm sure that nobody heard whatever else he had to say for the rest of the message. And it was just hilarious. But it's an easy thing to do, and I can fully identify.

I'm sure I don't know if I'm going to identify. But the drive for this orgasm tends to be intensified in the male more than the female.

That doesn't mean that the female doesn't enjoy it and long for it as well. If she's normal, she does. And that, too, is God-given. There's nothing dirty or nasty about it. It's the way our bodies work, and it's the way they were designed to work by God.

With it being more intensified in the male, this naturally produces a desire on the part of the male to pursue the female and take the initiative in the whole process.

[34 : 47] God designed the male to be the initiator and the female to be the responder. And this, by the way, is also why the male proposes marriage to her rather than to the other way around.

But even this has at times been overthrown by the present nutty generation where feminine demands have run amok. Masculinity and femininity constitute distinct characteristics that are hardwired into each of us by our maker.

But like every other good thing that God has given, sexuality is subject to corruption. fallen man has a penchant for turning good things God has given us on their ear.

There isn't anything we have not succeeded in corrupting and abusing. Our sexuality may well be the most pronounced among our several corruptions.

And chiefest among these are abortion, homosexuality, and the so-called same-sex marriage, which is not marriage at all, except in the eyes and the laws of our corrupt courts and legislators.

[36 : 03] And once again, the problem is corruption. Do you realize that abortion on demand is nothing more than the result of pursuing the physical orgasm without accepting the responsibilities that ensue when a child is conceived?

Do you not know that abortion is nothing more than a negative consequence of pursuing the physical orgasm at will with whomever, whenever?

And some would say, that sounds like you're reducing human beings to nothing but an animal. Right. Precisely. It is nothing more than animal-like behavior.

And by the way, has it ever occurred to you that this position and this demand beautifully fits the evolutionary model.

Because if evolution is the answer to origins and God is not necessary, why not? Why not?

[37 : 22] You can't come up with a good answer as to why not. In fact, the evolutionary model will conveniently accommodate anything that a fallen, perverted humanity wants it to.

And the all-descriptive word is whatever. Whatever. Sexual promiscuity is merely another example of the corruption of humanity.

When fornication is denounced, as all biblical preachers are commissioned to denounce it, guilt and remorse are the intended goals of the preaching.

This is called preaching against sin. It's never been popular, and it never will be, but it's something that we are called upon to do.

Preaching against sin and the guilt that ensues then provides a platform for the gospel that provides forgiveness.

[38 : 25] But before there can be any forgiveness, there has to be an ignition and a recognition of sin. In most circles today, fornication and premarital sex, as well as extramarital sex, is regarded entirely different than it used to be.

Our nation has delved deeper and deeper into sexual and moral corruption. The payoff is ruined lives, broken relationships, broken marriages, to say nothing of a half dozen different sexual transmitted diseases that often go with the territory of promiscuity, or so-called recreational sex.

The thinking of many today is that we have come of age psychologically and sexually. The thinking is we recognize sex as a normal human drive that deserves and desires to be satisfied, not repressed.

Only prudes would deny sex apart from marriage. Virgins, by the age of 18, are to be pitied. Poor things. How backward can you be?

Don't you know it isn't healthy to suppress your normal desires for sex? And so it goes. And this, too, of course, all fits perfectly into the evolutionary model of human origins.

[39 : 55] can you not see how and why evolution is at the base of so many of our human problems? Is it too hard to connect the dots with that?

Can you not see these things as being a predictable consequence? A logical consequence? An expected consequence? Of course it is. Animals do it without shame?

And so should we. The moral relativists and social scientists tell us, just pay no mind to those fanatical Bible-thumping religion nut cases who want to deny sexual expressions for all who want them.

An unintended pregnancy is an inconvenience that must not be allowed to thwart sexual encounters and satisfaction, especially when an abortion is readily available.

So just drop by your local Planned Parenthood and they will take care of your problem. And this too beautifully fits the evolutionary model. No God, no guilt, it's only a blob of tissue, not really a baby, not really a human being, not really murder.

[41 : 13] Besides, it's the law of the land and our very highest court said so. partial birth abortion.

You would be amazed how many adults, how many adults don't even know what partial birth abortion is. And you will not see it graphically displayed or described on television.

Do you know why? because it's not tasteful. Not tasteful? It would be upsetting to people.

Do you think it would be upsetting to the victim? What is it about a baby that is ordinarily born first?

What is it that exits the birth canal first? or at least supposed to and in normal cases does? It's the head.

[42 : 22] The head. Here is a baby. Could be full term. Nine months. Ready to be born. The water is broken.

The woman is dilated. And the head, the head starts to make its exit out of her body. And the head is out.

Out. The head is out. The rest is easy. And the abortionist takes a pair of surgical scissors and reaches in and snips the cord in the back of the baby's neck.

And death is immediate. you tell me that is not barbaric savagery insanity.

This is what is going on every day. Every day. And it's addressed as taking care of a problem.

[43 : 44] What has this nation come to? What? Our several national insanities are taking a devastating toll on our nations.

Relationships of marriage are now so risky many fail to even enter into one, opting for the noncommittal living together arrangements. And why are they risky, often failing?

It's due to the trashing of moral values that support the virtues like honesty and faithfulness and unconditional love. This is where we are as a culture.

And this is why, God, I hope it isn't, but this is why, it may already be too late. For a nation to engage in this is one thing, but for a nation to engage in it with the approval and the blessing of our government that is absolutely filthy, rotten to the core.

So, why don't we just wash our hands of such an aberrant culture of this whole whatever generation and just let them go?

[45 : 20] Why don't we just do that? Like Pontius Pilate at the trial of Christ, why don't we just wash our hands of the whole sordid mess and say, I'm going to have anything to do with this.

If that's what they want to do, if that's what they want to be, I'm just backing out. I'm washing my hands of it all. Why don't we just do that? We don't do that because God didn't, and we can't either.

If we truly love our fallen humanity, of which we ourselves are a part, we must seek to rescue them as brands from the burning.

Not only to save the lives of the unborn, but to save those who would go that route. Rescue them as brands from the burning, even though they kick and scream that they don't want our rescue efforts to even come near them.

This unwelcome rejection has been the history of every preacher and prophet God ever raised up, and today is certainly no exception. This crowd views our efforts as trying to force our values upon them.

[46 : 42] Hey, we didn't think these things up. These are not our ideas. These provisions that we preach do not fit the evolutionary model, but they do clearly fit the creation model, and that's why we make a big deal of them, because there are mandates from the creator.

Origins matter, because out of origins flows absolutely everything else, because this is the basis for authority. This has been going on now, since 1973, 1974, and every year that ticks off on the calendar, this nation sinks just a little bit deeper into the moral abyss of ruination, and we are on an accelerated course.

This year, 2016, could be our zero year. I'm not in the least bit interested in trying to be dramatic.

I'm just trying to be as honest as I know how to be. That's the way I read it, and I'm not alone in this. This is America's year.

It's going to be one way or the other. And if those who call themselves Christians do not solidify and start getting behind some right projects and stop turning our backs on the political process because politics is a dirty business and we don't want anything to do with it.

[48 : 42] If you don't get out of that and get involved, at least to the place of where you're willing to vote and vote your values and encourage others to do the same, we are going to fully deserve what we're going to get.

And let me tell you something. We've got it coming. We've earned it. We have been in a do-nothing but a tsk-tsk and wringing our hands and isn't it terrible for far too long.

It's about time for a new American revolution. And it isn't intended to be political. So don't give me that crap about me being too political.

It's intended to be moral and spiritual based on honesty and truth and justice. And it has nothing to do with politics.

And believe you me, the Republican and the Democratic Party both come up really short on those virtues. virtues. That's the stuff that made this nation what it was at the birth.

[49 : 53] And I want to leave you with this quote. It's one I'm sure you've heard before. Bears repetition. Didn't even come from an American. Came from a Frenchman.

Alexis de Tocqueville in the 1800s. Came over to this country and toured it extensively. He was absolutely amazed with what this nation had become in such a few short years.

And he made this observation among many others. And you will find de Tocqueville to be one of the most quoted historians you'll ever find. And this is what he said. America is a great nation because America is good.

good. And if she ever ceases to be good, she will cease to be great. And that's where we are.

We're not a great nation anymore. No. No. And no, I'm just as patriotic as the next guy. And I don't begrudge one day of my three years service in the army and I'd do it over again.

[51 : 07] I love this country. And that's why I'm telling you what I'm telling you. But we are not a great country because we are no longer a good country.

And we haven't been for a long, long time. Can it be turned around? Absolutely.

It's possible. Will it be? I don't know. I don't know. It's very, very difficult to be optimistic when you're confronted with the realities that we see all around us.

It just depends on whether enough of America, whether enough of those who say they embrace the values that we've been talking about. And again, let me divorce this from politics.

I'm talking about truth, talking about honesty, integrity, justice, commitment. those things are not political.

[52 : 08] They are desperately in short supply, especially in Washington, D.C. Yeah. I told you this Valentine's message would be different, didn't I?

Okay. Let's stand, shall we? Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Our Father, we would like Daniel of old go before you and confess our own sin and confess the sins of our nation.

Admit that we are a nation that has greatly erred and strayed from the original roots that sprung up when this nation came into being.

We have abandoned them. We have secularized our culture. We have dehumanized humanity with abortion on demand, people of the same sex demanding marriage, fornication being rampant, all that goes with it.

All of these things and more have served as an albatross around the neck of this great nation and would pull us down. Would you be pleased to so inflame your people that we will no longer be willing to just stand aside and say, somebody ought to do something, and isn't it terrible?

[54 : 05] And may we be a congregation of individuals who are willing to say, Lord, I confess I don't know what to do, but I'm willing to do whatever you may lead me to do.

I want to be available to you because righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. In the midst of it all, we recognize with the new sense of thanksgiving the glorious gospel that Jesus Christ has committed unto us by providing it through his own death, burial, and resurrection that gives us a basis for hope, and we can preach this gospel and people can believe it and have their lives changed and their eternal destiny altered.

We are so grateful for that. But first, we have to reveal that there is a need for that, and the need is our sin, because Christ died for our sin.

He didn't just die, he died for our sin in our place. We need to recognize that, we need to proclaim it, make sure others understand it, because apart from that reality, there's no need for a Savior.

Thank you for such a glorious Savior that we have, his wonderful name. Amen. Amen. Mm-hmm.