

Marv's Final Message Part 3

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[0 : 0 0] We are engaged in, I guess we would say, a kind of summation here of my ministry wrapping up, in that my goal is to leave you with as many, even though there are not many, but as many really important biblical concepts that escape many people, and yet they are so valuable and so important and so life-changing.

I just feel deeply constrained to leave these things with you with the hope that you can better absorb them. Some of the things we will be sharing you already know.

You could communicate them perhaps as well as I, but I feel a burden to leave these truths with you so that even if you already know them, they will simply reinforce what is already there because it is so very, very important.

And the reason it is so important is because it not only impacts your life here and now by way of understanding, appreciation, and decisions that you make, but it impacts your eternity.

Because your eternity is going to be largely related to your lifestyle here on this earth. Granted, a whole lot of things are going to be different and everything, but the subject of rewards and acknowledgement and well-pleasing from the Lord and all of that is going to be tied in with your understanding of these things because you cannot act on what you do not understand.

[1 : 5 4] Nobody can. So that's why information is so critical. And every time a preacher comes to a pulpit, his main responsibility is to just discharge information.

And what people do with the information, there's that volition thing again. You either go with it and you buy it, you reject it, you alter it, or you do something with it because when you get information, it comes into your mind, it immediately sets up a mental process.

You evaluate. You estimate it. You ask yourself, is this stuff true or is it not?

Does this compute with my understanding of things or does it completely go against it? And if it completely goes against my common understanding, could it be that my common understanding is wrong?

Or could it be the information that the preacher is giving out is wrong? So you're charged with the responsibility of assessing and evaluating and reaching a conclusion because the conclusion you reach will determine the action that you take.

[3 : 1 2] It's a very simple process and it's one that goes on all the time. Frequently, mostly, unconscious to us, we just do it automatic. It's just part of living. That's the way it is.

So that makes information so very critical. And what we are talking about this morning has to do with the origin of information that so tremendously impacted the entire world and still does today.

And the only question that remains about this information is its validity. Can it even be verified?

Can it be actually determined one way or another so that there's no maybe, but there's a definite answer to it?

I think that one of the greatest tragedies that can ever occur, maybe the greatest tragedy, in the life of any human being is to have been born and grow to adulthood.

[4 : 37] And grow to adulthood. And find a mate and marry. And beget children.

And live long enough to see your grandchildren. And retire from your employment. And go on into retirement. And eventually, you're gone.

And you never did know what it was all about. That is a tragedy.

To have lived a life crammed full, just crammed full, of little issues.

I know, I know some of them seem really big, and many of them are a lot bigger than others, and all the rest. Yeah, I give you that. Small and big issues. But by and large, we just get so engrossed with this thing we call life, and making a living, and keeping a household, and doing, and going through all of those responsibilities.

[5 : 55] They are the little picture. They're important. They're important. But they are what we call the little pictures. And we're so engrossed in them that we don't even know, or care, that there is a big picture.

You just wonder how many there are like that. Have no idea. And many reflect to quote a funny old saying a couple comedians had when one said to the other, you know, the experts tell us that two of the greatest problems that people deal with today is ignorance and apathy.

What do you think of that? And the guy said, I don't know, and I don't care. You just wonder how many there are living around us today who have that same attitude.

I don't know, and I don't care. I have to worry about bigger things, like, what am I going to have for dinner tonight? Or what's on television? That's even worse.

So, what we are talking about now has to do with understanding the confusing, chaotic time that this world underwent in which I believe, and this is just a Wiseman opinion, you can take it or leave it, but I believe it was the most confusing, chaotic time in the history of humanity because what happened is that God stepped into the picture in a way that he had never been involved before and changed absolutely everything.

[7 : 49] Just a major overhaul. I mean, it was so radical and so different that the individual who was challenged and commissioned to preach it had an uphill battle all the way and he paid for it with his life because the world was not all that receptive to it and you know what?

It still isn't. Nothing has changed and the reason is because of what we read in Romans 1 about the foolish heart being darkened.

That's why it hasn't changed and the catalyst for this change, the pinpoint in history that significant place that is so dominant is referred to in the Gospels and it concludes the Gospels and it opens with it in the book of Acts and we're in, we're right on the cusp of this enormous change and I would ask you to turn if we may first of all to, well, let's see, there are so many places so much and so little time.

Let's go to Romans chapter 3. Romans chapter 3 and what we are discussing even though it is found in Romans it's more or less the result of what is in the book of Acts but the book of Acts is that really pivotal place and let me take just a moment and I know this is boring as all get out to grace people because you've heard it before but let me repeat it, it's important.

This is a period in history that connects the four Gospels with the epistles or the letters. It is a bridge, the book of Acts is a bridge and it scans a time period I used to tell you 30 years but I've rethought that and restudied that and I'm more persuaded than ever that it's a span of about 35 to 40 years.

[10:17] That's how much time is involved in the book of Acts from chapter 1 to chapter 28 but we never think of it that way because you can read the whole thing in a half an hour or 45 minutes depending on how fast you read and we lose sight of the fact that this thing is recounting the events that transpired over about four decades and here's the problem.

Here's what we have. We have doctrine on the move. Is there anything that is harder to hit than a moving target?

And that's what's happening in the book of Acts. It is a book of transition. It is moving from one thing to another.

It is moving from something that had been in place for what 16 1500 1600 years something like that called Judaism and it began with Moses on Mount Sinai and the giving of the law and it was given exclusively to Israel it was given to show Israel the kind of God that they were serving and it was given also to reveal to them that there was no way that they could become pleasing and acceptable to this God whose badge is perfection while they are in their sin and yet because of God's love for them he still made a way whereby he could overlook Acts refers to it as God winked at their sin.

I still don't get a handle on that. And the Israelites were instructed to institute a system of sacrifice but it wasn't to be like the heathen around them some of whom sacrificed their own young unthinkable as that may be but then again those that they sacrificed were their children as abhorrent and barbaric as that was they did Ruth's people Ruth's ancestors and Ruth's people in Moab where she lived they were engaged in sacrifice to Molech a false god and

[13:10] God made provision for sacrifice to atone for not to take away not to take away not to remove but to cover the sins of his people and this was to be through animal sacrifice and all animal sacrifice was designed to do was show to the Israelites that in and of themselves and because of their sin there was no way that they could pay for it and the sacrifice of an innocent animal was accepted by God to atone for or to cover over the sins of the nation for one year and that was on the day of atonement and then the next year they had to go through the whole thing all over again that was the establishment of the first covenant and when Moses came down from the mount he had those tables of the law and he told the people this is what God requires of you what do you think and the people said you go back up there and you tell God all that he has said we will do so Moses said okay he told God you got a deal these people say if you'll be their

God they'll be your people and you'll protect them and look out for them and so on and so on and how are we going to finalize this thing and the Lord says it has to be finalized with blood now what's the big deal about blood anyway blood is life blood is life giving blood is important very important so he was told to take the blood of animals and sprinkle it on the tablets of law and sprinkle it on the people and that symbolized the closing of the deal that was their equivalent of signing on the dotted line and they did it with animal blood that was the establishment of the law of Moses now Moses didn't originate it but it came through Moses and he delivered it to the people and then the night that Jesus was betrayed he took a cup and he held the cup up and he told his twelve apostles eleven

Judas had already gone he told them this cup is the new covenant in my blood I would love to have seen the expression on those apostles faces they looked at each other and said what what is what is what is he talking about this cup represents the new covenant in my blood and the writer of Hebrews tells us it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin that's why it required the blood of a sinless sacrifice and that's where Jesus came in he was the only one out of all of humanity the only one who came in to the world without the taint of sin he's called the sinless son of

God and the angel told Mary that holy thing that shall be born of thee be the son of God and his name will be the highest and so on so he came forth as an utterly innocent sacrifice and because of who he was being deity in the flesh God was in Christ reconciling the world into himself and the text says that in John's gospel chapter 1 and the word he's described as the word the essence the communication of God and he says and the word became flesh Jesus in the flesh and dwelt among us and how do you think he performed all of those miracles it was only because he was in charge of all of the laws that govern the miracles and he could transcend them anytime he wanted to because he was the creator

God healing someone who was blind was not a problem to him he's the one that made the eyes he's the creator and we do not understand how he is the creator because we think that the father is the creator but the son is the creator and the father is the creator read Colossians 1 and in Genesis 1 the holy spirit is a creator who brooded over the face of the deep so we've got all members of this triune godhead and how can there be a triune godhead how can there be three individuals comprise this thing called the being of god and yet there are not three gods there is just one god how do you compute that well you don't so deal with it you can't compute that with human mathematics it doesn't work it just doesn't work do you know what that suggests something we all don't know it suggests that god lives functions operates thinks on an entirely different plane than what we do and when we read something like three and one one and three that does not make any sense and because

[19 : 08] I have applied my superior intellect to that issue I just rule it out of bounds doesn't make any sense and we reject it that's because we tend to think we are our own authority we like to dabble in that issue there's no truth to it but it makes us feel good it makes us feel important and in charge to think that we are the authority about anything I'll tell you what the longer I live the more I have become persuaded I'm not the authority on anything beginning with me so that's the bitter truth so we've got a trinitarian concept of God and in this trinitarian concept the son of God and we can't call him Jesus because he wasn't

Jesus until he was born in the body when the angel told Mary you shall call his name Jesus Yeshua which means Savior deliver for he shall save his people from their sin and in this being who performed all of these wonderful miracles and we've got 33 of them I think recorded in the gospels and John tells us when he closes out his gospel John tells us and many other signs or miracles did Jesus in the presence of his disciples which are not recorded in this book but these are recorded so that you may know that Jesus is the Christ the son of God and that in believing you may have life through his name so he has this flourishing delivery of miracles from raising the dead and healing the lepers and giving sight to the blind and deaf to the hearing and all of these wonderful things only because of who he was he is deity but he is coupled with humanity he is the the the anthropic person who existed that has never been duplicated in either before or after he's totally unique in every way there is something about

Jesus that is divine there is something about Jesus that is human and they are both real and legitimate and they are incorporated into one being and none of us can begin to understand how that can be but it is so deal with it we are operating on a plane that transcends our humanity and in that makeup in that body this one allowed himself to become the sacrifice rather than animals and because of his personage because of his status as the God man the value that was residing within his person when he was poured out unto death exceeded the value of the billions that's with a

B for whom he died can you get your brain around that well if you can I wish you would explain it to me but that's what the scriptures are saying God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself didn't leave out anybody and the point I want to emphasize that I've emphasized in the past the death that Jesus Christ died on that cross removed the sin barrier from every single individual so that does not mean all are saved it means all are savable big difference what makes the difference ah there's that volition thing again there are those who reject that salvation they reject the price that

Christ paid for them and there are basically two kinds of people who reject the gospel one who says I don't need that because I'm not that bad and the other who says I can't have that because I'm too bad go figure but this is the way people think this is where they are one sees himself behind beyond the salvation of God because God would never want anything to do with me you don't have any idea what I've done you don't have any idea what a scoundrel I've been and because of that God wouldn't have anything to do with me listen that is exactly the kind of person that God is looking for that is exactly the kind of person that God wants to embrace and be able to call his own and what's to prevent that there's that volition thing again God is a gentleman he doesn't go around just grabbing people against their will he presents something to them a proposition and he respects the will he has given them by allowing them to exercise it it's an awesome thing to think that there are people who can tell

[25 : 29] God thank you but no thanks but there are and God respects that otherwise this whole volition thing is a crock but it's real and then for the person who thinks they are too good and they don't need that let's go to Romans chapter 3 and verse 19 now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God because by the works of the law no flesh no human being will be justified or declared righteous in God's sight for through the law and this is of course referring to the law of Moses comes the knowledge of sin but now would you look at those two words there is a huge contrast that is being introduced but now but now but what's the big deal about but now what does he mean by but now he's what he's saying is something has happened to radically change the way it was in the past and the way it was in the past is what we just read but now something has taken place that has just exploded into being and changed everything what was it now apart from the law having nothing to do with the law or law keeping the righteousness of

God has been manifested how so what does that mean the righteousness of God the perfection of God has been manifested it means it has been put on display it has been shown it has been made a public spectacle what was the manifestation it was Jesus on the cross that's the manifestation that's the display that's the but now that's what changes everything this is the focal point of the universe this is what everything literally boils down to this was the centerpiece of the universe of all time it's the cross this is why the apostle Paul said when he wrote to the Corinthians I determined to know nothing among you except

Jesus Christ and him crucified why because that's the only thing that really matters that's the game changer that's everything and that's everything with a capital E how do you relate to that everything does that figure into your life into your value system we are talking about that as opposed to everything else nothing else matters this is it this is why Jesus could say I am the way the truth the life what else matters the way the truth and the life everything is embodied in him he is before all things and by him all things consist and Colossians tells us that he is the depository of all wisdom and what you have to decide what everybody has to decide is is this true or is it just a bunch of religious bunkum it's one or the other it is the greatest truth that ever was promulgated or it is the greatest lie and deception that was ever perpetrated upon humanity there is no way that you can have a middle ground for that gotta be one or the other make your choice but you better choose well this is exactly what it boils down to this is life's issue this is the ultimate recently we made a CD called the ultimate issue and as it began we noted actually it was done in connection with our 50th anniversary as a congregation and I thought

I ought to do something about so I did this issue called the ultimate issue and in it the observation was made and I began with it in fact that the existence of God cannot be exclusively proved or disproved and that has pretty much been the position for a long long time cannot be proved or disproved and then the observation was made until now until now what is the until now what has changed and the answer quite simply is this the space program well what in the world does the space program have to do with any of this only everything that's all only everything because in connection with the space program our brainy mathematicians had to engage in all kinds of calculations and determinations mathematically that were not even necessary before but the space program made them necessary because a whole bunch of things came into play as a result of sending a human being into space and we'd never been there before and we had never plumbed the depths of what was involved before because we didn't need to but the space program demanded that so the best and the brightest got to work on this and they came up with the most incredible absolutely amazing conclusions that are not based on faith they're not based on opinion they are based on mathematics and I make a distinction between being able to conclusively prove that

God exists or does not exist I'm going to close with this observation and by that I mean in order to conclusively prove that God exists all contrary ideas and objections have to be eliminated well you're not going to find that happening in this world because the moment you come up and present this to the atheists they've got an answer and their answer is well now what you're talking about is in connection with this universe but who is to say that we are not just one of a multiverse that there are many many other universes out there and the statistics that you're giving to prove the existence of God just happens to apply to this particular universe but there could be many other universes as well so in other words they simply will not concede no matter what because it's just not in them because the moment you concede that there is a

[33 : 47] God then they have to stop being God and that doesn't work in their game plan so what you have to examine is the end game and when I say cannot be conclusively proved to this day is as long as the opposition has an objection it is not conclusively proved but the time is coming according to Revelation chapter 19 which will not take time to go to the time is coming when there will be a conclusive proof and those who are deniers and have been deniers will not be in a position to deny any longer because the evidence will be there in front of them when they see him coming then they will know and they will mourn because they were wrong and it will cost them everything then it will be conclusively proved so where all of this comes down to is simply this how does it affect you

Romans 3 tells us but now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been manifested being witnessed by the law and the prophets even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe for there is no distinction and what Paul is going to have to preach is something that is going to be a hard sell you would not think would you that good news could be a hard sell it ought to be the easiest thing to propagate that anybody could possibly find but it isn't and so much is it a hard sell that it receives opposition on every hand and this gospel this good news of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ cost the apostle Paul his life for proclaiming it and it has cost countless thousands maybe many more than that their lives as well for proclaiming it standing for it refusing to deny it so all of this comes down to this where are you with this what's your position and if you don't buy any of this that's entirely your decision you've got that free moral agent that volition thing you don't have to buy a thing

I've said that preacher is just whistling dixie you can scrap it all if you want but for the sake of intellectual honesty you ought to have a better alternate what is it or you somebody said well I've got my own ideas I'm just going to wing it well you know what you can do that you can do that but if you do and if you insist on maintaining it the time will come when you're going to remember this morning and you had opportunity to make a different decision don't want you to have regrets when that time comes may we pray together father there still remains so very much of what we've been talking about that we don't understand we've got so many loose ends to so many things about this world and about the next world and we readily admit them and it makes us all the more grateful that you have simplified what really is required of you so that a child need not err therein life itself along with the scriptures make it so clear that we are all fallen frail human beings we all have a list of things that we would love to do over say over be over we can't undo them we all have regrets in our past and yet because of incomprehensible love for us for those of us to whom you've given volition will and so many times that we have abused and misused it how can you love us in light of that we don't know but you do and we are so grateful that you do we are so far from understanding your great loving heart and your willingness to be made sin for us you who knew no sin so that we might be made the very righteousness in God by being given a standing that is legal and forensic and full and will stand up in the law court of heaven we marvel at that and our prayer is that everyone here would be a partaker of it so in this closing moment our invitation is to those of you any of you all of you to simply go through the steps that are required the first of which is we have to admit we are far from perfect we are flawed the bible says we are all sinners every one of us big sinners little sinners medium sized we're all sinners we are all less perfect than God and yet your standard is such that you cannot allow anything other than perfection in your presence and we don't have that but if you're willing to give it to us and clothe us in it then we would have it and that's the only way we can get it so right now dear friend if you would simply acknowledge your own

failing and flaws and acknowledge that Jesus Christ died to do for you what you could not do for yourself you recognize him as the centerpiece of the universe that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son so that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life we want that to be true of everyone here maybe it already is maybe you've already made that decision but for that one person perhaps who has not this is your opportunity and if you would simply say dear God I recognize that I'm like everybody else I'm a sinner and I'm flawed and I'm so grateful that Jesus Christ was willing to overlook my sin by dying for it and giving me his eternal life and as best as I know how with my still questions and doubts and fears as best as I know how

I want to believe on and receive Jesus Christ as my savior I want to open my life to him and invite him in to make me what he wants me to be here am I thank you for doing for me what I could never do for myself dear friend if you've made that your prayer let someone else know so that they can encourage you perhaps another person who is a believer be people available that you can talk to including myself after the service dismisses and any and all of them would be more than happy to share with you and we have some literature that we'd like to give you too as well so make yourself known if you've made a decision and we can be of encouragement to you thank you for the mourning our father and thank you for the precious truth that we've been privileged to proclaim in Christ's wonderful name amen