

It's good to see you. You look good. I haven't seen some of you since Christmas Eve, but I'm not bitter. I'm just glad you're back. Let's get to work. I want to answer the question, that's what I want to answer. And it is the question that's haunting. It's the question that seems for the most part to never go away, and it's the question I think gets the most butchered when it comes to being answered. The question that I want to address in our time together this morning is why you're here. And I don't mean why you're here in regards to why you're here at this church, why you're here this Sunday morning. I don't want to get into that. I don't pretend to even be able to cover all of that in this time. There are some of you here because you really love the Lord. There are some of you here, this is a family tradition. There are some of you here because you're simply religious. There are some of you here that got guilted in here. I mean, we're all over the map when it comes to why we're here, so I don't want to address why you're here in that regard. I want to address why you exist, why you're here, why you live and breathe, why you're on this earth. I want to try to answer the age old question of "what do we exist for?" And if you've got any life under your belt or you're a studier or a thinker at all, there are a lot of answers to this. There are those that say, "Well, it's really simple. I live to lead a good life and to love my family well and to provide and to do good." And I would not disagree with that. I would not disagree with that as long as you don't try to make that ultimate. Yes, you do exist to do some of those things, but those are an outside, a piece of, a flower of a different root. And so I want to address it because I think the Church historically has not done a good job of telling you why you're here—you in regards to those of you who are believers and you in regards to those in this place who aren't believers.

Historically, what's happened is we've said, "God created mankind for fellowship." Now there's some problems with this, and I'll even step outside of just the fact that the Bible doesn't teach that, which seems a little silly. I want to address a couple of things. If we want to believe and say that God created us for simple fellowship, then there's some problems with what that reveals to us about the character and nature of God. If God created you and I for fellowship, then that means He, in and of Himself, the triune God, is not sufficient and is not sustaining. In other words, somewhere in the middle of the Trinity there was some loneliness. This is problematic because if you've ever been around lonely people, they're somewhat scary. So you make the God of the universe foundationally lonely—that's a terrifying idea to me. Because now you're not just talking about getting your car keyed; you're talking a hole ripped in the universe. So that's problem number one with this idea, outside of the major issue of it not being scriptural. Problem number two is that God then, if this is true, solved His loneliness by creating billions and billions of people who have no intention or no inclination of having an active relationship with Him. So not only is He lonely, but He's kind of dumb, in that He cannot solve His own problem. This is problematic. If you've got a lonely God who cannot solve His own problem, then how in the world is He going to step in and engage and bring about salvation for mankind? Which is why the Bible doesn't say He created us for fellowship—because He's sustaining, the triune God, perfect, sustaining in and of Himself. He does not need other relationships to make Him happy. This is a really strange, weird, I think, self-esteem kind of idea. It makes us feel better about us.

So, here's what I contend this morning, and we'll speak religiously and non-religiously. You were created for, designed for, wired for, given eyes for, ears for, a brain for, the ability to touch, smell and taste for one thing. Ready? Simple. Worship. Now, don't think singing. Song guys have hijacked that word. It is not theirs. "Join me in worship." Uh uh, I'll join you in singing, and maybe some of us will worship. Think about this. Deeply inside of all of us there is a driving force that wants us to be around things, watch things and experience things on which we can heap praise. Let's just take our

culture. I think this plays out in every culture on earth, but let's just take ours. This afternoon, grown men will scream at their televisions in the hopes that their brackets will stay somewhat intact. We are emotionally affected, stirred up and depressed by whether or not an 18-year-old boy can make an outside shot. So that's face value, but what's behind it? What's behind Americans spending billions and billions and billions of dollars every year to watch 18-to-25-year-old men play a game? Worship. Go to a sporting event. What do we do? Shout, clap, scream, cry. I was living in Houston when the Rockets went to the finals. And I got to go to game 7 against the Phoenix Suns, and Mario Elie hit the three out of the corner. Do you guys remember that? Those of you who follow basketball—he hit the three, and the room just blew up. I got the chills. I don't even care. I'm not from Houston. I don't care about Houston. I think it's a horrible little city. I always feel like I'm sweating there. I don't know what's wrong with that city. Anyway, I'm out. There are so many people that podcast us down there. "You dog!" It's just a horrible little city. Now, he hit the shot, and the place went nuts. I had the chills. I was like, "Yeah!" and I didn't even care. It was just this moment of worship. When you get out of here, when I finally let you out, go and rent any DVD of a live concert. I don't care what kind of music. I don't care—any. Do you know what you're going to see? Clapping. Do you know that the Bible calls clapping worship? Hands raised—the Bible calls that worship. Shouting—God calls that worship. And I know we have historic Southern Baptist roots—but dancing. And unfortunately here's the problem with my Baptist brother that I have issue with all the time. So heartily battle for the inerrancy of Scripture but then don't want to talk about parts of it. "Let us praise His name with...dancing." Uh oh. So what have you got? You've got worship, worship, worship, worship, worship. We've got to do it. It's wired within us. We're hardwired for it. We've got to do it. And where worship terminates, the souls starts to shrivel, and we get frustrated. Now the problem with this is it appears that there is nothing big enough and sustaining enough to hold our worship for long. So we have lulls in which there is nothing sustaining to worship. Or we have these things that at one time we worshiped, at one time inspired awe, at one time stirred us up—I'm not talking religiously—that have just kind of lost their awe.

I'll give you two examples. Two years ago, we got called from a church in San Diego that wanted to fly me and a couple of the pastors out. So we hopped on a plane, and we flew to San Diego, one of the most beautiful places on earth. One of the things I love about living in Dallas is everywhere you go is just beautiful. It's true. You can get mad if you want. Everywhere you go, you're like, "This is just unreal!" That's because you live in Dallas. Now, we got off the plane in San Diego—it's just unbelievable. The last day we were there, Thursday morning, me and Patterson, Doug, Josh Drew—four or five of us—we drove to Del Mar. And on the beach in Del Mar is a restaurant called Poseidon's. And it has a patio that goes out onto the sand. And so we went to Poseidon's, and we ordered breakfast. And we're sitting out there in June, on a patio, eating breakfast at like 11:00. The Pacific Ocean roaring to the right, the hill to our left—just unbelievably beautiful, awe inspiring, perfect temperature, nobody combusting in flames like they do back in Dallas. I mean just perfect, so perfect I couldn't hardly eat. We've got our food there, and we're just drinking it in. But here's what we noticed: no one else was. The lady next to me is complaining about her eggs Benedict. These guys are talking about business. No one is drinking in the Pacific with its deep blue waters, the gentle breeze off of it, the perfect temperature. Nobody's drinking it in. They've already lost it. It's just Thursday morning; that's all it is. We just got back from Seattle, where we were for a week. There were five straight days that we were in Seattle in the month of February where it was crystal clear. If you know anything about Seattle, I mean I thought Jesus was coming. I was like, "This is weird. Everybody get right. About to crack open the sky, come back. Everybody repent." I was nervous. The whole town was like, "Global something's going on here." It was just strange, and it was beautiful. You could see Mt. Rainier the whole time we were there. All you had to do was look up, and there it was, Mt. Rainier, one of the largest peaks in North America—it's just there. And so we're geeking it up like you wouldn't believe. We were taking pictures with it in the background, acting like we're pushing it out of the way and get the picture. And we're doing all these things, but nobody else cares. Everybody else is working. So it seems like these things that are so beautiful and so rich and so awe inspiring lose their weight. And if you'll think back on your life, how often your hope for sustained worship and sustained freedom is a future happening and rarely a present reality. So if you think back on life, it's when this happens, then you'll get there. And you get there, well, it's lacking. It sustains for a little bit. I mean, it's good for like a couple weeks, a couple months or maybe a year

or so, and then it loses it. And so you've got to have this next thing, you've got to have this next thing; and you've got to have this next thing. And all I'm saying here is that the things we're trying to worship, although they can incite that worship in us, they just don't seem to be able to sustain it for very long.

Okay, so you're at church on Sunday morning, Easter Sunday morning. I think you probably know where I'm going with this. I don't think that there's too many of you on the edge of your seat going, "Where's he headed? I don't know. What could be this ultimate thing, this thing that we could heap worship upon, that could just receive it for eternity? I have no idea where he's going." I will contend not only that you were created for worship—and let me say this before we progress. Because I had a really hate/hate relationship with the Church for a long time, despite the fact that I fell in love with Jesus. And here was my problem. I came to church and heard that God hated liars. Now do you know why that's problematic? I'm a liar. That God hated the adulteress, those who have idols other than Him. Strike two. And so here I'm sitting in church, although I love Jesus, I want to know Jesus, all I keep hearing is that God doesn't like people like me. If God creating for fellowship has implications about the character and nature of God, Him creating you for worship has implications about the character and nature of God, namely that God is not after your begrudging submission, but rather your joy. If worship, the stirring of our affections and our heart to an overflow is the goal of God in your life, that's a very different God than the one I grew up with, the one I grew up hearing about for sure. Now, for us to walk in and experience the type of worship, that sustaining, big worship that we were designed to walk in, you've got to grasp two things well. And if you don't grasp either one of these, your ability to worship and the level at which you can worship and experience joy are deeply affected. And it really fits well with where we are this weekend, because one of them's a Friday issue, and one of them's a Sunday issue.

Let's read Romans 4, starting in verse 23. In this text, I'll catch you up. God has called Abraham righteous, despite the fact that Abraham is not righteous. Let me give you an example. When you're afraid that you might get killed so you sell off your wife—not righteous. Men, if for some reason you find yourself in this situation, just get killed. Because if you both survive, you're going to hear about that for the rest of your life. Here we go, verse 23. "But the words 'it was counted to him' were not written for his sake alone..." So God says of Abraham, "It was counted to him as righteousness," which means he was not righteous, but God saw him as righteous. Now that's good news if you're unrighteous. Verse 24. "...but for ours also. It will be counted to us..." So now righteousness is "counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead, Jesus our Lord..." Verse 25 is the key. "...who was delivered up for our trespasses [Friday] and raised for our justification [Sunday]." Now if you want, go ahead and flip to Romans 1. I try to keep my ear to the ground in popular media in what the world thinks has gone wrong in us, humanity. And this is not just a religious problem, guys. Everyone has opinions on what's gone wrong in us. There are those that say the environment is the issue—not sun, wind, rain—not that environment—but rather we are born into a home that has issues, that creates issues. So the environment's the issue, the environment is why we're unfulfilled. Some say religion is the issue, that religion sets the bar so high that it perpetually makes everybody frustrated. Here's my favorite one; this one is legit. I just saw it on National Geographic about a month ago. The problem, why we're unfulfilled and why we're frustrated is that we just haven't embraced our role in the animal kingdom. And if we would just realize that we are animals like the rest of the animals, then we would live very well and deeply. And here was their illustration, and I promise you I'm not making this up. You can't make this stuff up. Their illustration—they would take like ethical, moral belief systems that humans embrace, and they would take them and they would apply them over the animal kingdom. And they would go, "See, doesn't work." My favorite was they took monogamy, and they laid it across a group of wild pack dogs in Africa. And they said, "There's no monogamy here. See? We have elevated ourselves so high that we've got these ethics and morals, and if we would just..." And you're like, "Seriously? Pack dogs?" I mean, not even like majestic animals, not even like lions or tigers or just something that we look at and go, "Oh!" Wild dogs—we're taking moral cues from dogs? Have you owned one? Have you owned a dog? Oh, I know, Bootsie, your dog, is different, but if you've owned a dog—I don't think I need to go any farther here. You don't take moral cues from dogs. It's a ridiculous idea. Do you know how I know this is true? Let a dog attack a kid in your

neighborhood. Do they get therapy? Do they get talked to? Do we sit them down and go, "You know what? It's evident that your mother weaned you too quickly. And then your other brother was killed by a Doberman. I mean, this is not your fault. Go, you're free." No man, we shoot that dog. If a dog attacks a kid, he's gone. That's true; I'm not making that up. Gorilla jumps out the cage—pow! It's satire, isn't it? Are you serious? We're saying, "Look at the dogs. We should be more like the dogs." No, we shouldn't. So there are those who are like, "Here's the problem: We haven't embraced our place in the food chain." Almost all of them are strange.

And listen, I don't think the Church has done well in definition. I think they've done well in word, but I don't think they've done well in definition. The Church would say that the problem with humanity is a sin issue. Now, I would absolutely agree with that. The Bible agrees with that. That is solid teaching. But here's where it starts to get strange. If you ask Christians to define sin, they will almost always give you a list of actions, which that's correct to a point, but it's not going to bring about a solution to the problem. Here's what I mean. If the problem with humanity is a list of immoral behaviors, if that's all it is, then you don't need a Savior. You don't need Jesus to die on the cross— you just need to do better. Right now, you have weeds in your lawn. It doesn't matter what you're spraying on there. It doesn't matter. For some of you, that is your lawn. But most of us, we just have a weed here, a weed there. You can get the mower and you can run over that weed; and then the yard looks great. But what happens two days later? It's back with friends. The problem with saying lust is the issue, anger is the issue, is that if you start just working—all I've got to do then is fix this lust. All I've got to do then is fix this thing. And that's what you've got—churches packed with people working on symptoms, rather than treating the disease. And so we've got to look at what the nature of what's gone wrong is if we have any real hope of worshiping like we were created to worship, which takes us to Romans 1. Let's look at it. We'll pick it up in verse 22. "Claiming to be wise, they became fools..." This is talking about you and I. "...and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles." Let me give you the root cause of most of those external sins that the Church has historically said these are unacceptable. The root cause is that you and I, all of us, every one of us—me, the elders here, you, everyone you know, everyone on the planet—has taken what is big enough and sustaining enough and sufficient enough to be worshiped consistently, constantly, always, forever, and we've taken our worship off of Him—and we've placed it on His stuff. We have preferred created things to the Creator. Now think about sin. What happens, is because you were built out to worship, because you have a longing to worship, because you can't help yourself but worship, you take your eyes off of who is meant to be worshiped and you start chasing something else—it's going to go bad. You start going, "Oh, women." You start going, "Oh, money." You start going, "Stuff." You start going, "Status." You start worshiping those things. Those are your pursuit. Those are primary. Those are what you want. Well, since they can't sustain worship, it's going to lead you into sin. Because you'll have a woman and guess what? It's not sustaining, so you're going to move on to the next one, then to the next one, then to the next one, looking for the mythical "one." Or you're going to go, "Oh, I just need to get to this tax bracket." And you'll get there but guess what? You'll then become greedy, begin to hoard. This is what happens. That's how sin occurs. Because worship, where it's meant to be put on, placed on, heaped upon God, is then taken and put on other things that can't sustain. And so we end up chasing them and chasing them and chasing them until we actually have dumber gods than some people in villages and countries that have no televisions. Listen, I've been to a monkey temple, right outside of New Delhi, India. They're worshiping a golden image of a monkey. It's right out of "Raiders of the Lost Ark." They're putting bananas in front of the golden image. There's a guy there singing songs to the golden monkey. You're going, "How dumb of an idol is that?" Once again, not even a majestic animal. We've all been to the zoo. We've all seen it.

So lay that across the stuff we chase: fleeting wealth, quick relationships, trinkets and toys. It's just as dumb, and the funny thing is, just as unsatisfying. I mean the majority of men and women in this room buy a perpetual lie that what you need for fulfillment is more of what you already possess. It is a philosophical, theological flaw that will haunt you for the rest of your life. This is what He's saying. This is what's gone wrong. By the way, I want to keep drawing attention to this. If God is saying the problem with the universe is a worship problem, then the problem is not that you're a hedonist,

but that you're not enough of one—that you seek quick, temporary, fleeting pleasures and not sustaining, eternal ones. That's a very different God, isn't it?

That's problem number one; let's look at problem two. Verse 24. "Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever!" Not only have we routed our worship wrong so now that we worship things that are going to lead us into external sin, but we believe, despite the reality of our lives, that we know what's going to bring us the most amount of joy, the most amount of pleasure and the deepest amount of life. We feel like we know that, and so we make decision after decision after decision for our own pleasure and our own joy. We don't get there for any length or period of time, and we perpetually think that we know how to get there. I will, until the day you fire me or God kills me, preach and teach that every command of God in the Scripture is not about pulling from you depth, life, meaning and joy, but rather leading you into the fullness of it. I'll give you an example out of my own life, a very personal example out of my own life. I grew up in an abusive home that was a difficult home. Praise His name, Christ has worked mightily in our family. My dad's actually a member of this church. How crazy is that? So what that creates if you grow up in a hostile environment like that, is baggage, issues. So I'm coming from this, and my beautiful wife is coming from what I just label kind of the "good girl home." And what I mean by that is not that everything's okay there, but they pretend that it is. Don't get mad. I'm not making accusations; I'm telling my story. If you just got mad there, search your heart...good girl. Anyway, we got married young. So what happens when you take a young guy who's not very self-aware and has a lot of issues, and you put him in the house with a woman who's not okay, but who wants to pretend that everything is? Well, you get four very difficult years of marriage. That's what you get. And I want to be real honest with you, with my wife's permission. There were nights that I would lay in bed—and just to be honest with you, the issue was me. I had a selfish, self-centered, lazy heart. And Lauren had some issues too, but she couldn't even see them because mine were so big. And I was asking Lauren to fulfill something that she just couldn't possibly fulfill. She just couldn't possibly do it. And so my love was very, very, very conditional, which means I would do what was right as long as I got the reaction I wanted. But if I did something right, and the reaction wasn't what I wanted, then I would quit doing what's right. Anybody? No?

I'm all by myself up here. Thanks, guys. Appreciate that, fellas. So glad you guys are so great. So there were times—I'm just being honest—where I'm laying in bed—I'm like twenty-four—going, "I can't do 50 years of this. This is marriage?" And you can't help but go, "I guarantee you this would be easier with somebody else." I mean those are just thoughts you have, thoughts I had, the whole time being painfully aware of God's command on me in Ephesians 5: "You love your wife like I loved the church in that I gave My life for her, initiated it, did not expect the correct response to it. I loved freely, openly, unconditionally. That's how you love your wife." I hated that text. That text haunted me. Because I wanted to be mean. I wanted to jab. I wanted to tell her what she was doing wrong. I wanted to not only do what was right but then have her do what was right in return. And it was four years. I'll be married nine this summer. Here's what happened though. Over four years, God did what we call theologically "progressive sanctification." Which means that, on the throne of my heart, I sat and ruled ruthlessly. Sometimes with honor, but mainly ruthlessly. And God had to put King Chandler to death. Do you know why? Because He loves me. King Chandler rules, it goes bad. King Chandler dies—worship, joy, life, meaning, depth. So I had to die. But how are you going to show an arrogant king the error of his ways? Give him a wife. Here's what I mean. Up until that point, I could make anything work. Up until that point, I could fix it. Up until that point, I could motivate. I could move.

I could assemble teams. I mean, I'm in ministry at this time. Up until that point, I could take a small Bible study in Abilene, build out volunteer bases, grow that thing to 3,000. I could go to Dallas, I can get into Prestonwood. I could go to their Monday night Bible study that's fledgling. I could rebuild the team, rewire worship, bring in other people, build that thing up a couple thousand. Until this moment, anything I touch works—except at home. And now, the last

four years have been unbelievable. I love going home and hate leaving. I love going home. I love walking into my house. When I get home, my little bride's got a little apron on. I'm going to kiss the back of her neck. I love going home. The best shot I had at deep, sustaining love was to not leave. That's what the text says. He is leading me to joy.

The third problem is what I call the "Shaquille O'Neal Clause." Look at it, verse 28. So we're worshiping the wrong stuff. We believe that we know how to get to worship better and then look at verse 28—"Shaquille O'Neal Clause." "And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done." Early in his career, Shaquille O'Neal, 7'3", would dunk the basketball and then dance around like he did something spectacular. Shaquille O'Neal dunking the basketball is like you and I getting a can of soup out of the cupboard. He's 7'3". With his hands over his head, he's eleven feet tall. The basket sits at ten feet. Shaquille O'Neal can dunk without jumping. Which means you shouldn't make a big deal out of yourself because you can raise your hands above your head. Check it out. Drink it in, people. It's a comical thing. So here's my question. What part of Shaq's training made him 7'3"? His daddy ain't 7'3". His mamma ain't 7'3". Is there a regimen that can increase height? There's not. Shaq didn't do anything to get that size. He was born. That's God's size. God gave him that, not so he can boast in himself, make much of himself. No, there's this failure to acknowledge God. According to the Scriptures, God put the sun right where it needed to be to not burn this planet to a crisp. He made the spring. He made the winter. He made the fall. He made the summer. He made the Pacific. He made the underwater reef, Cozumel. He made Rainier. He made Everest. He made the Grand Canyon. He made the physical body. On and on we could go here, and most of us live our lives being completely unaware, failing to acknowledge the Author of so much of this.

So this is you and I. This is bottom line, foundational problem with you and I. It's a worship problem. It's a joy problem. It's a hedonism problem. So what's God going to do? The church answer is, "He's going to forgive us." I mean, we belittle Him, we mock Him. We prefer His stuff to Him. We have no desire to truly pursue Him. Instead, we just want to play with His toys. This is who we are. How is God supposed to respond? Forgive us. Yeah, but that's problematic too, because if He's just and He's holy and He forgives you of belittling Him, then He's no longer just, like a judge who just let a criminal go because he apologized. So He can't just let you go. He's got to kill you. Why not? You belittled His name. I mean, you walked into the lion's den and slapped the lion on his face. His response is not to turn around. He's an apex predator; His response would be to kill you. So God, desiring you for worship and wanting worship, sends His Son. God in the flesh is arrested on Friday and slaughtered. I mean slaughtered. It is long. It is brutal. It is horrible, and it's because of you and because of me. Because this week we enjoyed unbelievable beauty outside and never thought to praise Him. Because if I had to guess, He has not been primary on your pursuit list, secondary on your pursuit list—He might not even this week be on your pursuit list. Because you have touched, taken and partaken in what is rightfully His and done so with no gratitude. 2 Corinthians says that in this moment, the cross, He makes Him who knew no sin to become sin on our behalf. Here's what's happening. All the wrath of God towards our mockery and belittlement is poured out upon Jesus.

Jesus freely laying down His life, absorbs the wrath of God towards those who would believe and when it's done says, "It is finished," and gives up His spirit. The veil in the temple torn in two, and then we've got the rest of that verse. So listen to the rest of that verse. "He made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." Remember that imparted righteousness that we read about when it came to Abraham, that he was not righteous, but it was counted to him as righteous? That's what just happened in the cross. Now when God sees us who believe on the name of Christ, He sees the perfection of Jesus, the righteousness of Jesus, the love of Jesus, the kindness of Jesus, the work of Jesus. We have become the righteousness of God in Him. So that's why the rest of the Scriptures are filled with verses like, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). You get that? No condemnation. Past, covered. Present reality, covered. Future, covered. No condemnation. That means that there's not going to be some sin in the future that the triune God gets together on and goes, "We really didn't see this one coming. What do You think? It's pretty wicked. Let's pull it. Let's pull the salvation. Sorry buddy, taking it back."

Not going to happen. No condemnation. It also means, for those who are in Christ, that nothing that comes our way is God's wrath but rather His mercy. And maybe that doesn't sound like a big deal to you, but when they're loading up your one-year-old son into an ambulance and rushing him and your wife to the hospital; and you're trailing behind them in the car sobbing, trying to keep up, to not have the weight of wondering if God is somehow angry, and you've somehow offended Him, to not have that on you is a precious gift. It means we can worship in sickness. We can worship in health. We can worship when we're well fed. We can worship when there's not a lot to eat. We can worship when the economy's booming. We can worship in a recession. But here's the thing. Because remember I said there are things that can affect your worship. And by the way, there's other implications of this—I just didn't have time to go through them all. You can't be separated from Him. He who began the good work will sustain it carrying us on to perfection. One of my favorites. We are God's workmanship. It's the Greek word for "poetry." We are His poetry. That's such a great verse.

Remember when I said there could be a problem with Friday that could make you miss out on worship? Here's the problem. If you buy into so much of this modern junk about how good you are, how right you are, how beautiful you are, how excellent you are in your essence—if you don't understand that you are a sinner, that you have belittled God, that you have mocked Him, that you have made light of Him, then what happens is you become uppermost in your own affection. You believe you're intrinsically good, and it's easy to keep believing you're intrinsically good when you have evidence that says you're not, because you can just quickly blame others for that in you because you're good. Now, if God created your heart to worship, to experience joy that terminates on another, do you see how problematic it is for the soul to believe that you, in and of yourself, are uppermost in your affection? Do you see how problematic that is? If the soul has been wired to worship another and you instead worship yourself, you kill the soul. And then you've got all these issues in your relationships, because you've got to blame someone for your unfulfillment. In my case, it was my wife. It's a Friday problem. You've got to understand that we're, as King David said, "brought forth in iniquity." But here's something I wonder. Jesus dies on the cross, they take Him down and put Him in the tomb.

And He had told the disciples, "Hey, this is what's going to happen. I'm going to go to Jerusalem. I've got to be killed." He outlines this is how it's going to happen. All the things that I just said were going to happen, they knew was going to happen in the death of Jesus Christ. Jesus dies, put in the tomb—they all go hide in a room. How can we be sure that all the wrath of God was poured out? How do we know that He doesn't have just a little bit left for us? He doesn't know me. I've done some stuff. How do we know that God doesn't have a little bit of wrath left over? How do we know that this is true? Because it seems a little unbelievable, doesn't it? Because so far, there's nothing about your right behavior. There's nothing about you doing anything. Christ paid the bill. Christ took care of it. It's His righteousness imparted. So it seems too good to be true. How do we know that Jesus is who He said He was? How do we know that He did what He said He did? How do we know that He is the focal point of all these prophecies and all this teaching? Sunday. We know because of the resurrection. The resurrection validates what happened on Friday. How do we know? Because God brought Him back from the dead. If it's not for the resurrection, we're going, "We think Jesus absorbed all the wrath of God. We'll know more after we die. Good luck." No, the resurrection is that peace that lets us move from depravity into the glory of life in Christ. And that's why some of you have a Sunday problem. And here's what I mean by that. You're so weighted down by your sins and your behavior, and you've got these things that you can't get out of your life. You wallow in this kind of self-pity where you're going, "Oh, I can't figure it out. And I can't get it right, and I can't move on.

I keep stumbling at this, and I'll never be good enough." You're wallowing in that trap, which is just as deadly as thinking you're great. Because Christ already paid the bill. The old has passed away, the new has come. That's what the text says. We are new creations. The old's gone, the new's here. Now we're a part of this progressive sanctification where He's making us more and more and more and more like Him every day as we obediently follow Him. So some of us, our worship is affected because we think more highly of ourselves than we should. And some of us, worship is affected because we think our sins still get to define us, and they don't get to anymore.

So I'm pleading for you, with you, for your joy. Because we're going to walk out of this room into this spectacular day, and there's this chance to just kind of go, "What a great day. Let's get in the car." There's this chance in that moment to feel the depth and the weight of a Creator God stirring up affection, gratitude. I'm going to go to my house and by the time I get there, all of our family will have gathered—my mom and dad and my sisters, their kids, my kids, my in-laws. There's just going to be kids everywhere. My father-in-law's bringing a smoked ham. It's just going to be gluttonous. And we're going to laugh. I'm going to sit there with my father, and my father will have to pray, because the rule is in our house is that the patriarch has to pray. And my daddy is the patriarch; he's the oldest, the wisest. We all come from him. He's got to pray, which is awkward for him. But we make him pray. "But you're the pastor." "You're the patriarch. That trumps pastor." And so he's going to pray. And this is my dad, this is this guy. Christ has done something there. He created all these flavors, and the combination of flavors that would occur when you combine all these different flavors. So then there's this chance today to live deeply and worship deeply and exalt Him and be filled with gratitude. Or you can just go eat some ham. I'm here every week pleading for your joy.

Let's pray, "Help us, Father. Give us eyes to see as we leave this place, ears to hear, the ability to sense and know, hearts that are filled with gratitude. It's for Your beautiful name. Amen."

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