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[00:00:00] And I want to show you a video today, it's a short clip, there's two videos this morning before we actually read the scriptures. The first one gives you a breakdown of the book of Genesis. There's going to be six different sections and then there's going to be mini series is within some of those sections. So the second section we're going to be talking about marriage and family and things like that. So there's going to be a lot we're going to glean from the Book of Genesis. But let's just go ahead and walk through these different sections this morning just so you kind of have an idea of where we're going. Section number one is God Speaks. Section number two is transforming your relationships. Number three is God gives grace talking about Noah, God befriends his love for Abraham and the patriarchs. God invites us to experience and in God plan to really be talking about the life of Joseph and God's faithfulness to Joseph. So, you know, we're going to be breaking the book up in six different sections. Kind of gives you an idea where the study of the book is going. There is a lot of information in the Book of Genesis. And frankly, like one of the hardest things about teaching this book is there's just too much information to convey. And so we're also going to be leveraging small videos because we want you to learn about God. You guys are right with that. Like you've come to learn. This is a teaching church. We teach the Bible and we want you to obviously really experience all that God has for you. But we want you to be able to walk away knowing the book of Genesis. And so we'll be leveraging some videos from an organization called the Bible Project.

[00:01:44] They put together some great stuff on the Book of Genesis, and it'll give you a good picture of this first section. So go ahead and roll that video. The first book in the Bible is a book you've probably heard of, it's called Genesis. Genesis comes from a Hebrew word. It's pronounced read sheet, and it just means beginning. Now, there's a lot of stories from the Book of Genesis, and it's easy just to pull out a specific story and and try to tell you what it might mean. But we think the best way to understand this book is to look at the book as a whole and show you how the whole thing is designed. The book is designed to fall into two main parts. You have chapters one through 11, which is telling the story of God and the whole world. And then you have the second part, which is about God and Abraham's family as chapters 12 through 50 and how the two of those parts relate. That's where you find the message of the book. OK, so let's start back at the beginning. The first part of Genesis begins with the creation story where God creates everything and how exactly that happens. Of course, that's where all the debates come. But he takes a dark, watery chaos and he turns it into a beautiful garden where humans can can flesh. That sounds nice. It does sound nice. In fact, seven different times. God says of all that he's made that it's good. Right, there you have it. You guys clap everything I said, this is the first service like it doesn't matter what it is, you guys clap. I love you for that. I've missed your your crappiness. Just want to say, you know, Desiree is doing the kinetic part.

[00:03:26] She's like, hey, we're going have a song and some giving and everyone claps. What church claps at giving Calvary Chapel, Las Vegas does. So I think it's great. You guys are happy to stand up today. We're going to read the scriptures. And in fact, this morning we're just going to cover for words. Can you handle that? Yeah. All right. We're going to read four words. We're going to read them together, and then I'm going to pray. So beginning in chapter one, verse one, the very first book of the Bible written by Moses. The Bible says this. Let's say it together in the beginning. God now, guys, not five words, not five words, four words. OK, in fact, there were more of you that read five words. You just can't stop, can you? I mean, it's great. Only four words today. Let's pray, Father. Thank you, God. Thank you for the power of the Holy Scriptures. Thank you, God that you have preserved the truth. Thank you, God that you've not left us orphans. God to just wayward Lee walk through this life. But Father, you have revealed yourself to us. God, we see you through general revelation that is creation. We see you through specific revelation. That is the Holy Scriptures and father, we see you through personal revelation. That is the incarnation of your son, Jesus and God. We pray today that you would draw our hearts. God like a moth to the flame, like. Like the magnet to steel. God saw our heart to your heart, Father. For those of us today maybe who've never even taken that first step in coming to Jesus in faith. And having our lives transformed by the spirit, God may today be the day for those of us perhaps who've walked with you for many years, we pray, God please.

[00:05:16] Today would be a day of alignment and collaboration and restoration, a new beginning. We ask not just for our own personal lives, but for our church. Father, for your glory. That your name would be known in Jesus name, Amen. You can have a seat today. Jesus said to his disciples, he said these words to them, he said, take heed lest you be deceived, take heed lest you be deceived. Now, he wasn't just speaking to the multitudes. He was speaking to his disciples. So I think sometimes, you know, when we look at that phrase, we think, well, of course, he's speaking to the unbelieving multitudes of people. But no, this was an exhortation. This was an admonition to his own disciples. And it's not the only time he gave it, but he understood. He understood the power of suggestion. He understood that there was a world that was seeking a philosophy within the world that was seeking to shape the souls of the sons and daughters of God. And so he warned even his disciples he knew that there was an effort to affect the way that they thought about the world and about God and about issues of life. And you know that that is true for us today. Jesus knew that his disciples were susceptible then just by nature, they were susceptible. He knows today we by nature are susceptible to the power of suggestion as well. You know, there's something called the illusory truth of fact. And it was discovered in the late 70s by Villanova and Temple University. It goes something like this. It's the tendency to believe false information, to be correct after repeated exposure to it. Now, you might be thinking, well, duh, obviously we know that, like, if you're just inundated, if you're inundated with information, a high volume of information, obviously, by nature, just because of exposure is going to impact you.

[00:07:21] But listen, it's worse than that. It's worse than that. So when you are considering new information, there are two processes you evaluate information by. One is a rational semi objective process where you're taking that data, you're taking the information and you're evaluating it based on your understanding of other truths. Right. That's a rational process. You're taking the data in and then you're comparing it with things that you know to be true. Well, there's a second way we process information as well and is less objective, is far more subjective. And I would say it's even operating in your subconscious. Your body goes through this process. It is physiological in a sense, where you are feeling whether or not the information actually seems to be familiar to you. And if it does, in fact feel familiar, then your body responds physiologically to that by assuming that that piece of information is true. So, listen, if you're exposed constantly to data and you're becoming aware of some new piece of information, your body, your your mind, your brain subconsciously, because that information is easier to be able to process because you've been exposed to it, your your brain assumes that it's true. So I'm saying to you today that there's a subconscious process that you go through as you're inundated with information because you've been indeed inundated. It's easier to process and because it's easier to process. Your brain assumes that that information actually is true. This is how the whole marketing world operates. This is all this how the whole system of advertising understands it can get to you through the power of suggestion, even if you're not processing that data. Listen, I would say to you, even geopolitical warfare now is resorting to misinformation, knowing that if social media platforms are inundated with data, people will subconsciously begin to process and trigger that data as true, even though they've not rationally or objectively evaluated it.

[00:09:45] And the truth is this. We live in an era of information. There is a deluge of information that is constantly, consistently bombarding us. Somebody is a recent study where they determine that the average American consumes about thirty five gigabytes of data every single day. I just think about that. Think about the sheer volume of information that is coming in through different platforms. And certainly you don't have all of the time to rationally process every piece of information. So it is in fact affecting you in some way. Some people say to me, well, past, you know, I know that I have all of this exposure to these different things, but, you know, it's really not impacting me. I would say to them and to you today, yes, it is. Your soul is being shaped. Whether you recognize it or not, your soul is being shaped, your morals, your view on morals, your view on marriage, your view on parenting, your view on personal purpose, your perspective on spirituality, how you believe about death and life after death, what you think about God. There is an effort in this world. It's sinister in nature. Behind all of the veil is the adversary himself who is seeking to shape your soul. Listen, this is the reality of the chaos around us. You think, why is there so much confusion? Why is there that noise that's going on right now? Flash flood warning all of your phones right now, this is a perfect example. All right. A perfect example like Basra. I'm not connected to my phone. I'm not connected to my phone. Now, this is my time, my sacred spot. No, it's not like it's just invaded the moment. Look, there is a flash flood warning right now because of rain.

[00:11:47] There's a flash flood warning because of information to. Mass confusion, mass confusion all around us. Why is that the case? Because we have a truth deficit in our culture, you know, for your soul. Listen, for your soul to be shaped by truth, you have to start where the Bible begins. Where does the Bible begin? In the beginning, God in the beginning, God, let me read it to you. For your soul to be shaped by truth, you have to start with the Bible starts in the beginning. God, why is the world dealing with so much chaos? Why every day when you wake up, it seems as if there's another crazy thing that's happening because the culture around us is dealing with the truth deficit. There is a deluge of information in this information age, but it is in fact truth starved. And so I want to say to you four things, very simple things, as we kind of lay out this morning in introduction to the study of the Book of Genesis. Four things I think will be really, really helpful as we study this book. Number one, God has to be our starting point. Number one, God has to be our starting point. I love how the book begins. I love how the Bible begins. I think it couldn't begin in a more majestic or powerful or emphatic way, simply saying in the beginning, God, how beautiful is the beginning of the Bible. And I would suggest to you no piece of literature that you've ever read, no academic scholarly work, no favorite song that you listen to, has a more beautiful beginning than the holy scriptures, the divine word of God. As Moses was inspired by the Holy Spirit, he started the book. He started the whole book.

[00:13:45] He started the canon of scripture with these four basic, powerful, beautiful, sublime words in the beginning, God, why is it so powerful? Why are they so majestic? Why are they so sublime? Because there's nothing there's no topic more sublime or powerful or majestic than the topic of God himself. And I would just like to remind you today is he read these verses. There's no argument. There's no philosophical debate. There is no weighing the the other perspectives or religious ideas. No, the Bible just says, as a matter of fact, in the beginning, God, this is why the Bible also says the fool has said in his heart, there is no God. I love the first note of scripture and it just rings so true today. Maybe you need to be reminded of the first note of scripture in the beginning. God, maybe today you've come in and there's there's chaos and confusion and discomfort and depression, maybe despondency in your life. Maybe there's toxicity and dysfunction. And, you know, you're living in an almost hopeless situation. Maybe your life has been consumed by the wave of the world and you feel almost as if you're about to drown. I want to speak to you for simple words of hope in the beginning. God, those words will buie your soul. Those words will lift you up. Those words will set you free. Those words. Words will bring you to a brand new beginning. As you put your trust and faith in Christ. You can know that the old things have passed away. And as the Bible says, all things have become new. I want you to take note of the note, because the Bible does not start by saying in the beginning me. Right, I mean, the Bible does not say I know that this might be a tough one for some of us to swallow, but the Bible does not start by saying in the beginning, me and, you know, well-meaning believers, oftentimes this is where we start, even with respect to the word of God, even with respect to our relationship with God.

[00:16:02] You know, we can sometimes bring ourselves consumed me first attitudes even into the scripture. God, what do you have for me? What have you done for me lately? God, how are you going to fix my problem? How are you going to solve my situation? God, don't you know this person is driving me nuts? When you when are you either going to fix them? Or relieve them from my life because they're like they're like a cancer, I'll just prefer you to cut them out sometimes. Even the way we approach the scriptures is self oriented. It's selfish. It is so refreshing just to be reminded by the word of God that are beginning place must be the Lord. The Bible does not say in the beginning me, the Bible says in the beginning, God, you know, you will never really understand true meaning or purpose in this life if your starting point is yourself. You will never understand real, true meaning or purpose in this life if your starting point is yourself. A recent Psychology Today article had a very suggestive title. This is the secular world, right? The title was this Self Absorption, The Root of All Evil Questionmark. And I thought men, even the unbelieving world around us, understands that there is such a level of self absorption. It seems to be consuming even our culture. We live in a Maemi culture. I want it now whether we're saying, hey, that's my toilet paper roll. Or whether we're saying, hey, that's my parking spot. I'm not going to fill the blank in for you today, what areas are you selfish in? What areas are are you dealing with self-centered? I'm not saying today that the toilet paper roll is my issue. I just think it's culturally relevant that we we see it's evident today that we live in a very self centered culture and things won't get right until we get ourselves right with God.

[00:18:04] Moses starts with the most basic, beautiful fact. And if I've said any truth to you over the course of so many years, this may sit at the top and it's just simple. It's two words. God is, God is. Would you let that resonate in your soul today? Would you let that speak to your heart today? Like I said to you earlier, maybe this is what you need to be reminded of. You're looking at all the things that are not. You're looking at all the dreams and ambitions that are unfulfilled. You're looking at all of the unfulfilled expectations and how others have not met the desires that you've had for them. And simply listen, you can put all of that to rest by being reminded today that God is what more do we need to know than our God is sitting sovereignly upon his throne and he has all things under the control of his providential care. I hope that encourages you today. God is, God is. And everything after that is a subsequent fact. And in fact, I would go further and say to you that all things exist because it pleased him. God is he's the ultimate reality. He transcends time and space. He is the one who is beyond our universe and all things that exist. We're going to talk about this in some detail in coming weeks. But all things that exist exist because it pleased him to cause them to exist. I love Revelation Chapter four. Verse Eleven is one of my favorite verses in the Bible. We're going to be in chapter four, verse eleven, probably in about four months because we want to take our time going through Revelation on Sunday nights. And listen, it's a great first grade and all translations, but the King James version happens to be my personal favorite.

[00:19:59] So if you're thinking, man, what happened to Pastor Derrick? You went on sabbatical and he came back all old English on us. Well, I just like the way it's framed in this version. So the Bible says this and verse 11 thou art worthy. O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power for that has created all things. Listen, check this out. You can say these four words with me and for thy pleasure, they are and were created. Isn't that good? Isn't that good? Somebody is somebody out there that can affirm the goodness of this verse. Listen, this is the song of heaven. This is the song of heaven. Like you're not going to be all wrapped up in yourself. God, where's my personal cloud? Why didn't I get my own planet? Isn't there something more fun to do in heaven? No. Heaven is going to be God. You are worthy to be worshiped. All glory, God, all honor and all power. Father, we give it to you. Look, the very fact that we're even present here is so undeserved with the song and heaven. And the only reason we've made it here is not our good works in our efforts, but the blood of the lamb who was slain for us, who was slain for us. And so we together will be making this declaration. God, you are the one who is worthy to receive all glory, honor and power. Because, God, we look at the general revelation. We look at your creation from the from the black hole to the nebula to the various galaxies, the billions of stars in each of the galaxies to the earth has been carefully, lovingly engineered down to the very detail, absolutely fine tuned, totally undeniable to the seas that are teeming with life, to the majesty of the mountains, God, to the life that you bring forth out of the desert, to the complexity of human life.

[00:21:50] God, you are the one who has created all things. You're behind it all. You're behind it all. God, you're the one pulling the strings and you have divine purpose in all that you've made. And not only that, but God, you did it because it pleased you. Who did it? Because it pleases you. I love that. Look, why does God do what he wants to do? Because. Because it pleases him that it pleases him. Right. So let me just say today you have been made for the pleasure of God. Why did God make you. Because you're loyal like mom, dad, pastor. Do we have to we're going to cover that. The birds and the bees. And Genesis says, why do we need to go into the biology now? You exist not because two people came together, but because God gave you a spirit and a soul. He planted it in your human body on the day of conception. And you've been created for his pleasure, for his pleasure. Why are you living today? What is the purpose that you're living for over the last couple of months while I've been absent, how have you been living for the pleasure of God. Listen, we get off track. We go off road in our lives. We we go down the road of talks, toxicity and dysfunction when we stop living for God's pleasure, when God ceases to be the center of our lives. And look, I want to suggest to you today, this is really the core of the message today. We all need to get back to him. We need to get back to him. We need that Copernicus revolution within our lives. You guys remember who Copernicus was? He was one of the guys. All the science and math had been laid out before this, but he was one of the guys.

[00:23:31] He was really the one who was noted for that revolution that put the sun at the center of our solar system instead of the earth, because before him, common concept was that everything revolved around the earth. I mean, not just is the typical human nature way of seeing things, but as he worked the math and he worked the physics, what he understood was, no, it's not the earth that sits at the center of the solar system. It is the sun that sits at the center of the solar system. And because the sun sits at the center, everything revolves around it in perfect harmony. There was a revolution that took place. And I think in a spiritual way, we need to have the same revolution in our lives where we stop thinking that everything revolves around us and exists for our own pleasure. You know how much conflict that brings into our lives. You know how much dysfunction that brings into our marriage. When we begin to look at our spouse like, hey, don't did you forget something? You exist for my pleasure. You exist to fulfill my needs. No, that's not the way that it works in the Christian world. Our lives are not to be oriented around ourselves. Our lives are to be oriented around the son of God. He sits at the center. He calls the shots. He holds everything in perfect order. And when he said, when you make that decision in your life, you know, this is what it means to be born again. When you put your trust and faith in Jesus Christ, what you're saying is, is no longer me, my desires, my needs, my dreams, my ambitions, my way or the highway that sits at the center. God, it is your way.

[00:25:13] Father, Son, Holy Spirit, you are at the center of my life, it's not my addictions, it's not my desire for success, not my ambitions that I have to fulfill. It's not being led and directed by my personal emotions. No, God, you are at the center and my life now orbits around you. My life orbits around you. I exist for your pleasure. You wake up in the morning. God, how can I please you today? What a different way to start today. Right. You know, I'm talking about because sometimes it's like, oh my gosh, what a crazy day I have, you know? I mean, I've got this, that and the other thing, men to start our day and say, God, I know that I exist for you and for your pleasure. This is why you've made me this is why you've shaped me. And my day will not be all that you desire to be unless I put your will in your pleasure at the center of all of my desires. Right. And starts with God. It starts with God. I think David got this. I think, you know, we'll talk about this verse a lot. But, you know, it's somewhere in the process. I don't know if it was when he was a little guy in the fields watching over the sheep or where exactly it was. But David began to understand that when you looked at the general revelation of God, the created universe, it was speaking of God beyond the beauty of what he saw. He saw the real beauty. And that was the beauty of the creator for he said Psalm nineteen one, the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament show his handiwork. The word handywork. We'll talk about later.

[00:26:48] It can also kind of be translated fingerpainting. So when you look at the complexity of the universe, I'll just tell you right now it's fingerpainting for God, it's fingerpainting. You're like, oh my gosh, I got. I got red. I've got job issues, I've got people issues, I'm like, hey, listen, fingerpainting, the universe, fingerpainting, your problem. He's got it. You'll be all right. No. One, start with God. Number two, I do believe Genesis answers the most important questions in life. Genesis, the book of Genesis answers the most important questions in life. Now, listen, when we study the Old Testament on Sunday mornings, there are some people who are like, pastor, what do we do? And like we're a New Testament church. We're a New Testament church. Why are we in Matthew or Mark or Luke or John or Romans or whatever? The Old Testament doesn't really apply to us. And I can say nothing is further. I say to you, nothing is further from the truth. In fact, you will not understand your old your New Testament. You will not understand the gospel accounts unless you understand the book of Genesis. It is where the whole story begins and it answers the single most important questions in life. You know, I did a little research on the most often asked questions on Google for all time, and I wanted to share five out of the ten with you. I was really surprised, you know, because it's like, well, certainly, you know, people are asking deep, important questions. And if we're going to talk about the most important ones of all time on Google, these are probably pretty. You know. Not so much, number one, I kind of get why is there a leap year? OK, this is business five out of 10, so this is not an order, but one of the top asked questions all time.

[00:28:28] Why is there a leap year? Maybe you've had that question. Go ahead and Google that, because I'm going to give you the answer today. The second one I get, why is the sky blue? Look, I mean, I think that that's a general question that a lot of people have. Why is the sky blue the third one? I just totally don't understand. Why are cats afraid of cucumber's? Let me just say, if you own a cat, you've got a problem in the first place. No, I just I just I'm just joking. I'm just joking. But I get. Can I get in trouble for a second? Is that OK? Dogs are so much better than cats. Dogs are so much better than cats. But dogs go to heaven. Cats go to purgatory. I'm just kidding. I didn't say hell. It could have been worse. I'm just joking. I know I just opened up a can of worms, but. Well, look, we got two dogs, we have a Rottweiler, one hundred and thirty five pounds, and then we got a labradoodle and they're both absolutely amazing. And you know what? They they love us and they are loyal to us no matter what kind of mood. We're in control, Gramp, you know, just miserable mood. And it's like, Master, I love you. I love you. Like, what can I do for you? I'll protect the house like there's value. All right, so question number three, why are cats afraid of cucumbers? I don't even know where that comes from. Question number four, why do dogs eat grass? So whatever don't yell the answer out loud, because we don't want to hear it. Fifth question I thought was pretty classic on Google all the time. Why did I get married? Why did I get married? Now, I would just like to say to you today, if you're asking Google why you got married, you you got bigger problems.

[00:30:21] In fact, you know, that probably tells you what the problem is. If you've gone to Google to ask that question, you are probably the problem in your marriage. Listen, there they're important questions. They are important questions maybe. But listen, they they can they pale in comparison to the most important questions. You know, there are a lot of issues that need to be resolved and dealt with in life. There are questions that we need to answer, but there are fundamental questions that all of us should be seeking the answers for. Ravi Zacharias put it like this. When shaping our world view, we ought to be concerned with our origin, our meaning, our morality and our destiny. These are the four key things that we ought to be considering. These are four key questions that we have that we need to answer, because everything in life is shaped by the answer to these questions. How did I get here? Why am I here? How do I live my life and where am I going after this life? If you've not answered those fundamental questions, I would suggest to you that none of the other answers to any questions you have really even matter. But the beauty is this. Genesis answers those questions for us. And Genesis tells us that we have a god of covenant, a God who is a god of relationship, a God who is not so transient, transcendent that he's separated from his creation, not a God who stands a far off, not the God of D. is that wound up creation and then stepped back and just let it go? No, we have a God who desires personal relationship with us, and that permeates the story of the Book of Genesis. The third thing I want to say to you today is that Genesis Genesis is all about Jesus.

[00:32:11] The Book of Genesis is all about Jesus. I know. Like I said, sometimes there are people, well-meaning Christians, who are like pastor. Why are we studying the red letters of the Bible? Because, you know, the red letters have more value than the black letters do. And I just want to remind you today, whether black or red, if it's in between Genesis one one and Revelation twenty to twenty one, it is all the word of God. He has spoken all of the words and the book of Genesis mattered to Jesus. He mentioned it many times. Jesus, in the gospel accounts, you'll see he affirms the creation story. He mentions the blood of Abel. He uses the story of Noah and the condition of humanity during the day of Noah to illustrate the condition of humanity. Just before his second coming. By the way, you see that being played out all around us. Jesus is coming back soon. Jesus said that Abraham saw his day and rejoiced. I believe he was referring to the situation with Melchizedek. We'll talk about that in some weeks. He alluded to Jacob's dream. He discussed lessons concerning lots and lots wife and her longing heart for Sodom and Gomorrah. Listen. When Jesus talked about Genesis, he didn't refer to it as if it was a myth or allegory, but as historical fact. And this is important because there are some who say today, as there's been great pressure from the secular, atheistic, unbelieving, naturalistic world, there are some who say even within the church, that the first 11 chapters of the Book of Genesis are to be taking are to be taken allegorically. They're a myth. They're not to be taken literally. And nothing could be further from the truth. That's not how Jesus interpreted the first eleven chapters of the Book of Genesis.

[00:34:05] He interpreted them as historical fact. And if it's good enough for Jesus, it is good enough for me. Jesus also, he not only mentioned Genesis, but he is the central figure in the book of Genesis, you say, well, his name is not mentioned. Let me tell you how often he has mentioned Jesus is the creator. Jesus is the second Adam. Jesus is the seed of the woman. Jesus is the one who will crush Satan underneath his feet. Jesus called Noah into the ark and he closed the door. Jesus is in fact our ark, Jesus Melchizedek. He is the angel of the Lord. He is the sacrifice prefigured by Isaac. He is the promise to Abraham that would bless all of the nations. He teaches Abraham to intercede. He met Hagar by the spring in the wilderness. He is the one who wrestled with Jacob and named him Israel. He is typified in the life of Joseph. He, in fact, is Shiloh. In the prophecy of Jacob. He is our God and savior. He permeates the book of Genesis. And having said that and having said that, let me just close by saying we need Jesus right now more than anything else. We need to get back to Jesus. We need to get back to the Lord. Listen, if you were to have coffee with me and say, Pastor, what is the one thing, not just the unbelieving world around us, but is what is the one thing the church needs today in this crazy, convoluted, chaotic world of mass hysteria? What does the church need today? I would say to you, the church needs to get back to Jesus Christ. The church needs to get back to its beginning. You know, Vince Lombardi was an amazing football coach, one of the greatest.

[00:35:59] Although he did not coach the greatest team in football history. Cowboys teams and are just getting. I'm a local boy, right? I grew up in right outside of Oakland, so I'm coming home and I'm coming home. He was a great coach. One time his team was playing so miserably. And it wasn't that they were poorly coached. Right. I mean, obviously, they had one of the greatest coaches of all time. It was almost as if they had totally forgotten how to play the game. No one was fulfilling their assignments, assignments. No one was doing their job. And so at halftime, what he did is he got his team together. Right. You would expect this deeply philosophical, powerful, emotional halftime speech to get his team back on track. But they had become seemingly so lost that all he did was he took the pigskin and he put it in front of his team like this. And he said, this is a football. This is the football like, you know, I mean, obviously he was telling them something that they knew, but they were so just all twisted and torn up and so just confused that they had to get back to the very beginning. They had to get back to the starting point, get back to the simplicity of what the game is all about in the first place. And so he says to them, pulling them all back is something that they knew to be true. Hey, let's start from ground zero. Let's start at step number one, y'all. This is a football. And I want to say to you today, this is God's truth. This is God's true. It's not. Sorry I had to throw this ball to somebody this morning. There we go. OK, this is God's truth, not the news outlets that you love so much, not CNN, not Fox News, not The Daily Beast, not Newsmax, not the Federalist, whatever, whatever you're looking at for news, I'm just saying to you today, that is not God's truth.

[00:38:10] This is God's truth. It's not your neighbor, your neighbor's opinion. It's not social media. It's not the platforms that you go to that you are almost irresistibly drawn to. Newsweek just did a recent study that said the average iPhone user touches their phone over twenty six hundred times in a day. Twenty six hundred times. And, you know, oftentimes a lot of that touching and scrolling and reading and listening is all connected to social media. And sometimes we look at those outlets as if they're gospel truth. While they're not gospel truth, this right here is gospel truth. I want to remind you of that today. It's not your favorite podcast. It's not your favorite pastor. I'm not saying that there aren't elements of truth that come through those avenues, but the only real truth that you will ever be able to stand on and build your life on is this leather bound book that contains within it the holy word of God. Jesus said to his disciples, You will know the truth and the truth will make you free. Look, we need to calibrate our lives. We need to calibrate our lives. We need to bring our lives into alignment with God's word. Sometimes we find ourselves playing a game. We're playing the game of Christian. We're playing the game of a churchgoer. We're playing the game of a culture warrior. And the reality is this. God is looking at us and saying, hey, I don't want the externals. I don't want the game playing. I don't want the viniar. I don't want a plastic Christian. I want your heart. My son did not die on the cross so that you could go through the motions and play a game and give an appearance to everybody that you're walking right.

[00:39:52] When in fact inside you are all wrong. You are all wrong. And that's not a word of condemnation. That's not a word to, like, incite you to shame. That is a message of love. God loves you more than that. You are fearfully and wonderfully made. When you were in the midst of the matrix of the womb and the place of darkness, God was shaping your body cell by cell together and placing a spirit within you so that one day you could bare his image again as you put your faith in Christ and your life is renewed and you have that revolution in your life, for God now sits at the center that is the heart of God for you. And yet, you know, we are susceptible. We are susceptible to the power of suggestion. Jesus said, take heed that you be not to see because our hearts like to him. This said are prone to wander, prone to leave the God we love God take my heartache and seal it. Fetter my heart to your heart. Oh God. God, you know the tendency that that I have to drift from you. I'll tell you how my sabbatical began. My sabbatical began by saying, God show me my sin. Show me my sin, I want to walk with you, I want to be right with you, and yet I know that I am in by nature, apart from Christ in my life, I am a wicked, self-centered person. Apart from you, I'm the most lost person on the face of the planet. And God, I know that there are tendencies of self-justification where we can conceal and cover and hide our waywardness and then feel as though we're justified in it because we drop a couple of quarters in the religious jukebox and we live our lives dancing to some religious music that God is not the author of.

[00:41:54] God doesn't want our games, God wants our hearts, God has more for us than that, and I would suggest to you today, it is right for us, it's right for all of us to align ourselves, to calibrate our hearts to the one who really loves us. The word calibrate means to adjust an instrument to its true value so that it can read or perform properly. We calibrate stuff all the time. We calibrate the compass on our iPhones so that it reads accurately. If you have a pool, you calibrate the page so you know the levels of the chemicals. If you have a television, you calibrate the colors so that, you know, the picture is presenting something that is accurate. We need to calibrate our life to God's truth because if our starting point is wrong, everything else will be wrong. Everything else will be wrong. Listen, if it's off just a little bit and so I'm saying to you today, maybe you're here and you've never put your trust and faith in Jesus Christ. All of this. What I'm saying to you really is new. And yet you've been searching, you've been seeking, you've acknowledged that there's something that's missing in your life. You want something more and there's something more is not church attendance. There's something more. Is not having spiritual leadership from humans in your life. There's something more is a personal relationship with the son of God who loved you so much that he gave his life on the cross for you so that you could be forgiven and reconciled to a God that you've been estranged from, just like me today. You need to take that step of faith. It's good that you're present here, but God wants you to take the real step of faith and trust in his son.

[00:43:40] Maybe today, that's the step you need to take. Your present here with us are listening online. Maybe today, your prodigal. It's not that you're not safe, but you know that you've been deeply wayward in your relationship with God. And can we be real today? Can we be real, you know, sometimes we're able to conceal and cover our waywardness so that it looks. To everybody else, looks like to everybody else that we're right where we need to be, but we know deep in our heart of hearts, we're not where we're supposed to be. And we we play that game and we conceal what's really happening. And, you know, sometimes as we walk down that road, we begin to believe our own lives, lies so that we ourselves are so self deceived that we can't even see any longer how far we've drifted from God. Or maybe maybe listen, we do know is acutely aware to us, but we're so afraid. We're so afraid. We put on the game. We played it for so long. We think, man, if I lower the curtain, if I lower the curtain and let other people see who I really am, what will other people think? What will other people think? And so we're fearful to take a step of faith that we know we need to take because we're so concerned about what other people think. And I know I've said this to you a thousand times, but there's only one opinion that matters and is the opinion of God is the opinion of God. And I'll just say to you, hey, if Christians are going to be so pharisaical that they can't help you when they're down, they're the ones who have the problem. They're the ones who have the problem.

[00:45:18] This is supposed to be a place where we can lower the curtain and be honest before God and be supported in the decision that we need to make. Not like the prodigal son's brother who just stood there in judgmentalism. We want to have the heart of the father. Maybe today, your prodigal in some sense. And you know that what's happening on the inside is in conflict with what you've been portraying on the outside. And you just need to get right with your father, your heavenly father, who loves you. Maybe today, you know, your your relationship with God is just solid. It's good. You know, you're, like in a great spot. The truth is, you're in a great spot. But I'll tell you what, you might be in a great spot. You're not in a perfect spot. You're not in a perfect spot because nobody is in a perfect spot except Jesus Christ. There are areas of our lives that always need fine tuning, even when we are proverbially, proverbially at our best in our relationship with God. There are always adjustments and opportunities for us to be calibrated to the person of Christ through the power of God's Holy Spirit. And so this is what I think I think today really does represent for us as a church. I think God is giving us an opportunity. I think God is giving our whole church an opportunity. We have a new beginning that God wants to give to us. Yeah, he wants to do it personally. And in a sense, you know, there are private things in our lives that he's going to do, but he wants to do it corporately. He wants to do it in all of our lives. He wants Calvary Chapel, Las Vegas to come to a place where we all collectively say, God, we're holding nothing back, God, we're holding nothing back.

[00:47:05] We belong to you and we want everything that you have for us. Father, we want to live for your pleasure. We don't want to wait to heaven to say to you all, blessing in honor and power and glory be unto you in the land. No, we want to live it now, Father. We want to live it now, because you, God, are the only one who is worthy. Maybe today the struggle for you is in your marriage and you need God to do all work in your marriage. Maybe your devotional life has just become a little stale and you're struggling hearing from God. Maybe today you've been battling meaning and purpose in your life. Maybe you've been overwhelmed with frustration and anger. You see the world around you. You are like a volcano that is ready to explode. God wants to touch that area of your heart. Maybe today you're discouraged, you're living without hope. You're leaning into depression and maybe self-harm or suicide. No, God today wants to step into your life and bring real change. You've had a void in your life that you have sought to fulfill with the things of this world. And everything has left you a little more empty. Would you let the one who is able to fill the void touch your heart? Jesus said this final words here. Jesus said, come to me, come to me. He didn't say Come to church. He didn't look, I'm glad you're here, I'm glad you're here. It's a good step, but it's not the step. The step is coming to him, he didn't say come to a spiritual leader or pastor, he didn't say come to a ministry philosophy. He said, come to me. The one you need is the Lord.

[00:48:44] Come to me. All you who are weary and heavy, laden, you are burdened down. You are overwhelmed, you are stressed out. You feel like you can't go another day. Jesus says, no, you come to me and I will give you rest. I will take the burden off of your shoulders, the sin you've been struggling with, the discouragement that's been weighing you down, the hopelessness that this world is has influenced you. It has encroached into your very soul. Your soul has been being shaped. And he says, I will make you all together a new creature in Christ Jesus. And the all things will pass away and everything will be brand new. Let's pray together. Father, thank you so much for your word today. God, we love you. We love you. Every piece of today is about you and it is for you. And God, would you be merciful today to move through your Holy Spirit in this place just as your spirit hovered over the deep? On the day of creation, father, we pray today. That your spirit would hover over every heart. Every soul, every mind that every lie of the adversary would be broken today, that minds would be renewed. Today that hearts would be healed. That in this place. The healing virtue of Jesus, your son would flow uninhibited, unrestricted God, that we would come to you with the mustard seed of faith in our weakness, God in our struggle, we yet would take the seed of faith that you've given as a gift to each of us. And we would choose today to trust you, maybe for the very first time, trusting you for salvation through faith in your son, maybe coming home to you and sincerely believing that you are a God who's never left us or abandoned us, that your eyes have searched the horizon for our return.

[00:50:52] Maybe today there are areas of fine tuning that we need God, that we would not be so prideful to think that our hearts don't need a move of your hand. Oh, God, I pray that you would do that work in our lives this morning and that we would simply yield to all that you have for us, not a single blessing would be missed in this place. This morning is praying we're going to do something just a little different this morning and. We really do believe it's the desire of God that we would all have an opportunity as the spirit of God is speaking to our hearts to respond. That's a come to Jesus and bring our need, whatever they need may be, like I've said before, maybe the need is salvation. Maybe we're prodigal, maybe we need some fine tuning. Maybe it's our marriage. Maybe it's our devotional life has just been stale. Maybe it's an area of sin that we need God's help with today. We believe that God is backing us to come so that he can do this fresh brand new work. That he can pour out and mercy his miracles upon our lives, that we would simply receive them today through faith, knowing that we have a God who loves us. And so today, I want to invite you this morning just to stand and to come forward. I want to lead you into prayer today. Today. You've never put your trust and faith in Jesus Christ. I want you to stand up right now and to come forward. Today is the day that God is appointed for your salvation today. If your prodigal stand up right now, come forward today, if there's fine tuning. And I do believe that all of us fit in this category, there's fine tuning that needs to happen in your life.

[00:52:50] Stand up and come forward. Let's receive today all that God has for. Your family never being reckless. Oh, it chases me down my cell phone, is it 99? I don't deserve it. Still, you give yourself away. I feel for me never read this. Before I spoke, you were singing, oh. You have Bensoussan. Before I took a breath. Read your life. You have pencils, all kinds. For me, overwhelming, never reckless. I've got chases me down my cell right now, leaves at 9:00 at night. I could hear it. I don't deserve it till you give yourself away. Fee of. B, never ending reckless love. Right. All right, hate like full disclosure today, I think the whole church should be down here at the front. So this is what we're going to do. I'm going to jump down off the stage since we haven't built the stairs yet. I pray I don't break my leg. But but I just want to say to you that as your pastor, I got no problem standing here with everybody else and saying to God, you know, God, align my heart to your heart, Colibri, my heart, God, I want more of you. I want all of you. I'm not ashamed or afraid to say that. And if I'm not ashamed or afraid to say that, then you shouldn't be either. You know, the reality is sometimes we sit in the seat and we know God is speaking to us and we have all of these reasons to not step forward in faith. And in all of that, you know, what you're missing is a fresh work of God's Holy Spirit in your life. Don't leave this place. Don't leave this place with regrets. Don't go another week. Say next week. Don't spend another day living apart from God's perfect plan and purpose in your life.

[00:56:02] Look, don't play a game. Don't play a game. You can go to lots of churches in the valley and play a game you're never going to get away with here because I'm your coach. More importantly, the Holy Spirit is our coach and he is saying, hey, listen, God is worthy of more than the game. God is worthy of more than the game. So listen, I want to encourage you. You have the slightest desire to come forward and to pray and to consecrate your life and to start fresh, to start over, to see what God might help your marriage. Today might be a mess today. Have the honesty and the humility and the boldness to stand up with your spouse and come forward in records to create your life. The all things can pass away and God can make all things. This snow shadow, you light up mountain, you were coming after me. The store you all kicked out. Will tear it out coming after me. There's no shadow. There's no shadow. You lied about it. You all right? Were coming after me. So you all kicked out by what turned out coming after me shadow this shadowy. Bouncin you all five are coming after me. I know you all kicked out by tear down coming after me. Well, me never read. Oh, we're chasing down by cell. I found this in 99, I couldn't earn it, and I don't deserve it. You give your self away. Overwhelming, never be reckless. I've got. And we're going to pray together today. We're going to pray believing. Because there's a promise that God gives to us that if we come by faith, Jesus himself said he would not cast us away. He will not cast you away today.

[00:58:57] He will not turn you away. He will not put up a wall. He will not discard you. He loves you and the promise is this as you come to him with any measure of faith, that is the opportunity he is looking for to do wonderful things in your life today with whatever you bring to him. Please know that as we as we come to him by faith in prayer, that he is going to answer in extraordinary ways over the course of days. As we return our hearts to him. So I want you to follow me in this very simple prayer. Pray with your whole heart, you can pray out loud as you follow, you can pray in the quietness of your heart if you want to. Either way, pray, believing today and expect God brought us to this point. For reasons. Follow me in prayer this morning. God, I believe in God, I trust that you are spoken to me today and you have given to me. The truth of your word. And today, I humble myself, I received by faith your word, I believe in Jesus, your son. He is my savior. He is my lord. He is the center of my life. God, I'm choosing today to live for your pleasure filled me and heal me and restore me and work the miracle in me, in Jesus name, I pray all God's people said, Hey, man, hey, man, I'm so great.