

God's sincere invitation

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Rev David Paterson

[0 : 00] In particular to the book of Job. The book of Job, chapter 33, reading verse 27.

If you look upon man, and if any say, I am sent in pervert in that picture's life, and it profiteth he not. He will deliver his soul from going down to the pit, and his life shall see the light.

And you know, many times in the world, and among people outside it, you have a joke made about someone who starts going to church.

Some understand, to seek to follow God. The joke very often is, you know, to see the light.

[1 : 12] Well, this phrase probably comes from the experience of the Apostle on the road to Damascus.

When he had that tremendously dramatic experience of being blinded by a light from heaven, when he saw the Son of God.

He saw the light. But you know, there are more parts in Scripture that talk about the light than that. Not everyone sees a light, literally, in the heavens. But everyone who will find God will see the light. In other words, that person will be inwardly illuminated by God, to see God's way of salvation, God's way back.

[2 : 24] Now, at the beginning of the year, I want to look with you at God's way back. Because at the start of the year, if we find the way back, the year will be a blessed one.

If we find the way back, if we find the way back, if we find the way back, the year will be another one. The God, to our gentlemen, at the end of the day.

Many of us, at the beginning of the year, those of us who profess to be Christians, and those of us who are not professing to be Christians, many of us, deep down, want something different.

Most of us, at the beginning of the year, want a new beginning. We want to begin afresh.

We want to begin with a slate clean. The problem that we face, of course, is that there are some things on the slate that we can't clean.

[3 : 44] Things that we've done. Things that we've said. Things that we've been. Things that we've been. Things that we boast for.

Things that we ourselves... Things that we reach budgets, are ours that we We ourselves can try, but we can't clean our own slate.

It's like we needless, with the beginning of 1979, of 1969, we went into the bedroom, pillowcases full of feathers and one of us in the family got into a terrific rain and we took and then as we split open the pillowclips we went to the window and we threw it out the window and the feathers began to blow the wind. A moment or two later we might have a bit of regret. We might try to gather up all the feathers because the wind had taken them away. We might gather up as thin as we could and put them into another barn. But the task is too big for us. The feathers of our living have blown far and wide. They've been observed by others. They've affected others. And no matter what we try to do, we can't really undo the past ourselves. There's nobody living who can undo the past. Now we try to, we may want to, we may wish that we had never done the things we've done, all of us. And there's nobody I hope here who thinks as they look over 79 that everything was pretty good. But I want to say to you my granddaae that you can't clean the slate. You can't catch the feathers. You've affected people. You've hurt people. You've led people astray.

You've made people unhappy. So have I. We can't undo it. That's what I want to say. And if you and I look over the past year, we can't look over it without guilt. Or we might devolver seem to blame for everything that happened in our own minds. But leaving that I say, there's guilt. We've got guilt on our shoulders as parents. And I have parents here who don't feel guilt for the way that they've guided their children. The things that their children have seen in their own home. The row. There's so many things. The lack of example.

Our children are looking at us. Over the past year they looked at us. Over the past 20 years they looked at us. Is there anyone in here that doesn't feel guilt? There's people in church here who profess to be Christians. Over the last year. How many people that you've been in contact with have you talked to about Christ? How many people have you witnessed to? Or have they seen you in your mood? And your queer lives? Have they seen you as people that wouldn't like to have a friend? Yes. Guilt. You take your light with God. You're reading the script, your prayer life, your work in the church, your Christian. There's no guilt. The things that you've said.

[7 : 55] The biting sounds. And there's non-Christians. Just the same. You have many opportunities but you've never taken any of them. You know, when you look over the past year they're in guilt.

When most of us have no shame. Shame because of the kind of people we've been. Shame because of the kind of things that we've done. Shame because of what we've left us done. Some of us are so much shame in their fight to look into the reality of the past year. We can dare you to be with a new heart. We can say we can. And wickedness is wickedness. And God is good. And God is just. And God is pure. And fear. We've got all got deep down with a new thing. In our fear. Fear of God. Fear of our contact. Fear of the future. Fear because we've been the kind of people that we've been over the past year. Fear of the past year. But then when you look over the past year there's a mistake that we've made. There are all kinds of mistakes that we've made. Some people we've missed yet. Some people we've hurt. Sometimes willingly, sometimes willingly. We've lived mistakes in every realm. Some of us have had somebody lost champions.

We've had a chance to put things right. Time and again we could have done that thing that put things right but we didn't do it. The years still have lost champions. It still was poor a lot of progress. It's been filled with diversions. If we look over the past year with shame and guilt and fear. We've lost chances and diversions and lack of progress. And surely with sin on our shoulders we've lost. On our shoulders we say, O God, what I really need is a fresh start. I'm a Christian.

What I really need is a new encounter with yourself. What I really need is something to hold on to. A new promise. What I need is a new dimension. I need new light. I need new life.

All right. If this is the pattern of our feelings. If this is the pattern of our past that we are ashamed of. How will we come to the beginning of a new year?

[11 : 05] What I need is a new life. What I need is a new life. What we need to be sure that we are on the right road. That we are on the right path. That we are on the way back to God.

So is there anybody in church this morning who really wants to be on this path and to be sure of it? I said to be on it and to be sure of it. Well if you do, there is nothing more that I can say. There is nothing more that I can do.

It is true of anyone who is in that way of mind. It is true of anyone who is in that way of mind. The Bible calls dead. The brand of spiritual dead is on your forehead.

Now then. What a road. What a road. You want to begin the new year on the right road.

[12 : 15] And say well, how can I get on to the right road. How can I be right with God? How can I get the slate of the past?

Why completely clean so that I can start fresh without fear and without looking back. That I can start a new road that everything is blotted out. That I am clean to make a new beginning.

And all this text that we are trying to give us the answer to our problem.

And all I want to do this morning is to go through the text. And as you go through the text, you will find that there are seven phrases in it. Seven phrases.

And in these seven phrases, if you look at them, you will look at them almost as a ladder with seven writings that you can climb. Or seven steps that you can take back to the path of God.

[13 : 37] And the first is very simple. But it is very precise. And it goes like this. He looketh upon men. Now just stop there. He looketh upon men. Who is he? That he of course is God.

And he looketh upon men. And he looks at them. And he looks at them from a position where he sees everything. Where he misses nothing. He sees the outside. He sees the inside. He sees the life pattern. And he sees the brain pattern.

He looks upon men and he misses nothing. This is the God who made us, the God who we have to do.

There is nothing him to provide. The text this morning says, He looketh upon men. Now this is a fact that must be accepted.

He looks upon men and says, This is a reality that must be feared. Because he who looks upon men, not only sees nothing, not only this is nothing, he forgets nothing.
[15 : 12] So this is a fact to be feared. And yet at the same time, this is a truth to be grasped. He looks upon men, he knows.

So we are dealing not with someone that we can hoodwink, not with someone that we can flatter, not with someone who can make a mistake. He looks upon men and he looks upon you. The whole of 1779, he's looked upon you and he's looked upon me from the moment he's been born and he's missed nothing. And he's seen everything. And he's forgotten everything. And he's written down everything. So therefore, instead of us going to get away from this fact, or away from God, we're going to meet up with God, if not in one of the months of 1880, in the future, he'll look upon men. Alright, that's the first one. Now the second phrase in our text this morning is also very controlled. You can do it. He'll look upon men and if any, say.

[16 : 35] If any man stays. Here we find an invitation. A universal invitation.

If any man stays. So we see two things in this phrase. One, it's a universal invitation. And two, it's a personal opportunity. An invitation and an opportunity. Given to who? Anybody. But you. But me. If any man stays. If any man stays. So we're all invited. We've all got the opportunity. There's a possibility of getting this slate clean. There's a possibility of getting the past and the Lord to death.

[17 : 36] It's for any man. If any man stays. Okay. What? If any man stays.

I have sinned. That's just genuine confession. God is waiting. At the beginning of the year. Not as a priest in a little box. But he's waiting as a God creator. To hear. To hear. Your. Personal confession. Is that very difficult? Your personal confession. Is waiting to hear. If anyone. Say. I have sinned. I have sinned. Your personal confession. Is that difficult? Is it difficult to go to God and make your personal confession? And then he says. I'm perverted that which is right. You know that is my priest. That's a little bit issue. Illumination. Illumination. When we go to God.

[18 : 32] When we go to God. And take our sins. I have sinned. I have sinned. Your personal confession. I have sinned. Your personal confession. I have sinned. Your personal confession. Is that difficult? Is it difficult to go to God and make your personal confession?

Where it exists? If it exists in him, I'm perverted that which is right. I am perverted that which is right. I am perverted and perverted that which is right.

You know that is my friend. That's illumination. I am pervert and self- matter can be your personal confession. There is no problem. Ihr'know that is my friend. It is not illumination. Illumination. When we go to God. When we go to God.

And make our confession. Confession. It must be because when we are illuminating. We must make a confession against upon Cinemoon, the background of our guilt. We must come to the place where we know we perverted that which was right. It must be just a general confession. It must be a lit confession. It must be an enlightened confession. We must know that we've perverted that which is right.

We've gone against that which was right. We've fought against that which was right. We've disembed that which was right. We've rebelled against what is right. God wants to hear a confession of our own rebellion. And a confession that His ways were right and His ways are right and His ways will always be right. Now are you and I prepared to make that confession? Because there's another element in it that we must come to experience. We look as upon men.

[20 : 23] that is reality. If any man say, that is an invitation. I have sinned, that is confession. And perverted that which is right, that's illumination. We would say, and it profit in me not. That's realising it. That's realising it. And what God is calling upon men at the beginning of the year to confess is that the actions of the past year haven't profited, have they? Can you tell me on any occasion when evil brings lasting enjoyment? When disobedience against God brings lasting contentment? I know that pleasure can be pleasurable for a season. I know that you can put God aside and forget him completely. I know that you can live your life and live your life in a vacuum without God. But can you tell me, my friends, of any evil thing that you have done diligently that really brought you contentment? Pleasure that's lasting. You know, evil will never leave us with something that we can be proud of, only with something that we will feel its you will be proud of.

And if you will, it's competent to be. And if you're here at the beginning of the year, and you look over the past year, and with all your teaching and with all your grace, and with all your teaching and with all your teaching, you're going to take care of the past year, I want to suggest to you that if you don't come to the place where you can say, it's profited be not, then you'll not go on to the road back. You'll be

You'll still be made on the broad road that leads to destruction. And so at the beginning of the year, God is asking for a confession that is genuine.

If any man says, he's invited everyone of us, I have sinned and perverted that which is right. I've sinned against God, against His way, against His instructions, against His book, against His Christ, against my conscience, against my background.

I have sinned. That's why I feel shame. That's why I feel guilt. That's why I feel fear. That's why I feel discontent. That's why I'm not really happy. I have sinned.

Then, and it profiteth me not. It never profiteth anyone. Someone says, alright then. What more?

There's no more. Now that's the beauty of this text. There's no more.

[23 : 36] Because if you look at these first four things, or first five things, you will see that they are all on your side.

You see, you've got to say, I have sinned. You've got to find out that you've perverted that which is right.

You've got to admit to God that it's this prophecy. You've got to come to God and I've got to come to God in this condition, with this confession.

So it is what then? Nothing. That's all that God asks this strange thing is. But when we do that, then God comes into action. And that's the beauty of this text. Listen to what it says.

He will deliver his soul from going down to the pit. Your soul will be delivered from going down to the pit.

[24 : 47] And that's redemption. And that's God's heart. And then he says his life will see the light. That's the direction.

And that's what we need going into the new year. We need God's redemption. And God's direction. And God promises it to those who make their confession, who say I have sinned. I've perverted that which is right and didn't profit me.

I want you to look at the story in the New Testament of the Greek Samaritan, or rather the prodigal son. The prodigal son. And I want to suggest to you that when that boy went wrong, he went really wrong, didn't he?

He wasted his substance with riotous living. He had his claim. He was a boon to the harlot. The publicans welcomed him with open arms. He lived high for a period of time until he found out he had really had nothing.

There was nothing left. Nothing to spend and nothing to hope for. Nothing to spend and nothing to hope for.

[26 : 23] The Bible tells us he came to himself. And he said within his own mind, I will arrive and I will go to my father and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven in the night sight and I am no more worthy to be called your son. Make me a servant.

And so, back he came. Now when he arrived very near his home, he found that his father was looking for him. And there you find the same thing as you find in this text. He looketh upon men. He looked at his father's face and his father's face and his father was looking for him. And in his father's eyes there was a welcoming look. And in his father's heart there was a welcoming warmth. And in his father, he looked at his father. And the father, he looked at his father and he was wanting to get right with his father. He was wanting to tell him that he had first had it all right to become of a son. He was wanting to become a servant.

And if you remember the confession that the boy got out. It was the same confession that you find here in the book of Job. His father came and he put his arms around him and welcomed him and the boy got this. He says, Father, I have sinned.

And the father did the rest. And the father did the rest. And you, my friends, you didn't even be here. That's what we have got to come to grips with.

[28 : 58] And the very simplicity. No matter what we have been. No matter what we have done. No matter how we have erred. No matter how we have turned. There is a way back.

But if you were to take this text simply, you would find that it was broken into four parts. First of all, realize that God knows. Right?

Two, bring out into the open yourself what God knows. Look at it. Bring it out. But God knows it already. Third, then let God deal with what he knows about it. As he promises to deal in that space. We having, he.... We have to go into Peace, Title, for the society's 1998. ... And then defend that Christ provide the fulfillment of his admiral business and this December 2007. Now look at the Egyptian...

He starts to go into Africa. ... for a foreign fairy tales in the immediate lihatlyn ruling. Malse, ... way and self-fi, Let God loose path oficalizing you.

[30 : 20] Man ... you, let God forgive you, let God wipe your strength clean, because he promises that if you confess to him, he'll do it. And then, as you go into the year, depend on him to give life to your life every step of the road. That's the pattern that we find in this text.

It's so simple, but yet it's profound. He looks upon men, and if any man say, I have sinned, and perverted that which is right, but it profitably not, he will deliver his soul from going down to the pit. And one says, how will he deliver my soul from going down to the pit?

This way, through giving you the protection of Christ's salvation, through giving you the covering of Christ's righteousness, through submitting to you the forgiveness of Christ's cross.

That's the only way any man can be forgiven. That's the only way any sleep can be complete.

That's the only way any person can go into the new year with hope and without fear.

having the protection of Christ's salvation, through having the protection of the cleansing of Christ's sacrifice. And having the promise of God's inner light by the indwelling Holy Spirit for the years of past.

[32 : 25] the only way any man can be forgiven. You see, as all in the Old Testament, yesterday was made to be new. At the beginning of the year, he looks upon you. He knows about you. He misses nothing. He forgets nothing.

Now, are you going to confess? Now, are you going to confess? You wrote confession? Are you going to say, I've sinned? I've perverted that which is right fought against it. It hasn't profitably. But if you come that far to God, that's as far as you can come. The rest depends on him. And he says, if you come that far, he will come all the way.

He will give you a fresh time. He will give you a fresh time. O gracious God, grant the reminds.

Begin afresh. At the beginning of a fresh year. With confidence. With peace.

And with the wonderful knowledge. With the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all things. And so when he is calling us. And so when he is calling us. To the past. To the past. To the past. By the people of God.

[34 : 14] We become, by the way. Repentance. In confession. And then trust me. To redeem. To wipe the slate clean. At the beginning of this year.

We are going to give us a strength. For the life of the day that we are. For Christ's sake. Amen.