



Sermon – May 26, 2019  
Chris Osborne

**Verses Covered**

*Ephesians 4:7 – 10*

*Psalm 68:18*

*Acts 1:8*

*Hebrews 7:25*

*1 Peter 3:18 - 21*

Great crowd on a weekend, Memorial. You are the subject of the text today. There's a deal that's being set up in April of next year that I went to the launch for it. They're trying to get a 100,000 people into Kyle field next April and have a big event. And I'm really, no problem with that. I'd love to see a 100,000 Christians in Kyle Field or 50,000 Christians, 50,000 lost people hearing the Gospel. That's great. Who in the world would have a problem with that? I have no problem with that. It's a great idea. But the only thing that bothered me was at the launch, and what I heard from the guy leading out in the deal is that it's not an event. That it is a movement. That it's a movement after this event next April in Kyle field. That there will become a movement that will sweep Bryan/College Station, sweep Texas, sweep America, and sweep the world. Now the reason I have a problem with that, and again, I don't have any problem with it being an event. But we need to be clear here, and this is part of the text, God has already started the movement. He started it 2,000 years ago on Pentecost where He started His church. It's the bride of Christ. It's the only thing in this world that Jesus said, no matter what happens, the gates of Hell cannot prevail against it. It is God's church. So there isn't any movement beyond the church. The church is the issue and the church is based on, remember Jesus in that very same passage, He said to Peter, and Peter said, "You are the Christ. The Son of the Living God." So the confession was good. But we misunderstood the other part when Jesus looked at Peter and He said, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar Jonah, flesh and blood has not revealed that to you, but My Father in heaven." So there comes a place, right, where God's Spirit speaks to us. We hear that. We respond to that. And then we become part of the church. Which is God's movement. It is His visible movement of what He did invisibly in our lives. Holy Spirit took up residence in us. Nobody can see that. But the way we respond to that shows the visibility of what's happened. We have to maintain that. And, again, I'm not anti this thing next April. It's great as long as we see it as an event, not as some sort of movement. And as long as we don't lose sight of what really matters. What happens in April next year really doesn't matter. It matters what you and I do all through the year. One of our staff members was working out the other day and a guy came up to him and he said, "Hey, man. Do

you know about the one faith, one hope deal next April?” And he said, “Yeah, I know about it.” “You need to be there, man. It’s going to be great!” And he walked off. Not a word about Jesus. Not a word about His bride. And here’s the danger point. He doesn’t know our staff guy. He had no idea who he was and so I guess he assumes that he’s going to make it next year. Because you don’t know what’s going to happen to somebody between now and next year. And so when we get to a point where a one-day event and a movement coming out is bigger than God’s bride, the church, we have lost our balance.

So we’re going to walk through this passage today. Relax. It’s Memorial Day. You can cook tomorrow night. Listen carefully. Ephesians 4. And remember we’re really in the same area. He said, “I want you to walk worthily of the calling by which you’re called.” And remember when you’re called into the church, you’re called to understand that you’re a sinner and that Jesus was not. And so God comes to you and offers you forgiveness and redemption. You say yes to that offer and you respond to the call. And he says, “I want you to walk worthily of the call.” Which means, remember, two things. I don’t want in my life what put Him on the cross. But I do want in my life what qualified Him for the cross. So I want that to be the case. If I do those two things, then I walk worthily of His calling. And then he talks about the fact, last Sunday, that we’ve got to be unified in here. We’ve got to pursue this, the bond of the Spirit in peace. We’ve got to allow the unity of the Spirit to bind us in peace. We have to make sure we walk together. Jesus prayed that in John 17. That men would know that we are part of Him. So we have this drivenness to be unified inside the church. And then he writes this. Look in verse 7. Here’s where we start.

<sup>7</sup>To each one of us this grace was given

Who’s us? Church. Not some ethereal movement, but the visible church.

<sup>7</sup>To each of us was given this grace

Now what is that? That I don’t do anything. God comes to me through His Holy Spirit, Spirit reveals to me the truth about me and the truth about Jesus. I respond to that and He gives me salvation. He gives me redemption. He gives me what qualifies me to go to heaven when I die. He gives it to me. That’s what grace means. It’s all it means. I don’t do anything. You don’t have to go to church. You don’t have to read your Bible to get saved. All those things are settled. It’s a grace thing. Now watch what he says.

according to the measure of the give of Christ.

Now what in the world does that mean? The gift of Christ was that God gave Him to the world. So He’s born of a virgin. Grows up. At age 30 leaves home. He spends three years teaching, preaching, doing miracles. Dies on a cross. Buried. Resurrected, we’re going to see in a minute, ascended. All of that package, particularly the cross obviously in His shed blood, is the gift. What’s the measurement of that gift? It’s very simple. God took, He hung on the cross from nine to three. So God took everything you and I have ever done or could do and put it on Him. There is no sin that wasn’t dumped on the back of Jesus. There’s nothing you can do that He didn’t cover for you. So the measure is that the forgiveness is full. It is complete. So if you’re sitting here thinking, “Man I terminated a life in the womb. There’s no way He can forgive me.” You do not

understand the measure of Christ. Because the measure of the gift of Christ is that was put on that cross. There isn't anything you can do, anything you haven't done, that is measured in the free gift of Christ as absolutely, completely covered in those six hours. You're covered. The measure is of that free gift that it is complete and full and it is all time. I had a guy in Midland, he came forward in a service, I gave Him to one of my men to disciple, thank goodness. Because after about two weeks he was sitting down with my guy and he said, "I don't think I'm a Christian." And the guy said, "What do you mean? I was there the Sunday you went down asked Christ in your heart. What are you talking about?" He said, "Well I've sinned since I got saved." He said, "Everybody sinned after they're saved." He said, "You've sinned after you've been saved?" He said, "Yeah." He said, "Man, that's really good." It's probably not the right answer, but there is no such thing, OK, there's no sin that you can't be forgiven for and there is no time forgiveness is not offered to you. It's not that you get saved on Monday from everything that you did in the past. You get saved on Monday from everything you did in the past, everything you will do on Monday, and everything you're going to do on Tuesday until the day you die. So if I measure out the gift of Christ, the measurement is that there's nothing I can do He can't forgive me for. And there's no point in time in my life He doesn't forgive me for. There's the measurement. God's grace gives me that.

Now and then he does a weird thing. He quotes from a Psalm in the Old Testament obviously, and he quotes a verse and he says, therefore, it says, I will rise to the highest, he led captivity captive. He rose to the highest, He led captivity captive. He gave gifts to men. Now to quote from the book of Psalm, his statement is that what we know about the Messiah we knew and so here it is. He tells you three things. He says He rose. He went to the highest. That is, and this is key to understand now. So Jesus comes at birth, 30 years later He's out of the house, three years later He's crucified, three days later He resurrects, 40 days later He goes home. Now this is pivotal. He goes home because He's finished with the first part of redemption. He's finished. It's done. After the resurrection, He spends 40 days walking around talking to people and saying, "I'm still in. I got out of the grave. I'm still good." And the ascension from Bethany, in front of His disciples, the ascension is for Him to go home. Why? Because He's finished the first step in the redemption of this planet. He's finished it. So He's gone home. The Bible says they saw Him sitting on the right hand of the throne of God. So He is home. He's finished the first part of redemption. Now what does that mean for us? Listen to what Jesus said right before He ascended from Bethany. Here's His statement. He says, listen:

[<sup>8</sup>you will receive power after the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea, Samaria, and unto the end of the earth.](#)

Gone home. He's ascended. We know He's coming back. So what is this timeframe? It's the timeframe, now listen, where the church, divisible proof of His internal calling, the church offers who He is to the world. There's an offer on the table right now of Jesus to the world. From the ascension to the return. Right now it's a period of offer. If He comes back tomorrow, the offer's off the table. This is the only timeframe that you have to say yes to Jesus Christ and the call of the Holy Spirit in your life. This is the only time that you have that opportunity. This is it. So this is the period of offer.

It's also the period, and this is why the gates of Hell do not prevail against the church. I want you to listen to Hebrews 7:25. Now listen.

<sup>25</sup>Lest He is able to save unto the uttermost those who come through Him to God always living to intercede for them.

You know why we make it? Because He prays for us on a daily level. You know why the gates of Hell don't prevail against the church? Because He prays for the church on a daily level. He doesn't pray for some ethereal, esoteric movement. He prays for the visible church that shows off that the offer has validity. He shows us off. He prays for us. And that ascension makes us the people that offer and makes Him the one who prays while we do the offering until the day He returns. So those of us that offer, will experience the attack of the enemy. Those of us who experience the attack of the enemy will receive the prayer of Jesus Christ. And His prayer is always bigger than the attack of the enemy. So the church, the gates of Hell, cannot stop its ability to offer the grace and the blood of Jesus Christ.

Now then he says, He captured captivity. Weird little statement. He took captive captives. He took the things that captured you and He's captured them. Satan has been captured by Jesus since the cross. You say, "Well he's still alive. Still running around." Yeah, but not for long. He's got a destiny coming. It's interesting that when Jesus went to cast out some demons, one of them looked at Him one day and said, "Lord, whatever you do, don't send us to that place before our time." They knew they were about to be captured. They knew that although they'd still have some time, the capturing is automatic. Satan and his demons have been captured and one of these days the Bible says in Revelation they're going to be dumped into the Lake of Fire and sealed and never ever released. Which is a great day for me because I am tired of watching him wreck homes and lives. He's captured. Death is captured. Again, we've talked about death is not that you cease to exist. But you're separated from each other, from God, from yourself. When He comes back, that death is sealed. Wednesday I will do a funeral service, Tim and I will, for a 40-year-old girl who grew up in this church. Her family's devastated obviously. But the one thing they can cling to is that this thing that's hurt her and will one day hurt them has been captured. So that when I die every person I ever knew in Jesus is there. I will go there because He will come back and get me and take me there. That's what John 14 says. And when I get there, those people that I meet I will never lose again. Death has been captured. Hell's been captured. I was headed toward Hell. But Jesus reversed that course. And now that's not where I'm going because of His grace. So He ascended. He captured captivity. He's going to give gifts to men. We'll look at that next Sunday morning. But then listen to this.

Who's the one that went above except also He descended into the deepest parts of the earth? The one who descended, this one is also the one who rose above all these things of Heaven that He might fill all things.

Now, a lot of question about that verse. One of those reasons why we, when Peter wrote and said, Paul wrote things that are hard to understand, we get that now. But I want you to be clear on what he's saying. So it's going to be a little difficult but I want you to hang with me. He says that Jesus not only ascended that before He ascended, He went to the deepest parts of the earth. He went to Hell. Now before you get mistaken here, let me be very, very clear. Now listen to me. There are

neo-charismatics today, Ken Copeland, Ken Hagin, and Charles Capps, all these guys. Creflo Dollar, all these guys, that will tell you that Jesus went to Hell, which He did in that 40-day timespan, and I'll tell you how we know that in a minute. He went there, but they will say that He went there to be tortured and to spend three days in Hell so that He could take our place in Hell and now we don't go there. You listen to me. If you believe that, you're going to Hell. The Bible says if you add anything or you take away anything from the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross, you are not a Christian and you are accursed by the Father. Anybody that says Jesus suffered in Hell as a part of our redemption has left the purpose of scripture which is to tell us that the blood of Jesus alone is the redeeming factor in our lives. And if you believe anything other than that, you have no hope. So He did not get tortured in Hell. But this is what He did. Listen. Christ also, and I'm in 1 Peter.

<sup>18</sup>Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit.

Now listen. Made alive in the Spirit. When was that? Resurrection.

in which He went and proclaimed to the Spirits in prison

Now there's the deepest part of the earth. Why?

<sup>20</sup>Because they formerly did not obey when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. <sup>21</sup>Now baptism which corresponds to this, now saves you not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience – through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Now it's interesting inside this passage and a verse or two below, what you have in the Greek. You have to words in the Greek for preach. You have *kerusso*, which means just to proclaim in the square. It was a secular word. It's in the New Testament. But there's another word in the New Testament also used. We all know it, *euangelizomai*, which means to preach the good news. Interestingly enough, both of those words are used inside this passage. So there are two things Jesus did. After His resurrection, He will spend 40 days appearing to people and at one moment He goes to where Hell is. Steps into Hell and He does two things. He proclaims that their destiny is now sealed; they're not getting out because of His death on the cross. It was a proclamation of judgement. But then He looked at the people who died in the days of Noah because they're cut off, many of them, before they have an opportunity. Everybody died at the same moment. There wasn't a waiting. And so those people are offered, not the second time, but the first time, they're offered the gospel. You say, "Well surely they will come." No. I don't think any of them came. Adam and Eve, not just that they were in a perfect place, perfect relationship, but surely, surely when God came down and talked to them, they sensed His love, right, His warmth of His presence, the joy of being with Him, surely they felt that. And yet in spite of feeling that, this guy comes up and says, "Hey, I know what He told you about this tree, but He's a liar." Satan is so good at what he does that he convinced people who lived in the warmth of the King and believed He was a liar. He got a third of heaven who are looking at the King on the throne every single day, he got a third of heaven to say, "Listen. Come with me boys. We can overthrow Him." So my bet is right here

when Jesus offered the gospel that he looked at them and said, “Don’t take it. We’re going to whip Him in the end.” All I want you to know, He did go preach in Hell. He was not tortured there. Our redemption’s on the cross and the resurrection. It’s not on going to Hell. When He did go to Hell, He went there to proclaim their judgement was secure and victory can be offered to anybody who the offer is extended to. So our job as a church, not as some ethereal movement, our job as a church based on these verses, our job is to walk worthily of our calling so that His glory comes out of us so that when we make the offer out here the world sees in us the visibility of the value and the worth of accepting that offer. We demonstrate in the church the beauty of Jesus Christ.

Father, drive that home to us. Drive that home to us in this room. So that, Father, we leave here caught up in being Your bride and that we offer to this world the visibility of what you’ve done inside our souls. Thank You for the healing, the forgiveness, the implanting of the righteousness, the destiny change. Those things that captured us are gone. Father let us show people in the Brazos Valley the offer You have on the table right now before You come back is worth always taking. Use us to that end. I ask You that in Jesus Christ name.