

Who Do You Say That I Am?

Seeing and Delighting in Jesus through an Expositional
Journey through the **Gospel of Matthew**

131- Jesus and John the Baptist- Part 2
Wisdom is Vindicated by Her Deeds- Part 1

Church June 22, 2025

Matthew 11:7-19

7 As these men were going away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John, "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

8 But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Those who wear soft clothing are in kings' palaces!

9 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and one who is more than a prophet.

10 This is the one about whom it is written, '**BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.**'

11 Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist! Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12 From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force.

13 For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John.

14 And if you are willing to accept it, John himself is Elijah who was to come.

15 He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

16 "But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market places, who call out to the other children,

17 and say, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.'

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon!'

19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

To the Glory of God the Father; God the Son;

and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Now around 400 years before Jesus was born- God the Holy Spirit “moved” on a man named, “*Malachi*”¹- whose “*Oracle*”² was recorded for us and placed as the final Book of the Hebrew Bible. And in **Malachi 4:4-6**, the Prophet said,

4 “Remember the law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel.

5 “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord.

6 “He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.”

Now understanding what the Prophet Malachi meant by what he said in these three verses back in the 5th Century BC. is the Key to us understanding *why* John the Baptist was sent by God the Father to do what he did in the 1st Century AD. But why is that? Because in verse 14 of **Matthew 11**, Jesus said,

And if you are willing to accept it, John himself is Elijah who was to come.

So, because Jesus said that John the Baptist WAS the Fulfillment of that ancient Prophecy- means that John the Baptist is going to do what God through Malachi said he was going to do. And that *why* we need to understand what Malachi meant in his Prophecy.

Now when the Gentile medical doctor, named, “*Luke*” (Greek: “*Loukas*”/Latin: “*Lucas*”) wrote his Gospel Record on behalf of the Apostle Paul, he was careful to quote what the Angel Gabriel said to Zacharias about his son, John the Baptist in **Luke 1:13b-17**:

13 ..."Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John.

14 You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.

15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb.

16 And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God.

¹ Many Scholars consider the name, “*Malachi*” to simply be a “title” or a Pseudonym” which means: the “*Messenger of Yahweh*”, while the actual person who wrote this Book was Ezra.

² In **Malachi 4:1**, the term, “*oracle*” refers to the divine Message or Revelation delivered by the prophet Malachi, which was God's Word to Israel at that Time

17 It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Here the Angel, speaking as a "*Messenger from God*" promised this old man, that his son would do several things:

- **he will be great in the sight of the Lord**
- **he will drink no wine or liquor**
- **he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb**
- **he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God**
- **he ... will go as a forerunner before Him [Jesus] in the spirit and power of Elijah**
- **[he will] TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN**
- **[he will turn] the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous**

... and the End Result of his Ministry will be that John the Baptist will...

... make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

So, Dr. Luke infallibly *echoed* what Jesus Himself said about John by *attaching* the ancient Prophecy of Malachi to John the Baptist. But in *addition* to fulfilling the Prophecy of Malachi, where he would "**restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers**", But John would *also* fulfill the *additional* Responsibility that God- through the Angel- gave to Zacharias in **Luke 1:17**, who said John would,

[turn] the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous

... which is simply another Way of understanding that John the Baptist would be used by God to bring wholesale "*Repentance*" to the people. And that is why the Apostle Matthew quoted John, when he began his Ministry, as crying out,

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 3:2)

But in the very next verse- immediately AFTER Matthew quoted John- Matthew linked John the Baptist to another- even *more ancient* Prophecy- from Isaiah that said,

For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet when he said, "THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!'" (Matthew 3:3)

... which Matthew *infallibly* quoted from **Isaiah 40:1-5³**:

1 "Comfort, O comfort My people," says your God.

2 "Speak kindly to Jerusalem; And call out to her, that her warfare has ended, That her iniquity has been removed, That she has received of the Lord's hand Double for all her sins."

3 A voice is calling, "Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.

4 "Let every valley be lifted up, And every mountain and hill be made low; And let the rough ground become a plain, And the rugged terrain a broad valley;

5 Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, And all flesh will see it together; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

... and Matthew says that John the Baptist WAS that "Voice" (v.3), who would cry out:

... Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God. Let every valley be lifted up, And every mountain and hill be made low; And let the rough ground become a plain, And the rugged terrain a broad valley

... which is simply a spiritual Metaphor that the Prophet used to denote a genuine hatred of Sin along with a genuine Repentance to the degree that the Path to God (Salvation) would no longer be cluttered and obstructed (by their Sins) but be clear. And the Result that Isaiah said would come on the Heels of John (Elijah) calling the people to Repentance would be...

Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, And all flesh will see it together

³ There is special Significance to **Isaiah 40** and the wonderful Promises it makes concerning the Messiah (Jesus). For 39 Chapters- Isaiah has referred to Israel's Sin and their Need for Repentance and a return to obeying the Law of Moses. This represents the 39 Old Covenant Books of the Law. Beginning here at the Beginning of Chapter 40- God speaks to His people, "**Comfort!**" This signifies a new Day (Covenant) that will be brought in through the Life and Ministry of Jesus- of whom John the Baptist is the "Forerunner".

... which refers solely to Jesus- Who IS the, “*Glory of God*”! (**Hebrews 1:3**)

So, Repentance will be preached by John the Baptist. And it is when people begin to *genuinely* hate their Sins and turn from them- that the Pathway to the Glory of God- Jesus Christ- will become available to them! In other words, without Repentance there is NO Salvation! And this has to do with the *part* of Salvation called, “*Justification*”- which is the Forgiveness of ALL Sin AND the imputation of Righteousness by Faith ALONE.

You see, as a fallen Rebel- we have TWO Problems and NOT just one:

1. We are guilty Sinners
2. We are wholly Unrighteous

... which means we have two great NEEDS:

1. We NEED to be forgiven of ALL Sin
2. We NEED to become perfectly Righteousness

You see, in order for anyone to be able to stand in God’s Presence *requires* that we are *completely* Spotless; *totally* Sinless; and *perfectly* Righteous! In other words, we MUST be “JUST LIKE GOD!” So, being forgiven of ALL Sin is wonderful- because without “Forgiveness” nothing else is possible. But unless and until we are also perfectly “*Righteous*”- we still CANNOT enter into God’s Presence! So, without Righteousness- we are DOOMED!

And this is an Area of Salvation that is almost completely ignored by those in the modern Church. Yet the Bible teaches very clearly that “*Righteousness*” is a Requirement for Salvation.

Okay, so, what does it mean for us to be “*Righteous*”? What does that look like? God Himself defined Righteousness as the “*State of Being*” where we live 24/7/365 in total and complete Obedience to God’s Commands. But what are the “*Commands of God*”? There are literally hundreds and hundreds of Commands found in the Bible. But in **Matthew 22:37-40**, Jesus said ALL of the many Commands of God can be summed up with just two:

37 ... "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND."

38 This is the great and foremost commandment.

39 The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

40 On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

... so, “*Righteousness*” is then defined by Jesus as possessing “PERFECT LOVE”!

Therefore, “*Sin*” and “*Unrighteousness*” is defined as NOT loving God and Man- PERFECTLY- and “*setting our Love*” on something else that “has been made” and that is “falling away” (Idolatry).

So, “*Sin*” is being *unwilling* (and *unable*) to love God with “**ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND**” (and **STRENGTH- Mark 12:30**) and being *unwilling and unable* to love our fellow-Man “**AS YOURSELF**”! So, the largest Problem that Mankind has today- is that we do NOT love God and we do NOT love our fellow-Man- to the Degree that God requires.

And that means that “*Sin*” is also “LAWLESSNESS”- which has to do with us living our Lives *contrary* to God’s Law (or living as though we had no Law from God to go by). So, God’s Law *demand*s “*Perfect Love*”. And so, the Result of being “*Lawless*” is that we are “*Transgressors of God’s Law*”- which means we are “*Sinners*” and are *completely “Unrighteous”*!

So, how may we obtain this “*Righteousness*”? We MUST obey God’s Law (to love God and Man- perfectly)! Simple, right? But here’s the Catch- we MUST obey- without ANY Flaw or Failure- in Thought; Word; Deed; and Intent! And we MUST love like that- CONTINUALLY (24/7/365)! And we MUST love like that- in every phase of our Existence!

But to obey God’s Law and love God and Man- *perfectly*- we CANNOT yield to ANY Temptation to love *less* than God demands in our Thoughts; our Actions; our Words; and even in the Intent of our Hearts! And we CANNOT love *less* at any Time. In other words, we MUST love *perfectly and continually*- 24/7/365- in EVERY phase of our Existence. And if we do that- we will EARN the Righteousness that God’s Law promises! But if we fail- even one time- or if we fail in just one phase of our Existence- we are NOT Righteous at all- and are totally and completely *Unrighteous*!

Bottom Line- it is IMPOSSIBLE for any human to love like that- perfectly and continually. It is NOT a matter of just putting forth more Effort. Nobody born after Adam sinned can love like that. And that universal Failure is what causes every human on earth to be a Sinner and to be totally and completely Unrighteous- which means we are all heading straight into the Flames of eternal Damnation!

Not in His pristine Holiness- God could have left us in that terrible Condition and remained perfectly Righteous. God could have done that- but thanks be to God- He didn’t. Instead, God went to great Lengths (at great Cost to Himself- the Death of His own Son)- to bring us into His Presence; wash away ALL Sin; and make us “fit for Heaven” by taking the spotless Righteousness that Jesus *earned* (by Him obeying God’s Law- *perfectly and continually*) and

“IMPUTING” that Righteousness to us- by the Agency of Faith ALONE! And that is the part of Salvation called, “*Justification*”.

Now Rome incorrectly teaches that Sinners become Righteous- slowly- over their entire Lifetime- by Grace and through Faith AND by those people faithfully and continually partaking and participating in the Sacraments. So, their unbiblical Formula for Justification is:

Grace + Faith+ Works= Justification

... but the Bible teaches another Formula:

Grace + Faith= Justification + Works

The Bible teaches that Sinners are made “*fit for Heaven*”; they are “*made to be Righteous*”; in other words, they are Forgiven and made to be Righteous- solely by BELIEVING and NOT by DOING! “*But does the Bible actually teach that, Brother Blair?*” It sure does. Please look closely at **Romans 4:1-3** with me:

1 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found?

2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

3 For what does the Scripture [Genesis 15:6] say? "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS."

... now look at **Romans 4:11-13:**

11 and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them,

12 and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.

13 For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through [his Obedience to] the Law, but through the righteousness of faith.

... now read **Romans 4:16-18**

16 For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,

17 (as it is written, "A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I MADE YOU") in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist.

18 In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, "SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE."

... and, finally, read **Romans 4:23-25:**

23 Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, 24 but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,

25 He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.

So, "*Justification*" happens to individual Sinners today because of the "*Righteousness of Faith*". So, AFTER we have experienced the Miracle of the New Birth- we are forgiven and made Righteous by Faith ALONE and NOT by engaging in Good Works- not even good *religious* Works- like keeping the Sacraments. And that means that Rome teaches and preaches an unbiblical and false Doctrine about Justification that CANNOT and DOES NOT accomplish ANYTHING for ANYBODY! And that is very Bad. But it gets even Worse- because by teaching falsely about Justification- Rome actually hinders, stops, and "gets in the Way" of people from becoming Justified by Faith ALONE- because, through their false Teaching about Justification they render the biblical Truth about how Sinners are Forgiven and made Righteous- to be- in Essence- a "*legal Fiction*"! ⁴

So, as John the Baptist preached Repentance- he baptized those, who had ALREADY turned from their Wickedness and had ALREADY turned to God. And in doing this- he was fulfilling what the Prophet Malachi foretold about 4 Centuries earlier and he was

⁴ The Council of Trent (1545-1563) was held to give an "*Answer*" to the Protestant Reformation. And at the End of the "*Summary Statement*" of that Council, the Roman Authorities *formally and officially* condemned the biblical Truth of "*Justification by Faith ALONE*" as a Heresy and maintained that Justification is a "life-long Process" that involves BOTH Faith AND Works- in direct Contradiction to the Scriptures. Rome further pronounced an "*eternal Damnation without the Possibility of Forgiveness*" (Anathema) on anyone who believes or teaches "*Sola Fide*" (Justification by Faith ALONE). So, Rome has *formally, officially, and categorically* condemned the biblical Gospel. And at that Moment- the Roman "Church" *ceased* to be a Christian Church and became nothing more than a "*Man-made and false religious System*" that has *purposefully* isolated itself from the Authority of Scripture. And so, faithful Christians everywhere should constantly and consistently pray for the Leaders of this "System" and call them to Repentance.

Restore[ing] the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers... (Malachi 4:6a)

But WHY was it important for Elijah (John) to do this? Because Malachi said if Elijah fails in his Mission- something very horrible will happen:

... so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.

... which is the “*Curse of Fatherlessness*” that has decimated many Cultures as well as entire Civilizations since Gods spoke this.

So, God has promised that He will...

... come and smite the land with a curse

... unless Elijah (John) is successful in his Effort to...

... restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers

So, John the Baptist was called and chosen to do three very important Tasks through his Ministry:

1. He was to publicly identify the Jewish Messiah; the Savior; Who, through His Life; Ministry; Death; Resurrection; and Ascension would bring the Old Covenant to a *decisive* End and inaugurate the *infinitely* superior New Covenant and “save His people from their Sins”.
2. He was to prepare people to receive Jesus by them being Justified (repenting and believing)
3. He was to **“turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers”**

Those are the *primary* Purposes of God raising up John the Baptist “in the Power and Spirit of Elijah”. But what did Malachi mean when he used the phrase,

... restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers

But we should understand this Prophecy in two different Ways:

1. Natural
2. Spiritual

The “*Natural*” Meaning of this Prophecy

Right now- this Nation, as well as many others, are reeling over the Weight of the Divine Curse of “*Fatherlessness*”. Because in an ever-growing number of Homes in the richest and freest Nation in the History of the World- there is NO Father present to love and lead and protect and provide for those in the Home. And even in those Homes where there is a physical Father present- there is normally NO strong, godly, or loving Father. There is normally just a Man, who cares little or nothing, about God and God’s “Divine Call” on him to protect, provide and lead his Family.

And as a Result- the Family is awash in Sin; Poverty; Crime; Disease; and many, many instances of Violence; along with a pervasive and almost impenetrable Cloud of Darkness that negatively affects each Member.

Now if you read the Bible with any degree of Honesty- you can clearly see that God created them *uniquely* Male and Female on purpose. So, the Distinctions; the Differences; the Uniqueness of both Males and Females is NOT some random and accidental glitch of the evolutionary Process. The Differences between Men and Women are “by Design”. They are both *Purposeful* and *Beneficial*. Therefore, those God-given Distinctions are NOT something that we should *ignore*; or *minimize*; or work to *overcome*. We should *teach* and *applaud* those Distinctions and *celebrate* the amazing Majesty of God, Who wisely made them different.

The Bible clearly and unapologetically declares that God sovereignly created Adam in a different Way; at a different Time; and for a different Purpose than He created Eve. And God established *unique* Roles and Responsibilities for the Man and the Woman based NOT in Competency but in the Fact that God made them as Male and Female. In other words, God established Roles and Responsibilities for both the Man and the Woman to yield to; surrender to; and fill- based ONLY in the Fact that He made them to be a Man or a Woman.

And those Sex-based Roles and Responsibilities were established by God BEFORE the Fall. And the Reason that matters is because, since that “*Divine Order*” was established by God BEFORE the Fall- therefore Salvation in Jesus Christ does NOT reduce; abrogate; or eliminate that “Order”. The Scriptures are crystal Clear about this- God has called Men to lead. And He has called Women to support the Man as he leads. And THAT is *why* God created them as Males in their Mother’s Womb.

Now I am not foolish or naïve; and I realize that what I just said to you is diametrically the opposite of what is being taught today in the public School

System; the Federal Government; the Military; the Corporate world; and, sadly, in many Churches. But what I just said to you is the Truth from the Inspired; Inerrant; and Infallible Word of the living God. Therefore, in total and complete Rejection of the ungodly “Feminist Movement”; and in direct Opposition of the personal Opinion of far too many people- Men are called to lead and Women are called to support that male Leadership.

And when strong, godly, and loving Men lead- everyone is blessed. But when Men abdicate their Responsibility to lead; when Men rebel against the clear Commands and Expectations of sacred Scripture, “wimp-out” and embrace, empower, or allow Female Leadership; or when Men are NOT even present in the Home to lead- the Wife and Mother (or Grandmother; Aunt; Sister; and even Daughter) is left to try to her best to stand in the Place of the Man and to attempt to function contrary to her own Nature to provide; protect; and lead the Family.

And the nearly constant Result of Families with NO Father or NO strong, loving, and godly Father present- is Sin; Chaos; Misery; and Destruction. For Example, when I was a child- back in 1960- the “*Illegitimate Birthrate*” in the Black Community was 24%. 24% of ALL Families in the Black Community had NO Father present at all. And as of 2022- that number is now 69%! So, even though the scourge of Segregation has been removed- there are today almost 3 times as many homes, in the Black Community, who have NO Father!

In 1960, the Father was either missing or non-existent in the White Community to the tune of around 7%. Today, that number is 25%! Again, with all the technological, medical, and financial Breakthroughs- almost 4 times as many homes in the White Community have NO Father!

What does this mean? It means that since 1960, this Nation has spent the entire “net worth” of all the Fortune 500 largest Corporations combined- trying to fight against the Destruction in our Society that the “*Divine Curse of Fatherlessness*” has caused. And yet, the Problem is infinitely Worse! So, today, Crime; Drugs; Poverty; Violence; the lack of Education and Opportunity; Disease dominates MORE homes than ever before! And today, Female led homes are now affecting the 4th and even 5th Generations- IN THE SAME FAMILIES!

Today, 98.6% of ALL gang members in young people under 25 comes from a Home with NO Father or NO strong Father. An even higher percentage of Child molesters and mass-murderers come from a Female dominated Home. A doctor friend of mine told me that he collapsed in the hallway of Memorial Hospital and wept bitterly after he delivered the 3rd Child of a girl- who was just 16 years old! And he told me through tears, “*That child is doomed to live a Life of Poverty, Crime; Drugs, and statistically speaking, will sire 2-3 more illegitimate Children by the time he is 18!*”

The “*Divine Curse of Fatherlessness*” is destroying our Country! There isn’t enough Money in the world to fix this Problem and NO Law can stop it. Washington does NOT have a single Answer to this Plague! Yet the Answer is amazingly Simple: Fathers! Strong, godly, and loving Fathers, who lead; who order their Homes; who love their Wives like Christ loved the Church; who teach their Children; who establish Discipline and Order in the Home; and who can truthfully and unashamedly say with Joshua,

As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. (Joshua 24:15)

“Biblical Manhood and Womanhood” is one of the most *consequential* Teachings I have ever been involved in- in over 54 years of my “Journey with Jesus”. And it flows out from the Reality that this Nation- the United States of America is reeling like a drunkard under the “Curse of Fatherlessness” as both Men and Women no longer know what it means to be what God made them to be. And so, we must heed the “Natural” Meaning of the Prophecy of Malachi and realize that if God does not:

... restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers

...we are DOOMED!

So, we, as sons and daughters of the Lord Christ MUST be about at least three things:

1. If at all Possible- with those of you, who are estranged from your natural Fathers- please *initiate* a Reconciliation with him- quickly! YOU NEED YOUR NATURAL FATHER! Saved or Lost- he is the Man God chose to be your Father. And his input into your Life is crucial to removing the multi-generational “*Curse of Fatherlessness*”
2. With those of you, whose Father is dead or unknown- please hear me. Find a *substitute* Father- quickly! Find a godly, loving, and strong Man who is able and willing to “speak into your Life”; hold you Accountable; and be a living Example of what a Father should be- so that when you become a Father- you may emulate his Faith and NOT perpetuate the Curse.
3. And with your natural Father; or the Father you become reconciled with; or with your substitute Father- establish a very loving; real; and useful Relationship with him. Go to him or speak with him- OFTEN! Sit at his Feet. Humble yourself to him. Ask him to pray for you. Listen to him. Look

at him as a Gift from God. Cherish your Time together. Learn from him.
Emulate his Faith!

Finally, do NOT tolerate Fatherlessness. It is a Curse. Hate it; reject it; and work hard to eliminate it! You Fathers- be willing to be the strong, godly, and loving Father to your Sons and Daughters that they need. And those of you, who will fill the Role of a *substitute* Father- be willing to “pour out” to those young people- the Wisdom; the Experience; the Accountability; and the Example of what a real Father looks like in the 21st Century. And by God’s Grace and to God’s Glory- we might see the “Curse of Fatherlessness” lifted from our Land!

The *Spiritual* Meaning of this Prophecy

The “Forerunner” to Jesus was John the Baptist. He was called and empowered by God to...

- **turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God**
- **go as a forerunner before Him [Jesus] in the spirit and power of Elijah**
- **TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN**
- **[turn] the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous**

... and to...

... 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!

... and John the Baptist fulfilled that on the Eve of the 1st Advent of Jesus to this earth!

So, now we stand on the Threshold of the 2nd Advent- the single most cataclysmic Event in the History of the World. And we must remember that, in the Prophecy from Malachi- the Prophet said that God would send Elijah before...

... the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord.

... which means if you are ready to meet Jesus Face to face- then the 2nd Coming of Jesus to this earth will be THE single GREATEST Day of your Life! But if you are NOT ready to meet Jesus- then His Return to this earth will be THE single most TERRRIBLE Day of your Life! It would have been better that you were never born than to stand before Jesus unsaved!

And so, in that sense- the Christian Church will act as the Forerunner to the 2nd Coming even as John the Baptist filled that Role

in the *first*. And so, just before Jesus comes back- the Church will...

... restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers

... and end the “*spiritual* Curse of Fatherlessness”!

So, what does that mean? It means that by preaching and teaching the Inspired; Inerrant; and Infallible Word of the living God AND by us living our Lives to the Glory of God- we will be used by God to “*Reconnect*” those Believers, who are alive today (the Children) with those who came before us (the Fathers).

You see, part of what it means to be “Fallen” is that we see the World through our own eyes. And people tend to separate themselves from those who came before us- and there is a terrible and destructive Disconnect from History. And even in the Church- people tend to think that Christianity started when they were saved while the “more aware” Believers think that Christianity started with Martin Luther- 500 years ago.

This Disconnect from History and from those who came before us is NOT helpful but is very hurtful. Because the Reality is that we CANNOT even image where we are today or where we are heading in the Future- unless we understand where we have come from in the Past.

All through the Bible- the term, “*Fathers*” was used to illustrate the men God used to fashion and “hammer- out” who we are and what we believe. And so, today, we have...

- The “Fathers” of our Faith
- The Apostolic “Fathers”
- The “Fathers” of the Church
- The “Fathers” of our Country

For example, in **Exodus 3:15**- BEFORE God delivered the Children of Israel from Slavery in Egypt- He *reconnected* the people on the earth at that Time- with those who had come before them.

God, furthermore, said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.

... which helped them to understand Who He was and Who they were.

So, God was NOT simply some vague, unknown Entity, who had a lot of Power. He had ALREADY been revealed to three men: Abraham; Isaac; and Jacob- many Centuries BEFORE Moses was ever born. And those three men became the “Fathers” of the Faith.

So, by default, that means He was NOT the “god” of Terah; Esau; or Ishmael. He very *specifically* and very *narrowly* identified Himself as being the one, true, and living God of those three “Fathers”- ALONE! So, He was THAT God- the God that Father Abraham saw and talked with. The God who met with Father Isaac; and the God who led Father Jacob! And so, BEFORE God freed the Jews from Slavery- He used Moses to **restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers.**

Then, after 40 years of wandering- but BEFORE they entered the Promised Land- God used Moses again to **“restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers”** to a whole new generation of people- by saying this in **Deuteronomy 1:21:**

See, the Lord your God has placed the land before you; go up, take possession, as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has spoken to you. Do not fear or be dismayed.’

And even in every phase of Life in this Country- we are encouraged to constantly look BACK- to the men God used to form this “Experiment with Democracy” and read what they said- so we can get a solid Foothold on Who we are; Where we have come from; Where we are going; and How we are to proceed. And we are told to do that and NOT simply “wing it on our own” and “decide for ourselves” What to do!

And the same thing is true in the Church today. Those of us, who truly understand the Value and Importance of our spiritual Fathers- have long ago rejected the unbiblical Concept of “consulting with ourselves” about what the Bible says and what it actually means by what it says. And so, we look BACK. And we humble ourselves to consult with the many, many Teachers and Fathers that God the Holy Spirit raised up in over the last 2,000 years. And that is what God uses to help us navigate correctly through the pages of sacred Writ.

As I have told you many times- there is a strange, Man-made and unbiblical Teaching, that is popular in our Day, that says: *“Since I am filled with the Holy Spirit- I have the Ability to by-pass and ignore and dismiss the Office of Teacher that God the Holy Spirit established in the very Beginning and ‘go it alone’; ‘one-on- one’- ‘me and God’.* And He will show me- directly- what the Bible says and means”- completely disconnected from 2,000 years of Church History and tens of

thousands of godly Men!” And their “Mantra” is: “I’m going to be led by God and NOT Man!”

And it all sounds so very spiritual. But in Reality, dear friends, for anyone today to try to figure out what the Bible says and means- *on their own*- without availing themselves of the “Gift of Teachers” and the “Fathers of our Faith” that God Himself gave to the Church- reveals a deep-seated Distrust in the Sovereignty of God and is simply another manifestation of the Rebellion of our fallen Nature.

But with millions of modern- Believers who are now completely *disconnected* with the “Fathers” who came before us- it is no Mystery as to why there is so much false Teaching in the modern Church; and why ancient Heresies- that were confronted; exposed; and rejected many Centuries ago- are making a huge comeback in our Day.

Because even though they want to claim that they are following God and NOT Man- all they have done is to *isolate* themselves from the many Fathers who could help them; and they are now just following one Man- *themselves*! The Bible commands every single one of us to...

... contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints. (Jude 3)

... and so, we are NOT to invent a single new thing about the Christian Faith. So, contrary to what many teach today- we do NOT need a “*new slant*” on Christianity. We do NOT need to be *creative* when it comes to Divine Truth and God doesn’t need my Cleverness or my entrepreneurial Abilities. God wants FAITHFULNESS! And He wants me to...

Fight, struggle, and contend to have and hold and obtain the “once for all handed down to the saints” Christian Faith that was given by Divine Inspiration to the apostolic Fathers!

So, part of the Responsibility that we have today is to *reconnect* modern Believers with the “Fathers” of the Faith and the Truth about God that those Fathers understood. And we do that through the full Exposition of the Scriptures- utilizing the Assistance of the Gift of Teacher that God gave to the Church.

“But Brother Blair- haven’t there been many false Teachers throughout Church History? You want me to consult with them, too?” Yes, but NOT in the Way you might think. Because even when a Teacher is wrong- it is helpful to understand WHY they were wrong; WHERE they got off-base; and HOW we may avoid that same Mistake.

And so, by filling our Role as a “Forerunner”- in the spirit and power of Elijah- to the 2nd Coming of Jesus to this earth- the Church- acting as ONE BODY- will be used by God to...

... make ready a people prepared for the Lord!

Amen. Let's pray.

© 2021-2025 by *Delighting in God Ministries, Inc.* All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America
Delighting in God Ministries, Inc. PO Box 147 Saucier, Mississippi 39574 www.delightinginGod.life
Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise, are from *The New American Standard Bible* © 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission

This is a single Transcript in a larger series of Sermons of a verse-by-verse “Journey” through the **Gospel of Matthew**. You are free to reproduce it and distribute it as the Lord leads you- without Cost or Reimbursement to us with the Stipulation that you may not add anything or take anything away from this Transcript without the express written Permission of *Delighting in God Ministries, Inc.* and that this complete Copyright Statement remains at the end of all copies.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your Pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God ALONE!