

### Q3 L03 - **The Roots of Restlessness** - 2021-07-17

Luccas Rodor: Hi, friends. Welcome to our "Sabbath School Study Hour," where we will be studying the Sabbath School lesson. I'm so excited. For our study today, we have a really good, a really deep biblical study. And I'd like to welcome all of you watching here from our local community. I'd like to welcome everyone that's watching online. I know that maybe some of you are in different time zones, and so we truly appreciate you investing this time in studying God's Word.

This week, we will be studying from our quarterly, our new Sabbath School quarterly, which is "Rest In Christ." It is so important for us to learn how to rest in Jesus and to find the true rest that he provides. This week's lesson will be--the title of this week's lesson is "The Roots of Restlessness," and I will be leading out today, so I'm excited about that.

But before we actually get into the lesson, I'd like to invite you to take advantage of our free offer. This week's offer is called "The Surrender Of Self." And so, if you're within the continental North America and you'd like a physical copy of this free offer, then you can call 866-788-3966 and you could ask for offer number 153. However, if you'd like a digital download, then you could go to [study.aftv.org/SH087](http://study.aftv.org/SH087), or again, if you're in the U.S., you could text S-H-0-8-7 to the number 4-0-5-4-4, and we'd be more than happy to send you a digital download of this free offer.

Let's say a Word of prayer before we begin. "Dear Lord, thank you so much for this beautiful day. Thank you for your love, your kindness. Thank you for your mercy. And thank you for helping us uproot the roots of restlessness in our lives. Lord, there's so much for us to learn with our study today. I ask you to just speak through the speaker. I ask the words that come out to be the words from heaven. And I ask you to allow us to learn from you, Lord, how to do this uprooting that sometimes is so difficult for us even to perceive in our lives. Bless everyone here, everyone that's watching online, and everyone that will watch this later on, Father. Allow it to be a blessing. I ask this in Jesus's name. Amen."

Well, studying this week's lesson was truly a blessing because the topics that are mentioned, the topics that are included, are topics that are so obvious. But what I've come to understand and what I've have come to learn, is that usually things that seem to be obvious, we kind of forget them, right, we kind of cast them aside because it's so obvious, it's so easy, and so we just kind of cast it aside sometimes. We don't really consider it. But in the end, these things are the things that we'll come to think that, "Wow. Maybe, I should have paid more attention to that."

So I'm really excited and interested about the topics this week. There are several smaller topics. The memory verse comes from James 3:16, that says, "For where envy and self-seeking exists, confusion and every evil thing are there."

Now, even on a superficial observation of this quarter's lesson title, and not to mention, you know, the really diving deep into each individual lesson, each of the individual 13 themes that cover the development of the lesson this quarter, allows us to perceive that this quarter's lesson, this quarter's lesson is about one of the most central, important, vital

aspects of what we learn in the Bible, which is rest in Christ, right? Rest in Jesus. That is one of the most important things that any Christian needs to learn about and needs to implement in their life, how to rest in Jesus. How do we do that?

In this modern era of unending hurry, tight schedules, generalized activism, people are running to and fro, people have schedules that go on and on. I was showing, I don't know how this happened, but I was scheduling some kind of meeting the other day with someone here from church, one of the young adults. And I pulled out my phone to check my schedule and I didn't even think twice of it. I, you know, just opened it on my calendar, and they let out this long whistle. Because the thing is, that in my calendar, I don't only have my schedule, but I also have the church schedule. Right? We have a whole church calendar. And so it's littered with different events and different things going on. Not that all of them are unnecessarily mine but it just looks so--like so much stuff. And they're like, "That's what you got to do?" And you know, and so I said, "Yeah, that's what I got to do." And they're like, "Wow, man. You're busy." And then I told them, "Well, not all of this is mine, you know.

But it just seems as though more and more, we have less and less time. The reality is that we have the same time. Everyone has the same amount of time allotted to them, but for some people it just seems as though 24 hours in a day is not enough. Have you ever felt like that? Like the 24 hours that you have is not enough. Right? Every day. And so, in this era that we're living in, in which these 24 hours don't seem enough, the feverish commitment to apparently unpostponable duties, that has a devastating effect that suffocates us, that dismembers families and relationships, skews our understanding of what is truly important and the primordial in life.

Now friends, all of this defines the fact that we need rest. Wouldn't you agree with me? Don't we need rest? And isn't the fact that we all agree with this, so emphatically, isn't that at least worrisome? We need rest. We need rest. But here's the thing, here's the caveat, the rest that we need is a qualified rest. It's not any kind of rest. And this is one of those things that a lot of people get wrong about the Sabbath. Today isn't about the Sabbath per say. And last quarter, we had a lesson just about the Sabbath, and I think that I was the one that led out on that one.

But a lot of people misunderstand the concept of the Sabbath when they think that the Sabbath is for them to sleep. Well, I'm supposed to be resting, right? So I'm just gonna spend the whole day sleeping. That used to be my understanding when I was a teenager. I just, you know, get home from church. After lunch, I'd go straight to bed. I'd sleep from like 2:00 until 8:00, until whatever sundown was, and then I'll go to the gym, play basketball with my friends. And to me, I kept the Sabbath just fine. I slept all day. I rested, right?

But friends, what we learned is that rest, the rest that we need, the rest that is essential, it's a qualified rest. It's a specific kind of rest. It's rest in Jesus. Rest in Christ. You know, business organizations, industries, they recognize that their employees need rest. That is something that is already recognized in the whole psychology dynamic of a business. Even work legislations around the world, force their businesses and industries to allow their employees to rest. People need rest. People need to stop. People need vacation. And sure enough, who hasn't taken a much needed vacation? Who here hasn't? Now, don't answer that because a

few of you might even say, "Well, I haven't taken vacation in ten years." Oh well, then I don't know what you're doing with your time, friend, or with your money, with the work that you're doing.

But, you know, a lot of us take this much needed rest. And we go to, you know some tropical resorts, or some peaceful mountains, or a lake, or a cottage or a cabin somewhere. Perhaps vacation in the Bahamas, or Florida, or parks or resorts. A lot of people come to our beautiful state of California. We have some very beautiful places here. One of the things I love the most about moving here is that, you know, 20, 30 minutes away, we have mountains, we have lakes and hiking trails. And right beside our house, we have a little trail. And so, it's so beautiful to take part of that kind of rest.

However, a strange phenomenon occurs frequently where many people end up, and see if you can relate to this, many people end up needing vacation from their vacation. Have you ever felt that? People need vacation from vacation itself. No, friends. The rest that we truly need, the rest that we really need is found in the freedom that we find only Jesus. Only in Jesus, he who invites us to rest at his feet and to learn from Him.

If you read Matthew chapter 11, verse 28 through 30, we learn from Him how to reorganize our schedules, our priorities. Our basic sick need really isn't of physical rest or even mental rest. And while those things are important, we know through the Bible that our real need, our real necessity is deeper. Our real need is that of spiritual rest. Rest in God. Seeking rest, and sophisticated and expensive resorts and paradises, is many times frustrating, a frustrating attempt equivalent to trying to cure stage IV cancer with sedatives.

Our true need is of liberation, freedom from the burdens that oppress, that asphyxiate, that suffocate and consumes us. That's what we need. Something or rather someone that is infinitely larger and that infinitely surpasses the limits of whatever we can expect.

What are your expectations about your rest? What do you imagine is ideal? Trust me, Jesus can go beyond that. Jesus does better. He covers the costs. The acceptance of rest that he offers us is the catalyst to solving some of our major problems. What are your problems? What do you struggle with? Stress. We live in the era of stress, anxiety. And I tell you this from personal experience, I'm a very anxious person. I'm one of those people that suffers beforehand by anxiety. You know those people, that the thing is like a month away and they're already worrying about it, they can't sleep about it, they're rolling around in bed? That's me. And so, I'm preaching to the choir here when I say these things because I need, I need that rest also.

But the thing is, is that sometimes we'll leave that only for the end. We'll try everything else. We'll try vitamins, we'll try hormones, we'll try medicine, we'll try sleep techniques, we'll go to sleep doctors, when what you truly need is to learn how to rest in Christ, to lay at his feet our problems, our anxieties, our worries. And again, I'm preaching to the choir. This isn't something that I've learned the secrets to just yet. But that's also what the road of sanctification is. It's where you learn gradually, slowly. Some of us learn quicker. Some of us take more time.

This week's lesson is all about the roots of our maladies, our evils, which are the true obstacles and enemies of our peace and of our rest in the first place. And just like it is with any other problem in life, recognizing it is part of the solution. You need to recognize the problem, am I right? For you to come to the solution for you, to find the answer to your problems, you need to know that there is a problem. And here, those who are truly understand their problem are already partially cured. So, you know--and here we go, and we dive into what this week is actually talking about.

Not long ago, a popular TV religious commentator or speaker trying to justify his new interpretation of the four horsemen or the horses of Revelation, trying to justify--here you're going to find a whole bunch of different interpretations out there that aren't especially biblical or sound theology. But here trying to justify his opinion, that was that Jesus never brings divisions or persecutions. That was his final interpretation. So those horses, whatever they mean, they don't mean persecutions, or divisions or problems.

And when I heard that, immediately the thought is, "Oh, has he read the gospels? Has he read the New Testament? Has he studied the history of that first church?" Because certainly, and here I admit this: conflicts, problems, persecutions, lack of harmony, that's not the intention or the desire of Jesus for our planet or of acceptance of Him. It's certainly not what He wants, but these frequently end up being the results of following Jesus. And that's kind of a mystery until we actually dig into it.

Since there can't be no harmony between light and darkness, between Jesus, between Christ and Belial, the division of those who accept Him and those who reject Him, that's inevitable. There's no way around it. That's the reality of the matter. There will always be a disharmony between those that are born the one time and those that are born again the second time. You have to accept that the acceptance of Jesus is totalitarian. There's no other way around this.

We are talking about a radical change in life when we accept Jesus. I what I mean about--what I mean here is that when you accept Jesus, that involves and that affects the entirety of your life. It has to affect everything. It affects every single aspect of your waking and sleeping life. Philosophy, dress code, diet, our general outlook on life, the view of this planet in the midst of a great controversy, our entertainments, our interests, our priorities. We cannot escape the tension with those that continue in their unaltered walk. And make no mistake, that is also totalitarian commitment.

There is no halfhearted commitment in this life. There is no halfway choice. Choosing Jesus is a radical totalitarian decision, right? But not choosing Jesus also is. There's no escape. You see, friends, Jesus, He's not just another influence among many others. But He is the dominating and governing influence above all others. And unless you understand this, unless not only you understand but you accept, and internalize and you put into practice this reality, you're going to be half living the Christian which means the same as not a Christian at all, not a true disciple. You might be a fan, you might be, you know, a far-off follower, but not a disciple. And it hurts to say this, because again, this is all of us.

I'm not up here on this stage just preaching down to you saying that this is something that only affects others, not myself. No, this is a difficulty that all of us on the road to heaven have to go through because this decision involves everything. Jesus Himself said that in some circumstances our greatest enemies would come from within our own families, our own household, among those who we love the most and those that love us the most, among those who accept Him and those who reject Him. And what that means is husbands against wives, wives against husbands, children against their parents, and parents against the children.

In the environment of school, of work, we're also met by turbulence. Sometimes, even persecutions. I know many people who have had a hard time in their jobs or even at school because of decisions that had to be made because of their commitment to Christ. In Brazil, not long ago, we--so in Brazil, we have this test for you to get into high school--sorry, for you to get into college, you have to go through this test. I think it would be the equivalent or something around, you know, the SATs or something like that. And these tests nationwide used to be on the Sabbath, and it was very difficult for Adventists or Sabbath keepers.

I remember that when I did it, I was one of the first batches of them allowing--actually, I was in one of the first batches of this test in general. And those first few years, it was on Sunday and then they switched it to Sabbath. And by the time I was a youth pastor, I was already ministering and teaching, chapelling to kids going through, you know, that experience. And I remember going with them to the school.

So they had these special schools where the kids will be locked in all day from noon all the way up to sunset. And this happens in the end of the year in South America where that's summer. End of the year in South American, southern hemisphere is summer, and so the days are long. And so I remember staying with them from, you know, noon, all the way to 8:30 at nights where they could only sit on their chair, on the desk. They couldn't speak anything. Some of these schools were more strict than others, and some they could, you know, they could kind of socialize and all that. But some of the schools didn't allow them to get up, to talk to each other. Either they had to sleep; they couldn't even take a book to read.

A few years ago, we had a law in our national legislation where they allowed this test to be switched over to Sunday, and that was a great victory for the Sabbath keepers. And they switched it because of religious freedom, religious liberty. And so, that was a great victory. But there are many people who go through this experience without that kind of victory.

So how do we understand these words coming from Jesus in Matthew 10:34 through 39, where the Prince of peace, the Prince of peace indicates that He came to bring the sword and fire to the earth. This text is certainly among the hard sayings of Jesus. Read with me Matthew 10:34 through 39 says, "Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to 'set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be those of his own household. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. And he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

And he who does not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. And he who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it."

When Jesus was born, didn't angels come to sing, saying, "Peace. Goodwill on earth?" Why this then? And what was interesting is that while Jesus uses a metaphorical word here in Matthew, the word "sword" He uses a real word, a not metaphorical word in Matthew, which is the word "division"--sorry, in Luke. Luke 12:53, He uses the word "division." And here you have a parallel in these two texts. One says He came to bring the sword; the other, He came to bring division. But the meaning is the same. The significance is the same. And we first have to observe that one thing here can be certain.

We can be certain of one thing. Jesus never advocated for violence or for conflict. Never. In fact, He taught His followers to not offer retaliation when attacked or mistreated. That is Christ's way. He is not advocating here for the sword or for violence. Matthew 5:9 tells us, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons of God." So what this means is that the God, our God, the God that we worship, the biblical God is the God of peace, and that those who follow him, reflect his character as peacemakers.

Aren't we called to become peacemakers? During His last visit to Jerusalem before His death, His message had to do with things that bring peace. He cried because they rejected that peace. The message proclaimed by the disciples, by His followers after His departure, is called the gospel of peace. Ephesians 6:13, the gospel of peace or 2 Corinthians 5:19, the Word of reconciliation.

But when Jesus spoke of the tensions and conflicts within the family, He was speaking, probably here from personal experience. We have several indications in the gospels that the members from His family had no sympathy either for Him or for His ministry, at least initially. When Jesus said that He didn't come to bring peace, what did He mean? The sword; division.

Friends, what He was truly, essentially saying is that that was the effect of His coming but not the purpose. That was the effect, not the purpose. His words would come true in the life of the primitive church, and subsequently, throughout the history of our church. Look back on history. How long have the true followers of God not been persecuted? For how long prophetically? How much time? That's a long time. Over a thousand years. We see that reality playing through the life of the primitive church where one or two members of a family or any social group accept Jesus, they can expect one or another form of discrimination or even persecution. We know stories.

Personally, I know stories of people who, after accepting Jesus, were renounced and denounced from their household, needing to live then on streets or at the mercy of anyone that took them in. Paul experienced ruthlessness from his own group, his own religious circle as a result of his conversion. He knew that tensions would arise among husbands and wives that embrace the faith and the other ones that remain outside of it. That is why he advised that if an unbelieving spouse, husband or wife, was satisfied in continuing to live with the other, the Christian spouse, it was fine. The whole family could yet come to conversion. We know that Paul give that counsel.

But what did he see if the spouse was unbelieving, and they sought out divorce or separation to end the marriage? He said that the Christian spouse should not stay by force or seek legal action because, in his answer, his reasoning, is because God has called us for peace or to peace. That's in 1 Corinthians 7:12-16, if you want to study it a little deeper.

Friends, the Jews accepted Jesus-- that accepted Jesus. The Jews that accepted Jesus were expelled from their synagogues. That's a real thing right there. And we really don't know-- because look, if we're ever kicked out of Granite Bay Hilltop, all right, if someone comes along and someone doesn't like you or something like that, if you're kicked out of here, if God forbid one day this becomes, you know, nonbiblical, which we pray it never will--but let's say a church becomes unbiblical and then you start preaching the truth in there and they kick you out, well, I mean you can just go to another church. We have a plethora of churches. We have churches, we have religious liberty.

But back then, being kicked out of the synagogue meant or it equated perdition. It was equal to being lost because salvation in the Jewish culture was done together, collectively. And so for them to be kicked out of the synagogue, that equated them to be removed from their social connections, their support system. They were treated as publicans, tax collectors or even Samaritans.

And so, friends, in the words of Matthew, Jesus was warning His followers that a covenant with Him could cause problems at home, problems at work, perhaps even the expulsion from the family and from their social connections. This way, it was good for them to be aware of what would happen. Later on, no one could ever say, "Well, I didn't know that the price for Jesus, you know, for following Him or being His disciple would be so high."

No, look, if there's one thing that you can say about Jesus, is that He's transparent, because Jesus was more than abundantly clear what would happen if we follow Him. Jesus is very clear from the very beginning. But even under these circumstances, and this is where the beauty of being a disciple comes in. Even under these experiences and situations of duress, companionship with Him would still bring internal peace and personal tranquility.

And that's what we understand when Jesus tells us in the Book of John that he came to bring this peace, but it's a different peace. It's a peace that surpasses understanding. It's a peace that the world cannot comprehend. How could you understand peace amidst the fires of persecution? But that's what we have in Christ.

In any case, from this point onwards, here in the lesson, the lesson this week, it zeroes in on other sources of restlessness, not only division that being a disciple brings, but other roots of restlessness, other things that bring us problems in the day-to-day. That when subvert and delivered over Jesus, allows us to live in peace with ourselves and with others. Monday brings us the topic of selfishness.

You know, ever since the fall, ever since the entrance of sin in our world, selfishness has become a part of our essential nature. By sin, we live centralized in ourselves. No one needs to take any sort of educational course, no one has to teach you in school or college. There

no master degrees or PhD's in how to be selfish or how to be egocentric. It's natural. Comes with us. It's an inherent part of our fallen condition.

Friends, the reality is that we live surrounded by ourselves to the north, to the south, east and west. We are there to ourselves. Egoism is the twin brother of pride, and because of it, we fail to see correctly, we fail to think correctly, we fail to act correctly and to make the correct choices. Egoism, selfishness, is among the foundational aspects of our afflictions. Permanent frenzies, relentless competitions and competitiveness. We become unhappy, jealous even, if someone else is promoted, or valued, or awarded, or considered better or even before us. And I'm sure that you can relate with me, all right. I'm not going to call anyone out. I know that I felt these things. It's part of who we are. Part of what we ask God to free us from daily. Daily, I die, and I like--I let Christ reign.

The reality, friends, the truth of the fact here, is that in the heart of every man, woman and child, there is a throne and a cross. And either the old man is on the cross and Christ is on the throne or Christ is on the cross and the man is on the throne. Our temptation and our great battle is to remove Christ from the cross daily, placing him on the throne and putting that old man, that old woman on the cross.

One of the most radical voyages that a human can take is the voyage to be free of themselves, free of their own ego. This is a journey that begins when we are babies, infants. A newborn is the center of its own universe. It's true. Growing in Christ is the slow discovery that others exist and that we don't exist exclusively to serve ourselves and to do our own will. But what is tragic here, is that unless Jesus frees us from this enslaving syndrome, we will navigate life with this immense burden that makes us miserable, that destroys marriages, societies and relationships.

The secret of marriage is you taking care, you taking it upon yourself to care for your spouse, to make him or her happy and allowing them to do that. If you seek your own happiness in a marriage, trust me, that is not going to go down well. Care for the happiness and the joy of your partner and you will be happy. Care for your own, your own interests, you will be miserable. That will be hell on earth.

What's worse, in our modern, individualistic society, where we take pleasure in being number one, and being the best, and being second to none. But with Jesus, we learn that we are not the center of the world, and from him, we received the power to be free from this burden.

I'd invite you to observe the expressions that the New Testament uses to describe our national conditions: unclean, blind, futile, vain, alienated and ignorant, dead in our trespasses, deceptive, carnal, corrupt, perverse, irreverent, defiled.

The list goes on. Friends, admitting the disease, admitting the problem is the first step in obtaining the cure. Selfishness is dangerous because it is usually done unconsciously. We don't realize it. We don't really think at the moment, "Well, I'm going to be unselfish now." No one wakes up and thinks, "Ah, today is the day that I'm going to be unselfish. Today is the day." No one thinks like that. It happens. Hindsight is 20/20 though. The things that



many people don't even think take for--or bother. They don't even bother to look back, but Jesus helps us. To fix this problem, we need external help, we need external help. He consistently warned us about the feverish materialism aggravated by the harassment of unscrupulous propagandas, the exploit of human egocentrism.

To Jesus, contrary to what Karl Marx would say about materialism--about religion, forgive me, being the opium of the masses. To Jesus, materialism is the great narcotic, an opium of the masses that numbs people against the reality of their true conditions, their true condition: transience, mortality, our insanities. While always wanting more, their dissatisfaction actually makes them poor in what is truly important. Allow Jesus to free you from this, from the consumerism that afflicts your life, the desire to have more, more, more. To buy, more, more, more. And in that way, attach your identity to the things that you have, not understanding that it's not truly you who owned these properties, but they own you.

Another route of restlessness that is brought up in this lesson is ambition. You know, the Middle Ages a group called the monastic--Oriental Monastic Movement, they sought to not only overcome sin or the sins that afflicted them, but they also wanted to expose the enemy behind these afflictions. They formulated a list of sins that today is known as the seven capital sins. The seven deadly sins.

Now, it's not that these sins were considered to be worse than any other sin, but the problems with these is that they were perceived as seminal sins, originating sins, birthing sins, which means is that these were the very womb by which all other sins are generated. Ambition is one that generates a list of evils that become uncontrollable. Jealousy, disputes, murder, slander, perverse competitiveness, deceptiveness, betrayals, treachery, felonies, infamy, backbiting, spite, permanent discontentment, dissatisfaction. All these things rooting from the desire to always be more, more, more, to climb higher on the ladder of success.

Friends, the list goes on. As an internal fire, it destroys peace, joy, solidarity, and the spirit of true friendship. Because when ambition becomes an idol in our lives, we fail to see humans as humans and we see them as things to be used, steps on a staircase to be trampled upon. Ambition is a close relative to covetousness, the sin condemned by God as tenth commandment that reveals his character. Fame, fortune, that's the essence of the American dream, that is widespread all over the world. And those who are infected and poisoned by the spirit since their infancy, are trained to see everyone else as their competition. And this mentality develops the syndrome of individualism that just dissolves the possibility of maintaining true and selfless friendships.

Among the disciples, the desire for the right and the left hand in the kingdom, seen as places of honor, proximity to the throne, to the center, that took them to squabble over who would be the greatest. You remember this in Matthew 18. But I find Jesus here just indescribable. Jesus unleashes a fatal blow to their blindness. And he called--and Jesus calls a child a symbol of unpretentiousness, humility, even of selfless regard. He calls a child, a small child.

Instead of regarding who the greatest is, Jesus reveals how the greatest behaves. The disciples were so worried about who would be the greatest in the kingdom, but Jesus draws the conversation back to the very gates of the kingdom, to the access into the kingdom. And that was the same as saying, "Look guys, while you're all arguing about who's going to be the best, who's going to be the greatest, you aren't considering the most important subject here, the more important question, which is entering the kingdom itself."

Because that's what Jesus says, unless you become as one of these little ones, you will what? You will be the greatest or you won't be there. That's what he says. That is the most vital need and the spirit that qualifies us to receive the kingdom. That also, that spirit that does define us, that qualifies us to receive the kingdom, it also determines the spirit by which we service the kingdom, or we serve the kingdom. The same spirit that qualifies you to enter it, also qualifies you to serve in it. And the Spirit of that kingdom is the spirit of a servant.

That same spirit arose again in Matthew 20. And here, Jesus, He places Himself as the example of unpretension and the lack of self-exaltation, when in Matthew 20:28, He says "The Son of Man did not come to," what? "To be saved but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many." Later on, His disciples understood what true greatness means. And all of them, with the exception of John, sealed their commitment to their master with their own blood. All of them died the death of a martyr, but all were also freed from the idolatry of self and of ambition that afflicted them.

Wednesday's lesson brings hypocrisy. Hypocrisy was known as the mask used by the actors who would perform on the stage, and that in their representations, they would simulate things, or people, or situations and events that they were not. And Jesus accused a great portion of the Pharisees and the religious leaders of his days of being hypocrites. Seen--we see this in Matthew 23, the woes. "Woe to you, Pharisees and teachers of the law."

That was such a mighty blow to them. The truth is revealed also by a well-known Latin phrase which is *acta non verba*, which means actions not words. Hypocrisy suggests a duality. Actions that deny the discourse. Deny what you say. Ever heard that, you know, you don't only have to talk the talk, you got to walk the walk? That's the reality here.

What's curious about Jesus's great condemnations were that there weren't directed toward those that were seen as the great sinners of the time. Jesus doesn't call out here the publicans, the tax collectors. the prostitutes. He calls out the religious leaders, the religious class. And the question is why? Because religious pretentiousness, the cape of righteousness and holiness, it creates a false feeling of safety and security. Because when you feel that you're good, that you don't need to do anything, well then, friend, nothing can be done for you. And that's why Jesus says that he didn't come for the holy, he came for the sinners, for the lost, because those are the ones that recognize their condition. Make no mistake, all of them were lost. Some of them just recognized how lost.

Remember the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector? Both go up to the temple to pray. Luke chapter 18. The Pharisee, however, he doesn't really go up to worship God, but to praise his own religious performance, his virtues. He praises himself saying, "Lord, I'm not

like all these other men that are extortioner or unjust, adulterers, negative identities. On the contrary, he fasted twice a week, tithed everything." Do you know how many times in the Old Testament God asked the children of Israel to fast? Twice. Do you know many times the Pharisees fasted when Jesus arrived? Twice.

The thing is that for the children of Israel, it was twice a year. For the Pharisees, it was twice a week. That's what we're dealing with here. That's that man. On the other hand, the publican doesn't find himself worthy to even approach. He hangs his head, he beats his chest, acting as though he's in the presence of death itself, and all he can manage to do is to sob, saying, "Oh God, be merciful of me, a sinner.

The irony is that the sinner goes down justified while the saint remains in his sin. The Pharisees and their hypocrisy were capable of creating an entire list of all sinners of Judea without ever including themselves. Friend, Jesus frees us from the hypocrisy and the duplicity, because in him, we learn and to see who and what we really are, and to accept Him and the forgiveness that He offers, and to rest from the evil that is deeply rooted in the very marrow of our bones. And then we are able to live without disguises, without ridiculous manipulations.

Friends, overcoming divisiveness, selfishness, ambition, hypocrisy, it's possible. And it's mostly recognized in the way that Jesus lived, and the example that He laid for us. This present life here is not our final destination. We don't live for this. We await where? What do we await? A new heaven and a new earth, where the first things will be done away with. And with this perspective, we learn to manage our priorities, and ultimately understand that we are only passing through this world.

This isn't final. This isn't all that there is. This is nothing. These few decades here, friends, don't allow the roots of restlessness to do away with the possibility of so much more. In our pains, and our weaknesses, in our falls and defeats and disappointments, He accepts us, He receives us, He cures us, and His grace is the great motivation for the walk.

Friends, with Christ, we learn the same that Nicodemus learned, being born again is primarily not a demand of God, it's an offer. It's a gift. And so, Nicodemus learned to rest in Christ. The Samaritan woman, she also learned that living--the living water is infinitely superior to anything else that she could've extracted from the bitter cisterns of her superficial relationships and her cheap sex. And so, she listened to rest in Christ.

Zacchaeus, he learned that the love of money and greed may even guarantee the larger slice of the pie, but if handed over to Jesus, it can give way to true contentment, solidarity and abnegation, and so, he learned to rest in Christ. Blind man Bartimaeus, he learned that through Jesus, he could learn to see as never before. And so, he learned to rest in Christ. The woman caught in adultery, she learned that the forgiveness and the sanctification of life are the results of a new and a purified heart that is handed over to Jesus Christ, that He offers to create in us, and so she learned to rest in Christ. The lepers or that one, learned that Jesus could make him clear, clean. And not only this, He was more than willing to purify him. And so they learned to rest in Christ.

Friends, Jesus has this mysterious power of seeing in us what we can't see ourselves, of making us fall in love with what we can become in Him, transformed by His grace. And then hate what we have been. Allow this same Master to change your life.

You know, Jesus is just like the sun, in which we don't believe in it just because we see it, but because of its light, we learn to see everything else. You don't believe in the sun just because you see it, but because through it, you see everything else. Jesus is just like that. We don't believe in Him just because we see Him or know Him, but because through Him, everything else changes. Everything else becomes different.

What are the roots of your restlessness? What have these roots been in your life? The heartaches and the heartbreaks of life? Trust me, Jesus can transform these roots of restlessness in blessings. He's more than willing.

You remember the story of the man that comes to Jesus says, "Lord, are you willing to heal me, to cleanse me? And Jesus says, "Yes, I am willing." And today, He says to you, "Yes, I am willing. Come to me all of you are tired and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." May God bless you. May He bless you. And may He bless you.

I'd like to invite you again as we finish this lesson, not to forget to take advantage of our special offer, "The Surrender of Self." If you would like this, please call the number, 866-788-3966. I'm sure that you will learn how to rest in Christ through this. You can also text S-H-0-8-7 to the number 4-0-5-4-4. We will send you a digital download. Or if you're outside of the continental North America, you could go on to [study.aftv.org/SH087](http://study.aftv.org/SH087) and you could learn how to surrender yourself to God and allow Him to dwell within your own heart, your life and you will rest in him. May He bless you. Amen and amen.

Announcer: Don't forget to request today's life-changing, free resource. Not only can you receive this free gift in the mail, you can download a digital copy straight to your computer or mobile device. To get your digital copy of the today's free gift, simply text the keyword on your screen to 4-0-5-4-4 or visit the web address shown on your screen. And be sure to select that digital download option on the request page. It's now easier than ever for you to study God's Word with "Amazing Facts," wherever and whenever you want. And most important, to share it with others.

Announcer: "Amazing Facts. Changed Lives."

Rueben: You know, we grew up in a neighborhood up in the Midwest that was a pretty bad neighborhood. And when I became a teenager, I started using drugs. I was on--I started using meth when I was, I think 16, 15, something like that. I was having some problems in my life I really didn't know how to deal with. The only thing I really knew was violence. So this night here, I was going to inflict violence on myself. I was really high, really depressed, so I took, you know, I had this 40 caliber.

So I remember I put one in the chamber, and I stuck it to the side of my head like this. And that gun had a hair trigger, you know. And I remember I was tapping it. Just--and a part of

me said, "No, I don't want to do this," but there was something very evil present there saying, "Do it." I just said to myself, I said, "God, if you're real, show yourself to me."

My mother took me to church when I was a little kid and we used to sing Jesus Loves Me. And I remember that song, it started playing in my mind and I almost had like a vision of me as a little kid. You know, and in Sabbath school, we used to bang those sticks together and sing Jesus Loves Me, and I heard that in my mind. So I said, "Wow." So, I just kind of like put the gun down, and I kind of fell on my bedside there and said, "Lord," I just basically just prayed this crazy prayer. I said, you know, I told Him everything that was wrong with me.

And I remember one day I was driving around, I kind of felt lost, and I drove by this church, and I seen Tom out there. Tom was just out there watering the flowers, you know.

Tom: So I caught a vision out of the side of my eyes, this big, husky guy with tattoos walking up, and he's saying hello. And I said--so I asked him if I could help him, and he told me that he drives by the church on occasion, and every time he goes by, he's thinking that he should stop in.

Rueben: After he showed me around the church, you know, I was like, "Okay, man, it's nice meeting you," and this and that. So I jumped in my car, and I started heading down the driveway. And the next thing you know, in like my peripheral vision, I see him coming around the corner like Jerry Rice running a football. No, not that fast, but you know, he was taking off after me. And he says, "Hey, hey, hey. Hold on. Hold on."

Tom: I asked him if he would like to have some Bible studies and he said, "Yeah."

Reuben: He would come by the house, we'd all start--we'd start hiding the beer cans and trying to air out the weed smell. And there was a presence that came with Tom that was comforting. You know what I mean? Even though I wasn't taking the Bible studies as serious as I should've, looking back, there was just a presence about him being there in the house that was comforting. I told Tom, I said, "Tom, you know you can't win everybody."

Tom: I looked at him and I knew I said to him, "Rueben, I never get anybody." I said, "It's the Holy Spirit will do that." And I kind of in my heart knew that the Holy Spirit was going to work on Rueben.

Rueben: So then Tom kind of left the picture for a while. And then I think one day at my mother's house, they were watching "The Final Events of Bible Prophecy." So I watched that, and I remember the scene where they had the hellfire and stuff. You know, they're outside the city and it showed the hellfire coming down and bringing people and stuff. And I remember saying to myself, "That's where I would be right there." After the hellfire scene, I saw the saints in the city, and the New Jerusalem, and Jesus recreating the earth. And I said, "I want that to be me and my family."

There was something about the way Doug preached and things that I felt that touched me, because he's kind of like myself, you know. He didn't grow up like that. You know, he'd done drugs and things, so I kind of found these common grounds that I had with him, and I liked

how he just kind of like kept it real with his preaching. And then Pastor Rodney came to the church and I got to know him very well, and we started doing some finishing studies. He wanted to make sure I understand what I was doing and things. And he baptized me, my wife, my brother.

No matter what you've done, where you come from, where you've been, no matter how bad of a sinner you think you are, the Lord Jesus loves you no matter what you've done.

Doug Batchelor: Friends, is because of God's blessing and your support, thousands of others just like Rueben have found Jesus and eternal life.

Announcer: "Amazing Facts. Changed Lives."

Sue: I felt like I was receiving some angel messages in and around my son's death. My son Jesse was just 31 years old, so I didn't expect him to die before I did. But in November of 2009, we decided to have Thanksgiving with him, and we'd normally go to a family to have Thanksgiving. I didn't know that it was going to be the very last time that I would see my son alive. In April 2010, I was urged to call him on the day that he died. I didn't make that call. I was too busy. I thought I had till the next morning to call him and it turns out that I didn't. And then, my husband's father was passing away in a nursing home slowly, not eating, taking his medicine. Just wasting away.

Merwyn: We were putting out "Amazing Facts" Bible study guides, and we had sent out cards, and we have this card, but when I knocked on Sue and Kirk's door by mistake.

Male: And we were convinced that this was the right house, and it obviously turned out to our surprise to be the wrong house.

Kirk: When they came by, we weren't expecting 'em. I think he told me about these pamphlets, these "Amazing Facts" that explained their doctrine.

Male: Well, to our surprise, when they answered the door, the gentleman, when he saw what we were doing, he said, "Well, we would like to take these studies.

Kirk: Anything about the Lord increases my faith is always open. Sue: These lessons came at a time that we didn't know we were searching. We didn't know what we needed. We were just hurting from the grief that we'd been through. When I saw this studies by "Amazing Facts" about the Sabbath, it struck a chord with me because I remembered when I had talked to my mother as a child about the Sabbath, about seeing the truth, when I was only eight years old and asking her why we didn't honor the Sabbath day. And she told me that it was just not the way that they did things.

Well, that wasn't a good enough expression, a good enough explanation. There was no scriptural basis for what she told me. She just said to forget it. And I went through all the studies that we had gotten, and I wanted more. So I decided that, well, if they put of these "Amazing Facts" Bible studies, there must be something online about 'em.

So I decided to check it out. I went on the computer to "Amazing Facts," and it said it right down at the bottom of the Bible studies, amazingfacts.org. Checked it out and there was free Bible studies there. It was the very same ones that we had been studying. After finding the "Amazing Facts" Bible studies online, and I did them all. There were 27, 28 Bible studies, I felt like I was finally seeing the truth after all these years.

We ordered the "Amazing Facts" DVDs like "The Cosmic Conflict," and "The Final Events," "Prophecy Foundations," and different materials like that, went through them and enjoyed all of them, and they impacted our lives even more.

Female: Well, I worked at the post office, and I knew Kirk and Sue for a very long time. And I wasn't allowed to talk to anyone about the Bible, and Bible studies and things like that. They had told us not to. But anyway, when Sue came in and talked about it, she talked about the Sabbath. And I told her, I said, "Well Sue, I go to church on Saturday."

Sue: So I invited myself. She was excited, of course, to have me go. My husband and I both started going that very next Sabbath. And it wasn't but just four months after that, that we were baptized in this church. And it felt like the most glorious experience I could have ever had.

Male: The thing that touches my heart the most is Merwyn and I had been doing this for over the last year and a half or two years, and Sue is not the only one that has responded to "Amazing Facts." We've had several others that have responded and have been baptized, so this is what really makes it exciting. There's times it's discouraging, but the bottom line is every time you see someone in the water being baptized, it's a thrill.

Sue: I know that Jesus loves me. After all of the tragedy that had been through, he made sure that the two men came and brought the "Amazing Facts" Bible studies to me and my husband. My life will never be the same. It is forever changed, and I am forever part of the family of God.