

Let Him Be - Revelation 22:11
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03-15-2026

In Isaiah 30 and verse 10, people were talking to the prophet. And they said, **Speak unto us smooth things**. We don't want you being honest. We just want you to tell us those things that are easy to swallow. And we'll be all right. Now, this is not smooth things. But that which I feel is necessary, and hopefully you will obtain benefit from it. **Speak unto us smooth things**. That's about all we hear today.

Before we read Matthew 3, just the first verse, we will continue our service thus far by seeking help from above. Help that you might hear, help that I might speak honorably to the Lord and to the benefit of your souls. Would you pray with me?

Our Father, the debt that we owe, we will never know here. We know a little of the person and work of the Lord Jesus. Three years traveling, long nights with no sleep, and days weariness in the distance he traveled and in that that he did. I ask you, Lord God, to set Christ before these. Give us of Thy Spirit that He might enrich each heart, that He might have a word for all lost or saved, uncertain, whatever the condition. Be pleased our Father to speak and give us a word from that distant land. I pray that You would enliven their hearts, that You would give them receptive ears, that You would give them a mind. As soon as a distracting thought occurs that they would push it aside and once again focus on hearing the word. Not because I'm a good speaker, not because I Have a great mind. But I trust, Lord, because of that that you would have set before them. Exalt Christ in our midst. Enable the speaker, Lord. Guide and direct. Let nothing be said except that which is pleasing and honoring to Thee. And Lord, if You do these things for us, we'll pause to give thanks. And if it is the beginning of a continuing work of thee, surely, surely these will walk away in thanksgiving. Be honored in our midst. And give us Thy Spirit. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

Preach unto us smooth things. Maybe I can explain better a little later. Matthew 3:1 - **In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea**. Now, a wilderness is mentioned, and we think of a desert, desolate place, solitary place. And that is what it is. Literally. But it cannot be here. Why would John be preaching in the wilderness? No, that wilderness is Judea.

Another meaning or a couple of other meanings for the word wilderness here - when speaking about people - those that have been deserted by others, a woman that has been neglected by her husband. Well, the nation of Israel has been deserted by the Lord. He called them his wife. Jesus calls us His bride.

But for 400 years, God hadn't had a word - nothing to say to them. Religion flourished as it is in our day for when Herod heard that wise men were come, he sent for them to inquire, where is he that is born the Christ? They didn't have to search the Scriptures. They immediately quoted Micah 5:2 - **in Bethlehem of Judea**. They were very familiar with the scriptures. They knew what the letter said. What about you?

Now, the next one is in Mark 1. Same as Matthew, beginning with verse 1. Mark 1. **The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.** My messenger, prepare thy way. **The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.** Now when a ruler would be traveling, he always had a crew out in front clearing, preparing the road, high places lowered, low places filled in. You'll find that in Luke 3:5. **Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth.**

And Jesus said, there's one coming in front of me that will prepare the way. Now, Luke 1:16 and 17 - next book over. Again, speaking about the forerunner, John the Baptist. Verse 16 - **And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.**

The last word that God had for Israel in Malachi 3:1, He said, **I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me.** Every one of us here have those that are not yet in the family of God. The only way that will ever be is by the Spirit once again, coming, making His abode with us and working in hearts. They never will until He does that work.

And you know, as you've read these passages before, the only ones not affected by the preaching of the forerunner were the scribes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees. Those religious ones were never affected. You know the ones that were affected when John preached to them? Those that were affected under the anointing of the Baptist preaching? Those lost, knowing themselves to be sinners.

And there's coming a time, I don't know when, that men will once again be anointed by the Spirit of God and it will have an effect upon the Lord's children. You will begin to prepare to meet Him. And it will have an effect upon the lost that might be in your families, your friends, and

their families. And that cry goes out, **Behold, the bridegroom cometh.** Now there were those that were attached to the true bride, just like there's always been a mixed multitude.

Remember Israel coming out of Egypt? And he said, and the mixed multitude begin weeping. Children of Israel began weeping, "Who is going to give us flesh to eat? We remember how it was back in Egypt. We had the leeks and the onions and the cucumbers and the melons, and that which would season. We're tired of this light bread from heaven."

Now some of you, you come week after week. You give the impression that you listen. But you leave unaffected. Hopefully that will change. Now turn with me to the last book and the last chapter, Revelation 22. **And he saith unto me,** verse 10, this is the bridegroom saying to John, not the John that was mentioned in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Verse 10, Revelation 22. **And he saith unto me, seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still. And he which is filthy, let him be filthy still. And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still. and he that is holy, let him be holy still.** Those that are unjust, not justified by the work of the Lamb of God, let them stay. Unjustified. Remain unjust - those that have not been cleansed by the work of the Spirit of God in their hearts, let them be filthy still. And then you've got the righteous and the holy ones, let them remain as they are.

Now Daniel was told to seal up the book, shut up the words, and seal the book to the time of the end of the world. John was told, "Don't seal it. The time is at hand." And you're living in a day when you are seeing none changed. Oh, you hear about a lot that made professions, living somewhat of a decent life, but no change. And most of us are of the persuasion that as death approaches, "It will give me the opportunity to get right and I will be prepared to meet the Lord. Death approaching will make a drastic change in me". It won't. It will not.

Now you can take a young sapling of a tree and you can stake it where it's bent horizontally with the ground. Leave it there a few years and then you can take the stakes off and it'll start growing upright. You can make all kind of shapes out of trees, young trees. I cut the top out of a small pine several years ago. It didn't put on any limbs, but it bushed out. Large, bushy, many needles around it. One thing you can't do is you can't bend an old tree. You can't cut the tops out of an old pine.

And it remained. It will for years, possibly. But now, which one are you like? The young tree or the old? This has nothing to do with age, physical age. It has to do with you as an individual. Are you so set in your ways that you will never be bent? Or are you still young enough that the work of the Lord can bend you and shape you and mold you? Now, I want to tell you something (and this is what threw me off because I've wrestled with this thing since Friday as to whether or not I

should tell you. But I think I've come to a peace within in telling this to you. And I do so specifically as you are now, everybody here. Will this be who you are at the end of your life?)

50 some odd years ago, pastoring in Alexander City, there was a young person there, a young male, who had graduated from high school. They had moved to Alex City. And he started coming to church, but he later told me, "The only reason I came was because I liked that girl". Very, very beautiful young lady. "That's the only reason I came". But the Lord arrested him and started a tremendous work in him.

A few years back, he told me that he was having problems with his mind, dementia. I didn't know how bad, but he had driven from South Carolina to Ashland and wanted me to have breakfast with him Friday morning. So he came and he was standing there and you couldn't tell anything wrong until I asked "Do you want me to go in my car and you follow me where you won't have to come back here because you've got another appointment at 10 o'clock"?

He said, "I don't understand what you mean". And so I tried to explain. And we sat down there, and he said, "Would you, would you ask the blessing"? He said, "My wife does at home. I can't, I can't anymore". And then I did. And he took his finger and he said, "Now you look at this". And he pointed to the table there. And he drew a number with his finger, 4-2-2-2. He said, "You know what that is"? I said, "No". He said, "Every two weeks, I am in treatment. It cannot cure my mind, but it can keep it where it is somewhat." \$4,222. That's \$8,000 a month. He couldn't form words to say a prayer. After seeing the figure, I told him we couldn't do that. And he looked with a big smile on his face. And he said, the Lord did that for me. He couldn't put words together to form a prayer, but he knew within his God had done that.

And I sat down with him in his car. He asked me to. And he pulled out a notebook, a list of names, what time he was supposed to meet them. He even had his own name in there and some other personal information if somebody stopped and he couldn't tell them. And then he said, now you go ahead and show me where the funeral home is. And I drove over there and he followed. Sat in the parking lot with him.

He said, "I am here to make my final arrangements. And I want you to do the service. Nothing can happen to you". I mean, he's six years younger than me, and most likely I won't be around, hopefully. But when I met him, he didn't have a Bible. Said they'd never had one in their home.

Four of those boys and mom and dad. I made sure he got one. And I got him a few of the old Puritan writings. And he said, "You're the one that started me on my right journey". And I say that to tell you his early years had shaped him into what he is now with a mind that is not functioning. And he was really intelligent.

What about you? I've known those that were in a car wreck. The trauma was so great that they never again had a right mind. How are you being shaped? And you young folk, if you hear anything from me today, hear this, be extra diligent in your younger years. For there comes a time when the Lord says, "Their life's shaped. It's molded. They're unjust. Leave them alone. They'll never be justified". Time's coming when the Lord will have said the last thing to you. "They're filthy. Let them be filthy still". And I was afraid that I couldn't get through that, telling you about him. But I had shed enough tears on Friday. I was hoping that I could relate that to you. And you big he-men that think it's wrong for a man to weep, you may find out one day.

He gave me a book, a little book, and he opened it and started showing me the chapters, and every page was underlined, highlighted somehow. He said, "That's mine". And he gave me a new copy. I want to read you a paragraph in it. It goes with what I'm trying to communicate to you.

"Death is not a natural part of life. It is rather a violent, unnatural intrusion into human experiences".

Contrary to modern myths about death that say death is a natural part of life, the cessation of existence, that there is a natural dignity in dying well, the Bible paints the opposite portrait with the most dark and sobering of all colors. Nowhere in the Bible is death treated as something natural, as something that can be easily domesticated. And you hear that on the news today and states are now having where they can put those to death where they die in a dignified manner. They went out as they were before the first drop of whatever they're putting into their system hits the bloodstream. Well, I got off that a little bit.

Death, it's not something that can be easily domesticated or treated as a part of life. No encouragement is given us in the Bible to minimize the terror and the fearfulness of death as our last enemy. Nothing in the Bible. And he goes on, he goes on to tell you, "Nobody's told us about the separation of the body and the soul. We don't know, but for something to be taken out of you that has been with you all through life, it's going to be a drastic experience".

And about all we've heard about death is, "Oh, it's just the home going of the children of God". That's true. But it doesn't mean that those last hours, days, I don't know, everything will be all right. No, a great division is taking place in you. And at the moment of death, your soul journeys to be with God. Your body is put in the ground. Won't be there long because that body will be resurrected and reunited with your soul.

And then the judgment of all, the righteous, before a God that they've known and they've served, they've been faithful to, and the unrighteous. It doesn't mean that you are mean. It doesn't mean that you are kind. Might be at times. I hope you'll lay hold of that and you'll think of that

separation. Now will you turn with me to 1 Corinthians chapter 15. First Corinthians 15 and verse 56 to begin with.

The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. Verse 57, But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. And you say, “Well, see that preacher”? Yeah, God gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, but you can't find in this Bible, and you didn't read it here, where the sting of death is removed from you.

You can't do it. When something that drastic happens to your body, it won't be like a little bee sting. But how do I talk about it? I don't know about it. I just know that it takes place. And I know the Bible. The Bible never says that in your deathbed, everything will be lovely and all. Yeah. And that might be true. But at the moment that your soul departs from your body, you will have experienced something drastic.

As he said, death is not natural. Death, though it is a part of life, death is upon us because of sin. And take charge of your life the best you can and see that the heart is right with God because you don't know. When you pull out in front of somebody, or as a wise man talked about, cutting wood with an axe and the axe slips, you don't know what's gonna happen in a day. And though Jesus will receive you smilingly if you're a Christian, but don't meet him as an enemy.

Death is a violent intrusion because of the separation of our body and our soul. And that which you must be, every person here must be concerned with is how are you being shaped? What are the chains that bind you to this old world? That keep you from being a diligent seeker after the Lord.

1 John 2:15, **Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, verse 16, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.**

And the only way one is prepared for the Lord is that a messenger speaks and the Holy Spirit attends the message. And it begins to work in your soul, which is preparing you, not just that day. But if you haven't had a transformation taking place weekly, monthly, then you didn't meet Christ and you're after the things of this old world. Things here cannot, dear eternal heart, things here cannot be what molds or shapes you. You fall after them six days a week and then you give the Lord a couple of hours on the Lord's Day and then immediately after you go back to the things in the world. You can't say that Christ is shaping you. The world's what's pulling you. And everybody but you know the outcome of life. And only a Christian has the Spirit of God making ready a people. You read those with me. And when the marriage of the Lamb is come, it said, **his wife hath made herself ready.** Are you being prepared? The only way you are is the Spirit of God justifying you before God because Christ bore your sins. The only way.

And every child of God must have the Spirit active within their own soul. And there are a lot of things that prevent His activity, but I won't go into those. When you were born into the family of God, there was a new creation, something that had never been, but that did not change the nature that you had and will always have up until death, child of God or not. Children have a new nature within. Those lost, they've still got the nature of the old Adam.

And it is the Spirit of God working in you that changes you from one of the earthly, as the scriptures speak about, to one of the heavenly beings. And what Jesus told Nicodemus, he said, **If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?** You can't do it. No man, no man, no man can. God's got to do that working within your heart.

Now one last, Philippians 3 beginning with verse 18, Philippians 3:18. **For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things.** And then in verse 20, he talks about the child of God.

For our conversation - our manner of life - **is in heaven.** While we're living on earth, it's in heaven. You young folk better listen. Our conversation is in heaven from whence also we look for the Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus. The reason I cannot speak to you of smooth things is because one day I must answer to the Lord of how I have walked before you and spoken to you. A mother with a children's best interest at heart, she wants to set before them a good diet, not things they call good. And that which keeps you on the narrow path is the active Holy Spirit, one not grieved, one not quenched.

Remember at the baptism of Jesus, the Lord had told John, this is how you'll identify. And he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him another place and remaining on him. Go back to Genesis and find the first place the dove is ever mentioned, and it'll tell you a lot.

The old ark landed, and Noah sent forth a raven, but it didn't come back. For the raven had plenty to eat on, dying, corrupting, putrefying, flesh. Noah didn't know. He had no indication of what's taking place out there. So he sent out a dove and it said, and the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot. And I saw the Holy Spirit descending and lighting upon him like a dove.

One of the most sensitive of all birds. And it doesn't take much noise in your heart to run him away. Now, do you see the two natures of a Christian in those two birds? They're there. One is earthly, nourished by things below, but the diet of a dove consists of things, of living plants that have produced seed, fruit, living plants having produced fruit, small berries and such, and some

in the dove family will eat the tender parts of plants, tender leaves and tender stem. A Christian eats and he's got a diet of living things, but he also has a nature that likes things of this old world.

Now listen, two times in the Lord's prayer. Father, **they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.** John 15:19, **If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.** This is not true today because there's so little activity of the Spirit that the true children of God are not greatly manifest. Oh yeah, he's religious, she's religious. The day is coming when there'll be a great distinction between a child of God and a child that has looked after her old nature.

I'm not speaking about your work, but when your work day is over, who are your closest acquaintances? If you had a choice, who would you like to have fellowship with? I know you can answer that. The crowd in Israel said, we'll be glad when the Sabbath's over so we can start back buying and selling. What topic of conversation would perk your ears up because that's your greatest interest? Is it based on earthly things? Are earthly things shaping and molding you?

That dear old friend, if he hadn't have been shaped before his mind began to be lost, he couldn't be saved now. And I know, because I've sat in your shoes and I've sat in your place, "Nobody's going to tell me". But I hope somebody will get your attention someday. You're either being shaped as part of the bride of the Lord Jesus, or hopefully you're not being set in so many things here below. You'd prefer light, jovial, smooth words and teachings. That's only fitting you as an unjust person to stand before God.

Let the unjust stay unjustified. Let the filthy stay filthy, not cleansed. And there was a man that came to a wedding, and the king looked out and said, "What are you doing here without a wedding garment on"? And the man was so frightened, he could not answer him.

You are either clothed in the garments of Christ's salvation and the robe of His righteousness, or you're still groveling around with things of this old earth. And that old nature is what's your guide. People, please, if I can beg of you, do something. Make certain your calling and election. Make sure of your salvation. And you that know you're lost, know that one day time will be out for you. And God will say, "Let them stay unjust". And that's an awful, awful sentence against one.