

## Our Point of No Return

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In aviation and air travel, there is a certain point in the flight which is known as the PSR, which is the Point of Safe Return, which is the last point on a route at which it is possible to safely return to the departure airfield with the required fuel reserves still available in the tanks. Once a pilot flies past the Point of Safe Return, he must either land at the airplane's intended destination or to change course and to land another nearby airfield should an emergency occur. If the pilot flies past this Point of Safe Return, he can no longer return to his departure airfield.

During World War II, there was a certain distance into Germany that the British and American bombers could fly and return back to England. Beyond that point, the bombers would not have enough fuel to return back to England. Because of strong headwinds or necessary evasive maneuvers, many bombers used more fuel than expected before they reached their bombing destinations. When the bombers reached that Point of No Return, the pilots and the crew all had to make the decision of either turning back to England without having made their bombing runs or to continue to their targets knowing that they would not return to England. And many bombers passed that point and never returned to England.

Most, if not all of us, have flown in an airplane. At the takeoff of every flight of every airplane, the pilot knows that there is a Point of No Return on the runway. The pilot begins his takeoff usually from a standstill. He pushes the throttle to almost full power. The aircraft moves forward with much force, rolling faster and faster down the runway. The speed needed for takeoff for most jet aircraft today is between 165 and 180 mph.

As the aircraft is rolling faster and faster down the runway, there quickly gets to be less and less runway left for the pilot to get the airplane airborne. At a certain point on the runway, the pilot has to commit to takeoff because he does not have enough runway left to safely decelerate and stop the aircraft on the ground. The pilot is totally committed to takeoff, no matter what. This point is called the Point of No Return.

I hope everyone has had a joyful and fulfilling Feast of Unleavened Bread, a festival symbolizing our journey toward the Kingdom living an unleavened sinless life.

Please turn with me to Exodus 13. Israel had just been thrust out of Egypt by the Egyptians themselves, and Israel left Egypt with a high hand, having spoiled the Egyptians of their wealth. God was giving the Israelites instructions as they were leaving Egypt.

**Exodus 13:06** *For seven days the bread you eat must be made without yeast. Then on the seventh day, celebrate a feast to the Lord.*

07) *Eat bread without yeast during those seven days. In fact, there must be no yeast bread or any yeast at all found within the borders of your land during this time.*

08) *On the seventh day you must explain to your children, 'I am celebrating what the Lord did for me when I left Egypt.'*

09) *This annual festival will be a visible sign to you, like a mark branded on your hand or your forehead. Let it remind you always to recite this teaching of the Lord: 'With a strong hand, the Lord rescued you from Egypt.'*

Of importance to note here is that the seventh day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread had not yet occurred. Something significant was going to happen on the seventh day that the Israelites would pass on down through their generations. As indicated in Verse 08, they were to celebrate what God did for them when they had left Egypt and when God rescued them from Egypt.

Please turn with me to Exodus 14. We all know the story. Yehovah led the Israelites to where they were trapped between the Red Sea and the Egyptian army.

**Exodus 14:15** *And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward:*

16) *But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. (Skip to)*

21) *And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.*

22) *And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.*

23) *And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.*

24) *And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians,*

25) *And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians.*

26) *And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.*

27) *And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.*

28) *And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them.*

29) *But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.*

30) *Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore.*

31) *And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.*

Please turn with me to 1 Corinthians 10. God the Father performed an incredible miracle and saved the Israelites from what would have been either certain death or certain bondage and servitude again. But God rescued them from Egypt. The crossing of the Red Sea had deep meaning for the Israelites as well as for us today.

**1 Corinthians 10:01** *Moreover, brethren, I would not that you should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;*

02) *And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;*

So with the cloud above them, and the walls of water on either side of them when they walked through the Red Sea, the Israelites were baptized unto Moses. And when the waters came together again and drowned the Egyptian army, another major step occurred in the lives of Israelites.

At that very point in time, when the waters of the Red Sea came back together, the Israelites passed the point of no return. Even if they wanted to return to Egypt, they could not go back to Egypt, at least in the same route that they left it. The Red Sea prevented their return.

Brethren, in my sermon today entitled “Our Point of No Return”, I would like to explore four aspects concerning the point of no return in our physical and spiritual lives.

The first aspect that I would like to explore is:

### **1. There is a point of no return in our physical lives**

Brethren, in our physical lives, we can pass points of no return where decisions that we make and actions that we take can place us on a path which totally alters our physical lives to a point where there is no returning to life as we had known it.

Premarital sex and pregnancy, adultery after marriage, committing a felony or major crime, breaking a major trust between friends, among many other actions and decisions can push us past the point of no return physically and can ruin relationships, friendships, marriages, and bright and promising futures.

Please turn with me to Proverbs 1. Wisdom tells us to stay far away from physical points of no return. A warning is given here to young people not to pass that point of no return.

**Proverbs 1:10** *My child, if sinners entice you, turn your back on them!*

11) They may say, "Come and join us. Let's hide and kill someone! Just for fun, let's ambush the innocent!"

12) Let's swallow them alive, like the grave; let's swallow them whole, like those who go down to the pit of death.

13) Think of the great things we'll get! We'll fill our houses with all the stuff we take.

14) Come, throw in your lot with us; we'll all share the loot."

15) My child, don't go along with them! Stay far away from their paths.

16) They rush to commit evil deeds. They hurry to commit murder. (New Living Translation)

A young man or woman giving in to unrighteous peer pressure can be pressured in to making terrible decisions that can be life changing in a negative way when they pass that point of no return.

Another example in the Bible of a physical point of no return is the story of King David. Please turn with me to 2 Samuel 12. We all know the story of David and Bathsheba. David was a man after God's own heart. But David allowed his lust for Bathsheba to get the better of him. David committed adultery with Bathsheba, and then he desperately tried to cover up the sin when she became pregnant at a time when her husband Uriah could not have ever been with her. What to do! What to do! David ultimately had Uriah put on the front lines of battle so that he would be certainly killed, which he was. Problem solved. David married Bathsheba, and all was well. He got away with it, or so he thought.

God sent the prophet Nathan to David. And Nathan, in explaining David's sin to him, said the following.

**2 Samuel 12:07** *Then Nathan said to David, "You are that man! The Lord, the God of Israel, says: I anointed you king of Israel and saved you from the power of Saul.*

08) *I gave you your master's house and his wives and the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. And if that had not been enough, I would have given you much, much more.*

09) *Why, then, have you despised the word of the Lord and done this horrible deed? For you have murdered Uriah the Hittite with the sword of the Ammonites and stolen his wife.*

10) *From this time on, your family will live by the sword because you have despised me by taking Uriah's wife to be your own.*

11) *"This is what the Lord says: Because of what you have done, I will cause your own household to rebel against you. I will give your wives to another man before your very eyes, and he will go to bed with them in public view.*

12) *You did it secretly, but I will make this happen to you openly in the sight of all Israel."* (New Living Translation)

Notice the past conditional tense in verse 8. I would have given. It is a terrible and sad event when God uses the past conditional tense in addressing us. Verse 8 says: "And

if that had not been enough, I would have given you much, much more." This tense means that something changed. God would have given David much, much more, but now He was not. David, by his actions and deeds, changed the plans that God had for him. David had passed a point of no return. The life that the Father intended for David to have would no longer be available to David. His life would never be the same. He would always be on the run. His own son would continually try to kill him. David paid a terrible physical price for his sin.

Brethren, in the past of each of us, what aspects in our physical lives have we passed the point of no return? In what aspects have our physical lives been changed from what our Father originally had intended for us?

The second aspect that I would like to explore is:

## **2. There is a point of no return in our spiritual lives**

Brethren, are we striving to stop sinning? Are we striving to become more and more like our Heavenly Father? Or are our hearts becoming callous toward sin?

Please turn with me to Ephesians 4. The Apostle Paul was exhorting the Ephesian congregations to quit sinning. Apparently, there were members in the Church in Ephesus who still had severe problems and issues.

**Ephesian 4:17** *With the Lord's authority I say this: Live no longer as the Gentiles do, for they are hopelessly confused.*

18) *Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him.*

19) *They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity.*

20) *But that isn't what you learned about Christ.*

21) *Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him,*

22) *Throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception.*

23) *Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes.*

24) *Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.*

25) *So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body.*

26) *And "don't sin by letting anger control you." Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry,*

27) *For anger gives a foothold to the devil.*

28) *If you are a thief, quit stealing. Instead, use your hands for good hard work, and then give generously to others in need.*

29) *Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.*

30) *And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live.*

*Remember, He has identified you as His own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption.*

- 31) *Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior.*
- 32) *Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.* (New Living Translation)

Brethren, these were Christians in God's Church who lived in Ephesus. Although they were baptized, they were still having difficulty overcoming their sins. Some apparently were lying. Some apparently were stealing. Some had anger issues. These were sins in their life that they had not overcome.

Brethren, are we overcoming our sins, or are we continuing to continue in our sins? Do we find ourselves with some of the same character flaws, weaknesses and sins in our lives that the Ephesians had?

Please turn with me to Romans 6. The Church in Rome also had many problems. Paul also exhorted them to overcome their sins and to not continue in them.

**Romans 6:01** *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*

02) *God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*  
(Skip to)

11) *Likewise reckon you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

12) *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof.*

13) *Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those who are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.*

14) *For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law, but under grace.*

15) *What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*

16) *Know you not, that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*

17) *But God be thanked, that you were the servants of sin, but you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.*

18) *Being then made free from sin, you became the servants of righteousness."*

Please turn with me to Hebrews 3. Prolonged continual sin hardens us and changes the way that we think and feel. We read about this in an exhortation to the Church in Hebrews 3.

**Hebrews 3:07** *Wherefore (as the Holy Spirit says, Today if ye will hear his voice,*

08) *Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:*

- 09) *When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.*  
 10) *Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.*  
 11) *So I swore in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)*  
 12) *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*  
 13) *But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*”

Christ scolded the Pharisees of His day because they had hardened their hearts against God. Please turn with me to Matthew 13. In attempting to keep God's Law to the extreme, they themselves became tyrants and actually made non-sin into sin by and through their own rituals, customs and beliefs that they had added to God's Law. Their added customs and laws became more important than the intent of God's Law. Without having the love that is resident in God's Law, they turned more and more away from God and hardened their hearts.

After speaking with the multitudes including the Pharisees, the disciples asked Jesus why He spoke in parables. Part of His answer to them was:

**Matthew 13:14** *And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:*  
 15) *For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”*

Prolonged sin keeps us from God and hardens our heart. Please turn with me to Romans 2. The Apostle Paul was warning the Roman congregation about members who were engaging in prolonged sin.

**Romans 2:01** *You may think you can condemn such people, but you are just as bad, and you have no excuse! When you say they are wicked and should be punished, you are condemning yourself, for you who judge others do these very same things.*  
 02) *And we know that God, in his justice, will punish anyone who does such things.*  
 03) *Since you judge others for doing these things, why do you think you can avoid God's judgment when you do the same things?*  
 04) *Don't you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin?*  
 05) *But because you are stubborn and refuse to turn from your sin, you are storing up terrible punishment for yourself.*”

Please turn with me to 1 Timothy 4. Continual unrepentant sin leads to a terrible condition in our spiritual lives. The Apostle Paul discusses this terrible condition in 1 Timothy 4.

**1 Timothy 4:01** *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*

02) *Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;*

The Greek verb for “seared” is «καυτηριάζω» (kautériazó) which is the word from which we get the English verb “to cauterize”.

When I read this verse, I always picture cows being branded with a red-hot iron, leaving a permanent mark or brand on the backside of the cows, because the branding iron sears the hairs and the flesh, leaving behind a permanent scar. The intense heat from the cauterization kills the cells of the flesh and of the hairs. Hair will never grow back on the cauterized part. That portion of skin will never be the same again. This is what sin can ultimately do to our conscience.

If we quench God’s Spirit, as the embers of God’s Spirit begin to cool, if we continually sin and further cauterize our consciences against God, we can begin to return to the world and to the life we had before God called us.

Continual unrepentant sin leads to a cauterization of our minds and our hearts against God the Father and against Jesus Christ unto the point that as Paul warns us in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 that we quench the very Holy Spirit that God the Father has placed in us.

As we have read many times before in the well-known verse of Isaiah 59:02, “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”

Continual unrepented sin not only cauterizes our hearts and minds, it also separates us ultimately from God the Father.

Please turn with me to Hebrews 6. We are given a severe warning here in the book of Hebrews that we can come to a point of no return in our spiritual lives, a point from which we cannot recover, and from which we will lose our spiritual salvation.

**Hebrews 6:01** *Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,*

02) *Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.*

03) *And this will we do, if God permit.*

04) *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,*



05) *And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,*

06) *If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.*

Brethren, there is a point in our spiritual lives past which we cannot return, past which there is no redemption, past which we will lose our spiritual salvation.

Brethren, that is our spiritual point of no return.

The third aspect that I would like to explore is:

### **3. We cannot look back**

Brethren, as I mentioned in my last sermon, we are all on a journey toward our ultimate destination, the Kingdom of God the Father. And as we continue down the path that the Father has placed before us, we cannot look back. Once we pass a point of no return, there is nothing profitable in looking back.

Again, an excellent example of what not to follow and repeat is the example of the Ancient Israelites. The Israelites had witnessed the incredible miracle of the parting of the Red Sea. However, for the Israelites, the passing of this point of no return did not stop them from desiring to go back to Egypt. Please turn with me to Exodus 16. The Israelites tended to remember what they should have forgotten and tended to forget what they should have remembered. They murmured repeatedly during their journey.

**Exodus 16:03** *And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for you have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.*

Please turn with me to Numbers 11. The Israelites romanticized their life back in Egypt, forgetting that they were slaves, beaten, mistreated, and subject to the whims of their masters. But that did not stop the Israelites from longingly looking back.

**Numbers 11:04** *And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?*

05) *We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic:*

06) *But our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes."*

Please turn with me to Numbers 14. Even when the Israelites were on the cusp of entering into the Promised Land, they still looked back to Egypt.

**Numbers 14:01** *And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.*

02) *And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!*

03) *And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? Were it not better for us to return into Egypt?*

04) *And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.”*

Emotionally, the Israelites never left Egypt. Although they had passed the point of no return, they kept looking back again and again at Egypt. And as a result, none of that generation, no one 20 years of age and older (except for Joshua and Caleb), would enter the Promised Land. They paid a great price for looking back.

Turn with me to Genesis 19. All of us know the story of Lot and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. God was going to destroy those two cities because of their wickedness and sins. But God spared Lot and his family.

**Genesis 19:15** *And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take your wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest you be consumed in the iniquity of the city.*

16) *And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.*

17) *And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for your life; look not behind you, neither stay you in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. (Skip to)*

24) *Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;*

25) *And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.*

26) *But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.*

The Hebrew word for “looked back” is “NABAT” (naw-bat) which means to look intently at, by implication, to regard with pleasure, favor or care.

We are not certain if Lot’s wife actually returned toward Sodom or just turned and looked back at Sodom. But she longed for Sodom. She still wanted to be in Sodom, and her heart was still there. And she paid for that longing with her life.

Do we find ourselves longingly looking back past our point of no return just like Lot’s wife and like the Israelites? Do we find ourselves looking back even longingly on something that God says is totally wrong. What did Jesus say about looking back? Turn with me to Luke 9. Christ and His disciples were walking on their way to Jerusalem. And they met several people along the way.

**Luke 9:59** *And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.*

60) *Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.*

61) *And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.*

62) *And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”*

Brethren, we made a commitment to God the Father at our baptism that we would be faithful to Him on our journey to His Kingdom. We must renew that commitment everyday by our willful obedience to our Father and His way.

Please turn with me to Philipians 3. The Apostle Paul exhorted the congregation to not look back but to always look forward and to look toward the Kingdom.

**Philippians 3:13** *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,*

14) *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

Brethren, we cannot return to where we came from. We cannot go back and we cannot look back if we are to enter the Kingdom of God.

The fourth and final aspect that I would like to explore is:

#### **4) There is a point of no return in our commitment to put God the Father first**

There is a misnomer among many brethren that our commitment to the Father, to Christ, and to the Truth begins at baptism. I've heard many young people, older teens and young adults say that they don't want to be baptized yet because they are not ready to commit to this way of life and to put God the Father first.

The truth of the matter is once a person knows in his or her heart that this is the truth and the way, that person is already being judged, whether they have been baptized or not. Baptism is an important symbol of a person's desire and commitment to live God's way of life and to give up the old way of life. Baptism is a crucial step. It is a necessary step. But the judgment on us for what we know does not start at baptism.

Brethren, if we know that we know, and God the Father and Jesus Christ know that we know, and we know that God the Father and Jesus Christ know that we know, we are already being judged for what we know.

This is true before baptism and after baptism, and continually all throughout our lives. Do we find ourselves fighting against the Truth? Maybe we don't want to accept the Truth? Maybe we feel that acceptance of God's Truth is a bridge too far, a price too high to pay? Maybe we make excuses or find excuses which will salve our conscience so that we don't have to accept the Truth or so we won't have to change or so we won't have to stand up against opposition or so we won't have to give up anything?

Brethren, please turn with me to James 4. If we know the Truth and willingly reject it, if we put it on a shelf, if we wish that it would just go away because it is just not convenient, if we intentionally put it out of our minds, we indeed are committing sin, and God will hold us accountable. James writes the conclusion of this matter in one simple verse.

**James 4:17** *Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*

The New Living Translation puts it even more clearly – “Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it.”

Please turn with me to John 9, and we will read about Jesus’ healing of a blind man. The Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Jewish leadership in Judea all had “Jesus Derangement Syndrome.” Jesus through His righteous acts, His miracles, His speech, and His condemnation of their hypocrisy drove the Jewish leaders crazy. They despised Jesus. Their “Jesus Derangement Syndrome” became so bad that they began to be against anything that Jesus did. We read an account of this in John 9.

**John 9:01** *As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. (Skip)*

06) *Then he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man’s eyes.*

07) *He told him, “Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam” (Siloam means “sent”). So the man went and washed and came back seeing!*

08) *His neighbors and others who knew him as a blind beggar asked each other, “Isn’t this the man who used to sit and beg?”*

09) *Some said he was, and others said, “No, he just looks like him!” But the beggar kept saying, “Yes, I am the same one!”*

10) *They asked, “Who healed you? What happened?”*

11) *He told them, “The man they call Jesus made mud and spread it over my eyes and told me, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam and wash yourself.’ So I went and washed, and now I can see!”*

12) *“Where is he now?” they asked. “I don’t know,” he replied.*

13) *Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees,*

14) *because it was on the Sabbath that Jesus had made the mud and healed him.*

15) *The Pharisees asked the man all about it. So he told them, “He put the mud over my eyes, and when I washed it away, I could see!”*

16) *Some of the Pharisees said, “This man Jesus is not from God, for he is working on the Sabbath.” Others said, “But how could an ordinary sinner do such miraculous signs?” So there was a deep division of opinion among them.*

17) *Then the Pharisees again questioned the man who had been blind and demanded, “What’s your opinion about this man who healed you?” The man replied, “I think he must be a prophet.”*

18) *The Jewish leaders still refused to believe the man had been blind and could now see, so they called in his parents.*

- 19) *They asked them, "Is this your son? Was he born blind? If so, how can he now see?"*
- 20) *His parents replied, "We know this is our son and that he was born blind,*
- 21) *but we don't know how he can see or who healed him. Ask him. He is old enough to speak for himself."*
- 22) *His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who had announced that anyone saying Jesus was the Messiah would be expelled from the synagogue.*
- 23) *That's why they said, "He is old enough. Ask him."*
- 24) *So for the second time they called in the man who had been blind and told him, "God should get the glory for this, because we know this man Jesus is a sinner."*
- 25) *"I don't know whether he is a sinner," the man replied. "But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!"*
- 26) *"But what did he do?" they asked. "How did he heal you?"*
- 27) *"Look!" the man exclaimed. "I told you once. Didn't you listen? Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?"*
- 28) *Then they cursed him and said, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses!*
- 29) *We know God spoke to Moses, but we don't even know where this man comes from."*
- 30) *"Why, that's very strange!" the man replied. "He healed my eyes, and yet you don't know where he comes from?"*
- 31) *We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but he is ready to hear those who worship him and do his will.*
- 32) *Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind.*
- 33) *If this man were not from God, he couldn't have done it."*
- 34) *"You were born a total sinner!" they answered. "Are you trying to teach us?" And they threw him out of the synagogue."*

The hatred of the Truth that Jesus represented and their hatred of the Son of God blinded their judgment. They refused to give Jesus and God the Father credit for a miracle that had not ever been done before – the healing of a blind man who had been blind from birth. They could not bring themselves to accept the Truth. And in the end, they kicked the former blind man out of the synagogue.

Nothing that Jesus did would be pleasing in their sight. Jesus knew this. He knew that He would never please them. He said in Luke 7:33 & 34, "For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.'"

Jesus did not try to please the Jewish leadership. His only thought was how to please His Father. And ultimately, pleasing the Father cost Him His life. He always though placed God the Father first.

Brethren, are we putting God the Father first in our lives? Above everything else? Above our friends? Above our families? Above any comforts we could have? Above the financial success and stability that we could have? Above the accolades we could have? Are we willing to put our very lives on the line for putting God the Father first?

Brethren, what is our attitude toward God's Truth and His way of life? What is our attitude toward our new understanding about who God the Father is and was, about who Jesus Christ is and was, about God's plan of salvation, about our part in it, about our responsibilities in this life and in our future spiritual lives?

Brethren, there are so many points of no return in our lives. Many of these points of no return are crucial forks in the road in our physical lives. And also, many of these points of no return are crucial forks in the road in our spiritual lives.

Our calling by God the Father is not a game. His calling is not to be taken lightly. As Rick Railston said in his sermon two weeks ago, God the Father is very patient, but there is a time limit.

Please turn with me to 2 Peter 2. The Apostle Peter gives a very stern warning about continual sin leading to a rejection of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

**2 Peter 2:20** *And when people escape from the wickedness of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then get tangled up and enslaved by sin again, they are worse off than before.*

21) *It would be better if they had never known the way to righteousness than to know it and then reject the command they were given to live a holy life.*

22) *They prove the truth of this proverb: A dog returns to its vomit. And another says: A washed pig returns to the mud."*

Please turn with me to Hebrews 2, where we will read a warning to the people of God. Again, spiritual salvation is serious business. So many of Jesus' parables ended with groups of believers who thought that they had spiritual salvation when they found out to their great dismay that the Lord of the house didn't even know them. In the end, they had never forged a true relationship with the Father in this life.

**Hebrews 2:01** *And when people escape from the wickedness of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then get tangled up and enslaved by sin again, they are worse off than before.*

02) *For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;*

03) *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;*

04) *God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"*

Brethren, will we be guilty of neglecting our great salvation?

Brethren, we have enjoyed seven wonderful Days of Unleavened Bread. And now as we look forward to the Feast of Pentecost which we will be celebrating in six weeks, let's strive to not let God's Truth slip from us. Let's strive to not neglect our salvation in any way. Let's strive to grow ever closer to God the Father and to Jesus Christ. And let's strive to identify, to acknowledge, and to understand the points of no return in our lives.