



## *HOW TO GET A PERSONAL RESCUING DURING A NATIONAL RECKONING*

Pastor Mark Driscoll

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All right who's ready for our sermon you guys ready to go to work reporting for Duty we're in Joel chapter 2 if you've got a Bible go to the Old Testament Book of Joel written over 2,000 years ago we'll be in chapter two as you're fine in your spot uh let me set it up with a story tell you a story about when I was a little boy I was a little boy and uh and I had the same voice by the way I was about three or four and uh and and my mom called me Mary my mom's probably watching love you mom she still calls me Mary so if you're wondering when does your mom stop putting a y on the end of your name I will just tell you it's sometime after 53 that's that's that's the future so as was a little boy and I was the oldest of five kids and my mom took me and she said Mary that's the stove she's like don't open the oven it's hot and whatever you do don't touch the burners they're hot you're going to hurt yourself well being a little boy I thought yeah that's probably not true uh and I and I need to verify and if you've got a son you know what this is boys are suicidal that's just how they are and so uh one day my mom uh left the kitchen and I wanted something above the stove in the cupboard above the stove so I pushed the uh chair up to the counter I climbed on the chair I climbed on the counter I walked over I'm standing on the stove I'm trying to get something probably cookies out of the the overhead shelves and my foot was burning it hurt like crazy and I'm a little boy and I realized my mom's not a false prophetess this is this is hot and so I I pulled my foot up I was like oh my goodness so I I climbed down real quick trying not to get hot but my foot is it's burned it's swelling it's red it hurts like crazy and my mom walks in and she can tell something's wrong she's like Mary what's wrong I was like nothing nothing nothing she's like no what happened I'm like everything's great she's like did you hurt your foot I was like uh yeah she looks at my foot it's red it's swollen it's burned she's like did you stand on the stove I can't lie I'm literally caught red-footed like I'm I'm caught I was like yeah I did she's like I told you I was like yeah I know Mom and and you were right okay here here's what I'm happy to report I've never stood on a stove ever since I have 50 years of unblemished stov standing avoidance and uh I have no plans to stand on a stove anytime in the future and and the point is this sometimes a little bit of pain actually can help you avoid a lot of pain and a lot of times in life we try to avoid pain but a little pain could be actually a way of training us to avoid a lot more pain and so ever since that day I I have not stood on a stove Ju Just to be safe I don't even cook I just you know just be safe and so here's here's the big idea right now in your life right now in my life we've got pain but what if that pain is actually something that God is allowing to teach us to inform us to prepare us to help us to avoid greater pain in the future and that's the big idea that I want to deal with today as we uh look at the Book of Joel they were facing a national Reckoning they had been rebelling against God for a very long time and suddenly there was a reckoning a reckoning is a consequence God says my patience is worn out you're not paying attention things are not improving therefore I'm going to allow some pain to come to you to get your attention to keep you from continuing in this direction and causing yourself more pain and so it came in their day in the form of locusts invading their country destroying their economy and so as we think about the pain that they're experiencing you need to understand as well we're in the middle of our own National Reckoning economically there's a reckoning politically there's a reckoning culturally morally spirit spiritually and socially there's a

reckoning this is a time when God is allowing some pain and as God's children we have the ability to open God's word and ask what is the purpose of the pain and how can the pain be used to prepare me to avoid worse and greater pain in the future that brings me to Joel chapter 2 and there's going to be two big Ideas here's the first one unrepentance unlocks Reckoning we'll just read it Joel chapter 2 1-1 uh blow a trumpet in Zion sound an alarm on my Holy Mountain it's a warning urgency sense of sense of Crisis looming their mood is the same as ours let all the inhabitants of the land tremble for the day of the Lord is coming the day of the Lord is the theme of Joel it is near a day of darkness and Gloom a day of clouds and thick Darkness it sounds like November doesn't it uh like Blackness there is spread upon the mountains a great and powerful people like there has never been before nor will be again after them through the years of all generations fire devours before them and behind them a flame burns the land is like the Garden of Eden before them but behind them a desolate Wilderness and nothing escapes them their appearance is like the appearance of horses and like war horses they run as with the rumbling of Chariots they leave uh the tops of the mountains like the crackling of a flame of fire devouring the stubble like a powerful Army drawn for battle before them peoples are in anguish all faces grow pale this is a time of great anxiety like Warriors they charge like soldiers they scale the wall they March each on his way they do not swerve from their path they do not jostle one another each marches in his path they burst through the weapons and are not halted they leap upon the city they run upon the walls they climb up into the houses they enter Through the Windows like a thief the earthquakes before them the heavens tremble the Sun and Moon are darkened this is a brutal season and the Stars withdraw their shining the Lord utters his voice before his army for his Camp is exceedingly great they picked aied with God he who executes his word is powerful for the day of the Lord there's the theme again is great and very awesome who can endure it what he's talking about here is a national Reckoning you need to know that over the nation is the Lord that Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords and he will come back to put an end to all sin all Injustice all tyranny and there will be no Nations All Nations will be ruled exclusively by his kingdom now in our day if a nation does not acknowledge and honor that King Jesus and that Kingdom eventually there is a reckoning for that Nation make no mistake our problem today it is spiritual it has economic and political and cultural implications but primarily our nation and our culture has chosen to pick a fight with God and when God has his creatures declaring war on him he is very patient but eventually he allows consequence to come event there is a reckoning and that's what they were experiencing and that's what we are experiencing this is the Bible giving language to the mood of the day and in that day he was talking about a place called Zion that's what we just read it's a place in Israel just outside of Jerusalem it's a place that still exists today it's mentioned about 150 some times in your Bible and the reason it's significant that's the place to which Jesus came and that's the place to which Jesus is coming again in that day there was literally a war against Israel here we are more than 2 and a half thousand years later that same place is still under siege this is all prophetic and anticipating jesus' second coming and what he says is blow a trumpet this is a warning it's like right now today in Israel there are Air Raid Sirens that will go off when rockets and missiles are being launched and it's a way of warning

people don't go outside it's a dangerous day in their day they had a trumpet in our day we've got Air Raid Sirens it's the same consequence it's the same purpose behind ultimately declaring to the people trouble is coming pay attention part of this is also my job and the preacher's job is to be a trumpet a preacher's job is to Proclaim that there is sin and death and destruction and Devastation and that Reckoning is coming unless people start repenting and so ultimately as well what we find here is he is getting them to look from their day to the last day for you and I to make sense of our life we need to know where we're going we need to know what we're preparing for and we need to know how all of human history will be ending the Bible refers to that eight times explicitly other times it infers it in Joel in so far as regarding the day of the Lord it says the day of the Lord um in chapter 1 and it does so on a few few occasions actually just once in Joel 3 it mentions the day of the Lord on two occasions and then in Joel chapter 2 where we find ourselves it mentions the day of the Lord by name five times the point of this life is to prepare for eternal life the reason that we want to deal with our sin today is we're going to stand before our savior for judgment on the last day and what can happen in this life is we get so anxious about today that we don't prepare for forever in this sermon I don't want you to think primarily about politics or elections or interest rates or economies though all of those things are important I want you to think about you standing before God giving an account for the life you're living right now that's preparing for the day of the Lord the day of the Lord is the last day of the last days so the Bible speaks of the last days we tend to think in terms of uh periods of like Millennium or decades or years God thinks in terms of the first and second coming of Jesus Christ so Jesus comes lives dies Rises and then he's coming again to judge the living and the dead and there will be Heaven and Hell the period between Jesus first and second coming is called the last days we sometimes refer to it as the end times and as we get nearer to the end there are some signs that tell us that we're nearing his coming in addition the last days ends with the day of the Lord that's the day when Jesus returns that's the day when after that day no one can be saved Heaven and Hell will be occupied the dead will be raised and there will be a global Reckoning and so what he's saying is prepare for that day use whatever pain you're experiencing today to examine your own life and to see what God may be telling you so that he can be preparing you to stand before him on a day of judgment um what we're talking about here is the wrath of God poured out in a season of Reckoning here in Joel chapter 2 it keeps using the word fire well that that so what that is telling us is they're seeing fire they're supposed to think about hell and they're supposed to realize that the fire is to warn them that an eternal fire is coming for those who continue to rebel against God and so ultimately I want to talk momentarily here because what they were experiencing was a foreshadowing of hell it's a foreshadowing of hell and so sometimes when you feel like man my life has gone to Hell well the whole point is to prepare you so that you don't go to hell right sometimes a little bit of hell gets your attention so you'll repent of your sin and then you don't have to spend forever in Hell there are times even in our own life where where it feels like we're we're getting a little bit of hell and I would tell you right now nationally feels a little hellish feels a little hellish Jesus is the one who speaks of Hell more than anyone so let me tell you what he said in 13 of his Parables Jesus talks about hell

Jesus talks about hell more than anyone in the Bible so those sort of progressive you know Jesus loves everyone you know we're all going to make it don't worry you know uh the rainbow flag is you know tolerance it's like no not that Jesus that's a false Jesus that's not the real Jesus the real Jesus talks of hell and he does so using a place called gehenna he actually speaks of this on 11 occasions so there was the city and outside of the city was the dump so everything that was disgusting and defiled and disregarded it was thrown into the dump what do you do at the dump you burn all the garbage so during the day if you looked outside of the city toward gehenna the dump you could just see the smoke at night you could see the fire the flame and Jesus says that hell's like that it's the place outside of blessing it's the place outside of the Eternal City of God it's the place where everyone who does not repent of their sin has an eternal Reckoning and it says the smoke of their torment Rises forever and ever that there is no rest day or night and that the flame is never extinguished the language of hell is as strong and shocking as it could be and here's why God doesn't want you to go there that's why God tells you how horrific it will be as a result when we get some pain in our life it's to remind us if we're not right with God there is a worse pain that is coming and so ultimately Jesus talks of hell with weeping people that are just emotionally devastated forever Jesus talks of Hell in the terms of nashing of teeth just have you ever been in so much pain that you can't speak you just groan will you grind your teeth that's hell the Bible says this do not be deceived God will not be mocked we will reap what we sow I just feel inclined in the spirit to say this as well there's a haunting little line in Revelation and the Holy Spirit reminds me of it it says they were tormented forever day and night in the presence of the Lamb everyone's going to be with Jesus forever either as Friend or Foe as saved or damned Jesus not only rules Heaven Jesus Christ rules hell Satan and demons will be sentenced in tormented in Hell by Jesus Christ most people take themselves far too seriously and take their God far too lightly amen and and and what God is doing here in their day as well as our day he's trying to get our attention like you're sinning you're rebelling you've declared war on me I've told you in the book that I wrote that it is going to end very badly for you and you're going to be an enemy of mine forever and ever so right now repent stop change apologize run to me and I'll save you that's the big idea so let me ask you this where is the pain in your life right now where is it and what is God saying to you and what is God teaching you and how is God using that pain to get your attention and to keep you from some sort of Greater pain CS leis a Christian Author says this God Whispers to us in our Pleasures speaks in our consciences but shouts in our pains it is his megaphone to Rouse a deaf world this is the problem that we're having even nationally right now lots of pain but no repentance hey God I'm sorry I was wrong God we're sorry you know your your word says stuff about Sin and says stuff about debt and says stuff about pride and yeah we did all the the opposite God we're wrong could you please help us save us forgive us there's none of that if you want to guarantee that you'll never be elected run on a platform of we all need to repent you will get zero votes because no one wants to say I'm part of the problem everyone wants to say I'm just another victim and God says we're all part of the problem we've all sinned and fallen short and so they were they were now experiencing some some foreshadowings of what it's going to be like in the last days as we get to the day of the Lord

there's conflict there's pain there's crisis there's debt there's turmoil there's anxiety the same things that we're experiencing it was more than 500 years after Joel that the Lord Jesus is walking on the earth and the disciples came up to him and they asked him they're like okay you're here the first time when you come the second time how do we know we're getting close how many of you would like to know that because the Bible said Jesus no one knows the hour or the day of his coming there's always one guy like I do I got a chart um you know you don't know so we don't know when Jesus is coming but there are some indicators that we're getting close to his second coming and this question is asked and this is about the day of the Lord so we're just going to expand on the theme of Joel and here are the eight signs that the day of the Lord is near so Jesus is he's on the earth they come up to him in Matthew 24:3 and it says as he that's Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives let me just see this here's a little nerd fact Jesus first coming he's on the Mount of Olives and they're like hey when you come back what's it going to be like they may have known that hundreds of years prior in Zechariah 14:4 he prophesied that when Jesus came the second time his feet would land on the Mount of Olives and he'd split it in half so the place that Jesus is sitting is the exact place that Jesus will be returning it makes you wonder maybe they're having their daily devot they like oh Zachariah says Jesus come to the Mount of Olives Jesus is on the Mount of Olives let's ask how do we know you're coming back the disciples came to him privately telling uh saying uh tell us when will these things be you're here the first time when you come in the second time when to the last day in when's the last day when's the day of the Lord that's the returning of the Lord tell us when when will these things be and what will be the sign the sign pointing to your coming in the end of the age so number one I'll give you eight number one demonic leaders leading to the Antichrist and Jesus answered them see to it that no one leads you astray and somebody's always trying for many will come in my name I'm a Christian I believe in God I'm a good person saying I am the Christ and they will lead many astray these are people who who come and they look at all the pains problems and perils in the world and they say I can fix it and what they're saying then is I'm the Savior trust me follow me obey me and I'll rescue you Jesus says unless they're pointing to me that's not someone that is uh filled with the Holy Spirit they're empowered by demonic spirits and ultimately they're Antichrist and this leads to the great deception at the end what Paul calls the man of lawlessness the Antichrist two or we're seeing a lot of really horrible leaders that tell us that they're fantastic and going to fix our problems right yes no yes yes number two Wars and threats of Wars Matthew 24 6-7 Jesus says and you will hear of wars and rumors of wars see that you are not alarmed for this must take place for the end is not yet for nation will rise up against nation and Kingdom against Kingdom what Jesus says is as we get closer to the day of the Lord You're going to have an escalation of Wars I'll show it to you this is the last 30 years conflicts are on the rise Wars are increasing and let me say this we know right now that turkey and Iran are threatening war on Israel Iran is also attacking through their proxies of Hamas Hezbollah and the houis we dealt with this a bid last week if that happens now you're going to probably drag in Russia maybe China which includes the us and we call this World War III or Armageddon we're we're on the brink of what could be a global escalation in War I I hope and pray we're not but it sure seems

we're going there number three natural disasters Matthew 24:7 and 8 and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places all these are but the beginnings of the birth pains when a woman asks birth I've never given birth I'm not a birthing person um I've had water retention and weight gain um but no baby um but what I've observed is as a woman gives birth the birth pains increase with intensity and frequency right up to the birth and what he's saying is the human history is like a pregnant woman it's going to get really intense before Jesus comes comes to bring newness of life in addition um Christians will be hated number four Matthew 24:9 then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death and you will be hated by All Nations for my name sake we're now living in a world where the Bible is considered immoral and Justice is undoing what God commands let me say this social justice is often just sin repackaged by prideful people and so at the end of the day as there is this increasing opposition to the word of God there will be increasing persecution for the people of God and it's just bizarre we're seeing uh martyrdom increase and we've got brothers and sisters around the globe that are paying the ultimate price for their love for Jesus but even in our own nation that says that our rights come from our creator suddenly it seems to me like there's an attack on people of Faith seems like if you want to raise your own children and not them be brainwashed or gender confused or mutilated suddenly the government thinks that is their right to override your parental Authority we're living in a day when increasingly just teaching the word of God can get you banned from social media platforms and Outcast is hate speech we're just living in a day when when it's not indifference toward the things of God it is Defiance toward the things of God and what he says is it's going to get worse so there's the word of encouragement um but let me say this at least we know what's coming so we're not shocked and we know what's happening okay things get darker till the light of the world comes number five widespread apostasy Matthew 24:10 and then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another entire denominations will just become completely corrupt giving up on Bible teaching and Jesus and Heaven and Hell and men and women and everything it's just a complete and total failure of nerve if you don't want to be attacked it's very simple don't say anything don't have anything and don't do anything otherwise you're going to pay a price and we're seeing now a historic apostasy we're seeing entire churches denominations tribes networks Bible colleges seminaries pulpits completely Antichrist it's just it's shocking the pace I I give you my word I will always preach his word I promise you that I will I will promise you that because here's what I know I've got to stand before him and the Bible says you shouldn't try to be a teacher you're going to get judged more harshly I know that verse that's a terrifying verse like that's I yell a lot because ultimately the church belongs to Jesus the PO Pulpit belongs to Jesus the sermon belongs to Jesus the people belong to Jesus the the dollars belong to Jesus the real estate belongs to Jesus the future belongs to Jesus right it it's it's all his it's all his so guys like me we're just stewards hey tell us what you want you're the boss tell us what you want said we'll say that and at some point when you think that you're serving someone other than God you become apostate it's a tragedy I me verbal process so online watching right now are tons of people that can't find a church they were going to a church and a church walked away from God and there's a lot of people like why are people leaving the church here's my

question why are churches leaving God if your church leaves God leave your church right but don't leave your God we'll keep going um number six lies and false teaching Jesus says this will this will escalate as we get near the day of the Lord many Matthew 24:11 many false prophets will arise and Lead many astray here's what he's saying is it's going to get so bad you don't even know what the truth is feels like we're there remember remember see I'm I'm older now um so I remember growing up it's like oh it was in the news now you're like that means nothing that means nothing I just thought about it news is a four-letter word you know it just is you know used to be like oh well the politician said you're [Music] like oh their only gift is lying that's their only spiritual gift is lying how many of you are you like I don't even know what's true or false I can't even I can't even make heads or Tales of it it's the world in which we live and technology and artificial intelligence it doesn't make it better you can lie faster and more effectively than at any point in human history it's true right we had an example of that this week uh it was a tragic situation in the UK uh a young man walked into a place where children were learning to dance and he stabbed to death three children um harmed uh 10 other people adults and children his name wasn't immediately released so word went out uh it's it's illegal immigrant it's a Muslim and this was a terrorist attack and then thousands of people in the UK they take to the streets they protest and Riot and businesses are shut down and then a counter-protest Rises up says that's all racist and bigoted and discriminatory and over 700 people are arrested and here's what they found out none of that was true it was a 17-year-old boy tragic horrific story he was actually born in the UK he was not a Muslim but he was autistic and there was something wrong and he he did the most Unthinkable unspeakable thing but but let me ask you this if you were Satan the father of Lies would you be really excited about technology and artificial intelligence this allows the father of lies to weaponize the phone in your pocket that you pay to get lied on right I mean this so what he's saying is as as as things get darker and the the the end gets nearer God people have got to be clear-minded and say you know I don't believe everything I'm I'm not a conspiracy theorist um but I'm adjacent you know uh you get that I just made that up um It's like because every once a while you're like yeah I I just I I don't know man I I just don't believe all that or any of that how about this one Lawless Anarchy Matthew 24:1 12- 13 and because lawlessness will be increased what yeah the love of many will grow cold but the one who endures to the end will be saved are we seeing an increase in Lawless Anarchy oh my goodness I mean we we saw it a few years ago like you can take over a city for as long as you want and set things on fire and run for vice president sh let's give him a promotion oh gosh gosh yeah I mean I I the sister testified she said it's true the Bible says where there are two or three Witnesses I'll be the second that is true um and then here's the good news though Global evangelism see because as things get darker Jesus wants the news of his salvation to go out to the Nations Matthew 24:14 and this Gospel of the Kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to All Nations then the end will come so the goal is to get what is called uh the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the nations of the world we call this missions work and and this is church planting and Global evangelism and if you're here and you're hearing this here's why it's not too late for you the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is this and let me make this as



plain and as clear as I can before you understand the good news you need to know the bad news now the good news is there's a God the bad news is we've all sinned against him we've rebelled we have disregarded defied and Dishonored that God because that God is good and holy he can't accept us as we are the truth is as well even if From This Moment forward you try to get live a good life it's too late even if you lived a perfect life from today it's too late God was completely right if he had chosen to just have a global Reckoning and send everyone to Hell forever that would have been perfectly just if you're a criminal you're convicted you go to jail hell is like God's jail for unrepentant Sinners that makes sense instead God did something shocking he he decided that he would come down and fix the problem himself that God became a man and his name is Jesus Christ and Jesus said something that no other major world uh religious leader or founder has ever said he said he was God and then they said well if you keep saying you're God we're going to kill you he said you will kill me I'm God I know the future 3 days later I will rise from the dead and prove that I'm God and we crucified him on a cross and on the cross Jesus took our place so that we can take his place he died so we could live he endured the wrath of God so we could receive the grace of God he experienced condemnation so we could receive salvation and Jesus died and was buried and 3 days later he rose from the dead and he proved his resurrection to crowds over the course of 40 days upwards of 500 people at a time and here we are 2,000 years later and the Church of Jesus Christ is absolute evidence that Jesus Christ is still alive and changing lives that's what we believe amen so if you're here or hearing this you say what does this have to do with me it's not too late see the day of the Lord that's you might die or Jesus might return but in that moment it's over Heaven or Hell Grace or wrath blessing or cursing forever it's not too late see right now today you can you can tell Jesus I'm a sinner I'm asking you to be my savior forgive me and I'm sorry I'm sorry for who I've been and what I've said and what I've done and and if if you will do that you don't need to worry about the last days and you don't need to worry about the day of the Lord because you're with Jesus and Jesus is for you and we live in this magnificent day when technology doesn't allow just the Gospel of Jesus Christ to God uh as people travel but also through technology and so let me just let me say something I'm specifically grateful for says that the gospel will be preached the good news will be preached to the Nations so here we are at Trinity Church I love you guys thank you for giving me the honor of teaching you God's word um and then we've got real Faith Ministries which is a separate Ministry online and through that we distribute the Bible teaching from here and I asked the guys I said this year how many nations will get a sermon or a study guide or a book or some other a daily devotional some other piece of Bible teaching content it's over a 100 Nations it's over 100 Nations that that the word that is preached here it goes out and so I would just ask you be praying be praying for missionaries and church planners and Global evangelism and and Bible translation but if you think about it pray for real Faith as well is we're we're trying to get the good news of Jesus out to the Nations now that being said the message of the Bible the message of the Bible from beginning to end for our response is repentance now the counterfeit of that in our culture is tolerance tolerance is you don't need to repent well then you will have a reckoning unless repentance goes up Reckoning comes down amen but if repentance goes up here's where the

good news is repentance unlocks rescuing for some people who don't repent of their sin there's a reckoning in this life and in eternal life for everyone there is a reckoning in this life and eternal life for unrepentant sin for those who do repent there's not a reckoning there's a rescuing God's like I'm going to love you I'm going to bless you I'm going to help you you're going to avoid this problem in your life and you don't have to worry about eternal life you're going to be with me forever see this is the hope of the believer it's not that we're not going through the same pain that everyone else is but we have a purpose and that is in the end we'll be with him we'll be like him we'll be for him and this will all be over here's what it says in Joel 2 12-17 yet even now declares the Lord return return to me with all your heart this is repentance with fasting and weeping and mourning Rend your hearts not your garments return to the Lord your God for he is he's gracious and merciful slow to anger abounding in steadfast love and he relents over disaster who knows whether he will not turn and relent and leave a blessing behind him a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord your God blow the trumpet in Zion consecrate a fast call a solemn assembly that's church that's what we're doing right now gather the people thank you for being here consecrate the congregation that's us assemble the elders those of the older leaders like me gather the children even the nursing infants let the bridegroom leave his room and let the brighter chamber between the vestibule in the altar let the priests the Ministers of the Lord weep and say spare oh just saw this oh oh that that's I missed it spare spare who not the nation not the Nations your people I I don't know I don't know what's going to happen to the nation I don't know what's going to happen to the planet but I I know if you're one of God's people he's going to spare you oh let's all just take a deep breath like doesn't that feel good right your PE here's my question are you one of his people boy I I miss that that thank you Holy Spirit for just reminding us right there Holy Spirit that's where we need to just we just need to sit for a moment Holy Spirit we just acknowledge right now this is your perfect word speaking right now and Lord so many people have pain and anxiety and stress and frustration and worry we just want to be your people and we trust you to spare your people H spare your people oh Lord that sounds great and make not your heritage or reproach a by word among the Nations why should they say among the people where is their God let me turn this into some questions for you dear friend number one do you know who God is see what Joel is saying is let's get the church together because the world doesn't understand who God is but let's remind ourselves who God is and what he's quoting here in Joel 2 he's quoting an old test book written by the Holy Spirit through Moses chapter 32 of the book of Exodus in that occasion God shows up and he says let me tell you who I am she introduces himself that verse in Exodus 32 that's quoted in Joel 2 is the verse that's quoted in the Bible more than any other verse in the entire Bible and what he says here is this uh God is gracious and merciful slow to anger abounding his steadfast love how many of you there's certain people that you're not going to go to them and say I was wrong I'm sorry it's my fault because they are going to eviscerate you God is going to forgive you if you turn to the Lord and say I am a sinner I Repent I'm sorry I was wrong this is what's amazing about God God never has a bad day God's the same every day gracious merciful slow to anger abound abounding steadfast love guys I forgive you I love you um I'm going to help you I'm not going to keep rubbing your nose in it I'm

not going to bring it up over and over Jesus died for it so we buried it hey how about uh how about we make some progress and and have a different future together oh thank you Lord oh thank you Lord do you know who God is if you know who God is you should run to him not from him number two are you wholeheartedly running toward God he says return to me with all your heart let me ask you today friend how much of your heart does your God have right now does you have your whole heart like well he's got part of my heart there's also some sins that I really like he's he's got part of my heart but I'm also a little jaded skeptical bitter hurt frustrated anxious how much of and so the the point is this God wants your whole heart because let me say this well number one he deserves it number two it's best for you there's no one that gives God their whole heart and regrets it there's no one that gives God their whole heart and doesn't have a joy that they can't even explain number three are you a prodigal returning to God today he says literally return to the Lord your God many of these people they grew up in church or they went to a believing school or grandma or Grandpa told them about the Lord but they had just like the prodigal son they just gone their own way and they're returning is that you today for some of you this word is for you it's return to me whatever you've been doing that's wrong and sinful repent of it that means stop it if you've been walking away from God in parts of your life this is where you start walking toward God say I'm sorry I'm wrong please forgive me I'm coming back home in addition question number four is your relationship with God your highest and most urgent priority this is an incredible line let the bridegroom leave his room and let the bride or chamber you know what that is it's a wedding day so the picture is the groom is over there with the groomsmen and the bride is over there with the bridesmaid and all the guests are showing up and the music starts playing and the doors open and the bride and Grom realize we're not right with God so they cancel the wedding and they run to the church not for the wedding but for repentance nothing is more important nothing is more important than your relationship with God and what he's saying is even if it's your wedding day if you're not right with God go get right with God before you get married whatever you're doing some of you I could just I just sense this in this like but Mark I'm busy I I got a lot of work I don't I don't have time I don't have time well I'll tell you what if God isn't your first priority you'll never have time right some I don't have time to read my Bible I don't have time to right like well you need it and as the world gets darker you need God in a profound and deep way more so than any other time in your life is it a priority is he a priority number four number five rather are you leading your children and family into godliness consecrate the congregation assemble the elders those are the old guys like me gather the children I've got five of them here at the church uh even the nursing infants what he's saying is this all of God's people need to be in God's presence church is for everybody right are you leading your family in the purposes of God and I would speak to the men okay if you're a man right how many how many men in the house raise your hand this is not a trick question by the way this isn't like the Olympics um okay um okay if you're if you're a man you're the leader of your home now you lead with your wife but you go first this means that you initiate prayer for your family that you open the word of God with your family come on let me go a step further when you're wrong you repent first so you know what I'm sorry it was my fault you know Jesus

died for that that's how that's how bad dad blew it right there and what he's talking about is thinking in terms of generational Legacy because as the future gets darker we need to send some people there who know and love Jesus even the nursing infants let me just say this as well now that I'm a grandpa and my grandkids are here I believe that this world is so dark and so despicable and so diabolical and so demonic that if that's the only environment that our children and grandchildren know it's impossible for them to be healthy and joyful so we want to bring them into God's presence here's God's people they repent they're joyful they're filled with the spirit they forgive each other right they sing they have hope your children need to be in an environment where the holy spirit is active and there's life and joy and that's what he's saying in addition um what do you need to repent of so God can deliver you number six he uses this language return with fasting weeping mourning and Rend your hearts what do you need to repent of here's what I don't want you I want you I don't want you to hear this Ser be like that was so good on Wicked people repenting I'm sending that to my mother-in-law right away okay okay maybe just save that for her birthday this is for you okay because here's what happens is we tend to tell people repent so you can be a Christian will you also repent to grow as a Christian and here's what I believe I believe that the Holy Spirit has already highlighted something for each of you personally I believe this week he convicted you he spoke to you he revealed to you he reminded you there was something in your life God said okay that's it right there that's it that's it right there are you going to repent of it you know God I'm sorry I'm wrong God Jesus died for that I need to put it to death number seven what is your life saying about your God to others he says this why should they say among the peoples where is their God people are watching the unbelievers are watching the Believers and the unbelievers are like what good is your god he doesn't show up and help you so why should I why should I seek Him the point is this an unrepentant believer is a horrific witness because God doesn't bless you unless you obey him let me explain this as simply as again I'm I'm I got five kids I love them with all my heart I love being a dad if your kid comes up to you let me ask a parent your kid comes up to you and says I hate you I disagree with you and I'm going to Rebel will you help me okay what's the answer no I'm not the government I'm a parent the answer is no okay your child comes to you and says you're right I'm wrong there's no excuse I need to change I'm struggling would you help me yes God's a father if you're rebelling against him he can't be blessing you unless you repent and then those who are are watching they're wondering why is your god not actively involved in your life you actually don't know God you don't have a God your God never shows up it's like well it's because I'm in sin and I'm unrepentant so not only does your sin hurt you it hurts the people that you're supposed to be sharing Christ with let me bring the band up doesn't mean we're done um but let me just let me let me share with you just let me put the pastor hat on and and try to be a help so here's the big idea unrepentance goes up Reckoning comes down repentance goes up rescuing comes down that's it that's Joel and that's Christianity and so the key is will you be repentant or unrepentant of your sin and recently on a Tuesday morning God woke me up early and I want to share some things with you that that he laid I believe God spoke to me and and I made a note and it was it was early in the morning and some of you asked Pastor Mark how do

you know God woke you up early in the morning cuz that's the only time I'm up early I'll be honest with you like there are people right now every day they're like it's 4:00 a.m. and I'm eating raw eggs and I'm doing push-ups with cinder blocks on my back that's not me that's not me I'm snoring okay I'm snoring I believe God's in control so I'm sleeping that's what I do so God woke me up early and it for me it was really ear like it was single digits it was early on a Tuesday and um and I felt like God wanted me to share with you about repentance not as you have to repent but you get to repent right it's a it's a gift that God gives us because he loves us and so if you're willing to repent here's some things that God will do to to bless you and to help you and to love you and encourage you uh number one you'll start to feel about your sin the way God feels you know that you're repentant when you don't just hate the consequences but you hate the action I can't believe I did that I can't believe I said that I am devastated by what I said or did or failed to say or do now all of a sudden you've got God's heart in addition it removes the barrier between you and God's blessing father I sinned I'm wrong I don't have an excuse I'm not going to blame anybody I'm sorry please forgive me I forgive you I bless you I'm going to help you I'm going to help you in addition when we repent it removes the guilt and shame and condemnation some of you you're living under a heavy weight of guilt shame and condemnation and some of you some of the things you've done I mean they are they're Wicked I mean some of you you know it and you're carrying it well Jesus carried it to the Cross so you don't need to carry it anymore but for some of you it's like I committed adultery I blew up my marriage I I aborted a child I stole from my employer I lied I've got a whole secret life of hidden sin that nobody knows about I've been addicted right and so not only does he forgive you he then takes that guilt off of you for there's no condemnation for those who are in Christ he takes that shame off of you because Jesus Christ went to the cross and the Bible said he scorns it shame and and and he's like no don't carry that Jesus carried that you give that to me and I'll I'll carry that for you that's what he wants for you in addition um if we repent it keeps things from getting worse right right how many of you you know somebody you're like they're going the wrong direction and they just keep going and it gets worse the the word in the New Testament for repentance can literally be translated U-turn this is like somebody is driving off a cliff and repentance is start going the other direction as quickly as possible you're going to hurt yourself in addition um it ends sneaking and hiding some of you you've got a a private life not private to God or you got a secret life and it's not a secret to God repentance is you already know so I'm going to bring it to you so that I can remove it it increases self-improvement if the Christian is always saying okay what now Lord just assume I've got a sin in my life what now what do you want me to work on okay I Repent I apologize let me put that to death let me learn new things let me change let me try let me grow here's what's going to happen then this is why I'm so excited for you the people that you love the most are going to get the best version of you Hallelujah right they're going to be able to enjoy you yes if if you're repentant here's what I'll tell you your marriage will get better you go to your spouse like I wrong like I know I'm sorry you should be Jesus died for it don't kill me okay we'll have a date night this repentance it not only heals your relationship with God it heals your relationship with other people and um I'll close with this for those of us who are husbands

and fathers if we will lead in Repentance guess what there's going to be tremendous blessing on your marriage and on your children and on your grandchildren You' be like I'm sorry I was wrong oh okay so Dad can be honest and Dad's humble and Dad needs Jesus I guess that means we can all be humble we can all apologize we all need Jesus we do how many of you if your dad just said I'm sorry my fault I was wrong please forgive me that would heal the whole family people who don't repent they not only um see God pour out his wrath on them they pour out their own wrath on themselves and on their family and they cause Devastation and Destruction for Generations so guess what we're going to do right now this is a solemn assembly we're going to be with our God we're going to repent we're going to apologize we're going to own it we're going to get unburdened we're going to get forgiven some are going to get saved we're going to get healed if you're with somebody you're like I'm sorry forgive me I was wrong own it heal that relationship if you've got kids and the Holy Spirit convicts you go home and say you know what God spoke to me today I'm sorry things are going to change I shouldn't have said that I shouldn't have done that there's no excuse it's not your fault please forgive me and God already has Lord thanks for an opportunity to repent lord it's one of those things as Christians we we've heard the word a lot but we've not done the action a lot and so Lord I pray right now that there would be uh an unleashing of the presence of the Holy Spirit to reveal to us those those beliefs and behaviors that are blocking our relationship and our intimacy with with you and our enjoyment of you and Lord I just pray for a freedom I pray for a joy I pray for a hope I pray for a peace I pray that all that is between us and you would get repented of and set aside so that we could see you clearly and that you could re down your kindness on us purely in Jesus name uh friends I've done my job it's your time to meet with your God