

Septuagesima: 1 Corinthians 9:24–10:5

Don O'Connor

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Some of you are beginning to grow from revelation to revelation; you see some things you didn't see last Sunday. The trials and sins you go through, God knows and is above it all. God ever lives to make intercession.

We do not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

1 Cor. 10:1 (KJV)

Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

Another word for ignorance is darkness. Willful ignorance is darkness. There are many people in this world who know more than you know about the Bible but they are in darkness.

1 Cor. 10:2-4 (KJV)

And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; [3] And did all eat the same spiritual meat; [4] And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

We who struck him with our sin, what flows forth are water and blood.

1 Cor. 10:5-12 (KJV)

But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. [6] Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. [7] Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. [8] Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. [9] Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. [10] Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. [11] Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the

ends of the world are come. [12] Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

If you think you stand, take heed. We have seen many who thought they stood. They fell.

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Gandalf is not welcome for he is perceived as one bringing bad news. He put a name on Gandalf called ill news - ill guest. Wormtongue

Spell of lethargy. Theaodan must be awakened from his stupor if there is any hope. The fate of middle earth hangs in the balance. Middle earth hangs by a thread throughout all three volumes.

Has anyone lived in middle earth? It is only an allegory and not even in the same quality as C.S. Lewis' no wonder it is so popular.

What's striking however is Gandalf's comfort with task of bringing bad news. Gandalf knows his motive in bringing bad news - to awaken people, the king, out of their stupor. "Hear O ye kings; give ear o ye princes."

We bear bad news - you and I. To a culture often sitting in the self-absorbed stupor, enchanted by entertainment and listening to multiple Wormtongues. The culture cannot bear the news we're called to preach. Our words transcend the darkness. Our concern in bringing this bad news transcends the darkness of the bad news.

Will those in this building who have been inculturated hear? The message is death. For the wages of sin is death. It is unavoidable. If contemporary culture hears - we speak the law. The law is a curse to everyone who has not kept everything written in the law. The law always accuses and condemns.

We never know why we're doing what we're doing. Our great concern for our children, other people, becomes a cover-up. One of the most boring things I hear is about wayward children. The father in the story doesn't care. Go do your thing. The message is death. You parents who used to worry are idolaters. (Gen 21) Abraham, take your son, your only son, and sacrifice him to me. Read Isa 3 - women and children are their oppressors and women rule them. What's ruling you today? What is your god? Who is your god? Take your ball and go home. Do me a

great, giant favor and do what you want. Please don't come sucking around. At least that prodigal had the good sense to say, 'I'm not worthy'. Some of us have hung out for years just so we can get into the refrigerator or have a mattress put under us. What bad news this is. Ahab didn't want to hear bad news. He went home and cried that somebody wouldn't do what he wanted. If you find Ahab in this church he's got a problem with his wife, because women have problem with that. They want a husband who will love Jesus more than them. Jesus, as any woman here could tell you, is irresistible. I'm talking about the real Jesus, the one who lays his wife down by his wife. The one, who is ravished by his wife, loves his wife and lays his life down for her, washes her with the water of the Word.

The first task of Christian conversation involves leading unbelievers to see they are spiritually dead and their objects of their trust.

What do you trust in? Chariots? Horses? Children? Do what you want. Maybe you can make them an idol and they'll make you look good after all.

People must learn that what they trust in, and you must lead them to die as devotees of their self-constructed gods.

Women would always want to be married to a man who loves Jesus more than them. Ahab refused to carry any weight. He put it all on Jezebel. Ultimate despair, women love it when their husbands are bad and then the light doesn't have to shine on their sins.

Baptismal death and our Christian vocation. We are enabled to lead others to see their spiritual deadness because we have died.

The father in the story is a type off the Heavenly Father. He gives his son his inheritance and tells him to do what he wants.

People have been known to return to their vomit after being saved. But God warns us of the wrath. Be not deceived. WE don't think we reap what we sow, but we do, Christian. The wrath of God is in this world, but not against the new creation. If I walk after the flesh, I reap death, corruption, wrath - wars, taxes, over-taxes, these are all wrath of God. There is national wrath and institutional wrath over the churches today. 70AD. But I go to church! What you have is a cultural morality that is God's enemy because it replaces God's absolute law - thou shalt not do this or that. When this is not preached because it is "bad news" what has to be preached is what the church preaches, but they're better at it.

We have all our little righteousnesses like going to church and may be tithing (if you don't tithe you're a thief and thieves don't prosper as much and they can't understand it and don't like it). My concern is not about what you think.

God's word rightly heard will kill us. It puts us to shame.

Church today doesn't talk about sin because it is bad news to those who are dead.

The apostle Paul explains that he has been crucified with Christ, therefore it is no longer he who lives. He does not do so from malice.

He doesn't kill us out of maliciousness, but he does put us out of our misery. The death, the wages, the wages of entertaining yourself all the time is death. Do you want some accolades from the world - a reputation? Go ahead, but this does not avail before God. No one can stand before God in his own righteousness. "I'm doing a thing that benefits mankind."

Martha Dawn, writer, "this is Dianna, the Goddess of the Ephesians, and the whole world was worshipping her and her promiscuity." At her funeral they showed her with Mother Theresa. How do your works measure up to Mother Theresa's? Prince Charles was in New Orleans. They really love the "royal" thing.

C.S. Lewis, speaking from the perspective of God, explains, "I have not come to torment your natural self but to kill it. No half measures are any good. I don't want to cut off a branch here or there, but to cut the tree down. The things in yourself you deem innocent and those you deem wicked. Diagnosis more user friendly. In spite of the advice, the law makes no concessions and we can with the best intentions inadvertently make concessions. "God hates sin but loves the sinner." Both statements are undoubtedly true but placing the two together results in a falsehood. When the culture hears "God loves you", you don't hear "God hates the sin and condemns the sinner to hell." God sent his son to die for the sinner so the sinner can be forgive, but God loves the sinner." Even when we do inadvertently soften the blow of the law it still remains, bad, ill news. We should not be surprised that the culture's negative responses are directed at Christians and not so much at God. The law is bad tasting medicine for the sinner and we will not take it unless we are convinced we are ill.

Personal denial is maintained by minimizing or ignoring the corrupted human nature revealed by sin. This perspective fuels that blame must be assigned somewhere.

In diagnosing sickness, if you go to a doctor and he diagnoses a supposed terminal disease, what do you think people do? They go into denial and when they are over denial, they go into anger. Then they bargain with God. In the bargaining stage all theologies that rely on good works of faith for salvation. Against the certainty of death good works don't help.

It continues in the sign of the cross. Calling us to joyful service as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. The fact is there is less and less to deny. Our anger becomes less and less and our will begins to be conformed to the will of our father.

Anger- silent anger - silent punishment - withdrawing love - the wages of this is death.

Sometimes the only way I learn is through pain. You can tell me a thousand cartloads. In this culture, all suffering and pain is evil. Certain sufferings and pain have drawn me to the Lord, out of death, eternal death.

Then our bargaining is among the first item dispensed with as we realize we have nothing to offer God.

If you drop dead this second, life will go on. Over-important pride in yourself or in your children. I don't want to hear about your children, Father; I want to hear about you. I don't want to hear about your dad, Children, want to hear about you. Watch what you get sucked into. You can only fool someone who wants to be fooled. Get real.

The stages of grief to the response of the cultural message of God's wrath are the same as with a medical diagnosis. Christians will experience denial, anger, bargaining and depression (the fourth one before acceptance). Give your life to God. Give your children go God, he knows how to deal with them. But you'd have to give yourself to God first. We live in a culture that uses children. Depression and acceptance is the last. Christians do not grieve like those who have no hope. The culture will respond with grief because the message is death. The wrath of God must be taken seriously, if not by the culture, at least by Christians. This explains why preaching about the wrath of God will ever remain appropriate though not popular. God's wrath and God's love, the message of law and gospel, must never be separated.

We can never know the uncommon grace of the love of God until we know we deserve his righteous wrath.

From womb to tomb you've thought of nothing but yourself, and all your goodness is filthy rags. Aren't you glad you died and that you know it? You can't put anything on a dead man.

You might as well go to a cemetery and tell all those people who bad you've been. You're the third and fourth generation God is visiting the sins of your grandparents on - the blood of Christ breaks that curse. I can't blame my great-grandmother. Go to the cemetery where she's buried and start reproofing, rebuking and exhorting her that she should have loved more. If you're under the ground, condemnation has no hold on you. The minute you -jump up in your own strength and start getting proud.

You are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God. God took you to the cross.

We are assisted in our proclamation of law and gospel by recognizing the stages of grief. Pointing to the cross.

We're like Gandalf. The king is sleepy because one of his servants put him under a spell and he's been sleeping.

Smalcald Articles. In the case of a Christian repentance continues until death. Here is some good news. I'm not ashamed that I have to repent every day. Why? Because I know there is nothing good in my flesh. Some of you might still think there is something good about you. The only thing you bring to your salvation is your sin.

Ro 7:23 - Paul wars with his members. The problem isn't these outward things you do, it is you - these things only come out of your heart.

Some fanatics may appear - who hold that once you receive the spirit and the forgiveness of sins, or become a believer, you

Do what you will; it matters no as long as you believe for faith blocks our all sins. I have encountered many foolish people as this and I fear that a devil dwells in some of them. Holy people, who fall into hope sin as David did faith and the spirit, have departed from them.

How many of you fell into murdering someone in your heart. IF you've broken one point of the law you're guilty of the whole law. When a person falls into this the spirit departs because the Holy Spirit does not permit sin to rule or gain the upper hand. If sin does what it wishes, the Holy Spirit and faith are not present. Paul was talking about the sin in his members. The thing he wanted to do he didn't do. He found another law opposing God's law in his heart. But it never gets the upper hand. You become wretched. The law brings you to see your need in Christ. How are you doing with loving God and your neighbor? "Help me, Jesus!" Love doesn't think evil. Have you ever thought evil of your neighbor? How you doing with

coveting? How many of you didn't covet anything last week? Just because you're asleep or unaware of things, it doesn't mean they don't exist. "Don't awaken me Gandalf with bad news." He who hates his brother is a murderer. We just give it a different name. We do not call things what they are, not the natural man. We don't call envy, envy or hate, hate. We think adultery is outward. Oh no, read your Bible. Stealing people's time, name and reputation. You don't want to speak evil of anyone ever. Who can control the tongue? Love doesn't gossip. It is not a busybody buzzing around with some stupid Babylonian news about nothing. If you have time to listen you're just as guilty as the babblers. If you're itching or lusting for news, you only spend 995 of your life justifying yourself. If you tell me some evil someone else did I'll feel pretty good about me. Think evil of anyone and it is hatred.

How many of you think I'm specifically talking about you?

The Holy Spirit does not permit sin to rule. Yet it is true - if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If you say you have no sin, you need to be forgiven. Communion is only for people who have been really bad - wicked people. When that comes, the sweet sacrament, the gift of God... I want to thank you, Jesus.

Are you hoping that you could lead a holy life or stop thinking about yourself all the time? I believe and it is already finished. Now you'll get caught up in something else, the body of Christ. Like Luther said the most beautiful thing in the world is your neighbor; not because you have to love them. You don't have to love your neighbor - you get to. "Jonathan, you do not have to love Molly."

My people have a tendency to wall themselves in - cover themselves with a wall of knowledge, speech, anger, depression, pity, accusing. Who have you accused in the last 24 hours? You're worse. "Well, you don't know what she did." You're just using it to save your life and I'm not tricked. Don't talk to me, talk to someone else who has good news.

They cover with a covering not of my spirit and they go down to Egypt, the culture, for ideas.

Take heed brethren lest there be in you an evil heart of unbelief.

Where is the place you're called to go out of today?

Hebrews 11:8 (KJV)

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

The place he's calling you to come out of today is between your ears. You may even be having a contention right now with what's being said. If you feel personally attacked, it proves one thing - that you don't know you're dead. Just because you've proved that you don't know you're dead, it doesn't mean God doesn't love you.

Is the place you're called to leave a place of blame and watching for evil? Fear - a lot of you are afraid you'll be exposed today and your sin will be found out. You don't know what the bad news is all about yet.

Hebrews 11:8-11 (KJV)

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. [9] By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: [10] For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. [11] Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

Abraham gave his beloved son to the Lord. Some people never get weaned - they think they're the center of the universe. You ought to have fun not thinking about them. Do what you want.

Heb 3:12 Take heed lest there be an evil heart of unbelief in you.

Caring for your children is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, and stop laying Christian, particularly the religious Christianity, morality, you brought in here. Morality comes down to this world's culture.

"Thank you God I'm not like other men." I'm exactly like other men, and the other one in me is exactly like men who are dead.

"I'm bad, I can't break this habit, and so I give up. I'm in ultimate despair. I can't be as good as that brother over there." If you say these things in your heart, this is the place God is calling you to leave. I don't care about the facts, I care about the new creation, and so I never believed you anyway.

Part off the world, the devil's work and he's really good at it, is to convince you to silence the voice of your conscience by getting you to do wonderful things. You can never do enough -

the voice of the law never stops. People, no matter what you give them, except the gospel; you can never do enough for them. Your children exploit it - you can never do enough for them. Movement in the United States: You can be spiritual but you can't be religious. Spiritual means that you don't have any commitment to anyone - mystical, metaphysical, twisting words around in your mind. You'll be doing things like raising the dead, keeping the law, healing the sick - metaphysical games, twisting things around so you'll win again. Try this in the business realm. Some men want to fail.

Satan's work is to keep men's conscience from troubling them, sear their conscience to silence the voice of the law. It won't work because God loves you.

Screwtape Letters - he gets people thinking they're good, unlike others in the church. The Bible says there is none good - no not one the scripture says. I've told you this for 30 years, and it's the best news. No one can be saved because it is impossible with men. We have nothing to do with it - it is God who saves us.

Satan's work is to keep a man centered in his own righteous works of the law - morality. People take pride in all kinds of things and find a morality in it. Satan's work is to keep you ignorant of your sin. You don't know 99% of your sin. You spend your whole life thinking about yourself and trying to get people to.

What you're hoping in is fleshly and carnal, and the carnal mind cannot understand the things of God. The flesh is like grass. If you put hope in it, it is grass. The tragedy is that you won't get to love people.

John 16: When the Holy Ghost, the comforter

Men love darkness

Light makes manifest.

Who can trust in their heart? A fool. There has never been one good thing in my fleshly heart - never.

Woe unto them that seek to hide their counsel from the Lord. They start hiding from themselves and lose themselves in the process. No one is allowed to tell them any bad news. Don't reprove me, don't exhort me, don't admonish me because I want a teacher to tickle my ears.

Luther - you cannot know your sin except by faith.

If you're a fool you'll trust in your own understanding. And some of us have great understanding today. It would be better to become a child. Jesus is the end of my natural understanding if I'll let him be.

We like to save our life because we think we can bring a better end.

The devil, Satan, sets moral standards to lower the law's standards so there is no preaching of the law -- just do these wonderful things in the name of Jesus and make these people twice the child of hell you are.

The government has a 3billion dollar bill for some flooding. How much do you want to contribute to this? "Well, Don, it's the heart- the widow's mite." Try tithing. Try talking to your children rather than getting into the politics of the world - love your neighbor - stop thinking evil, stop seeking your own.

He spoke a parable to certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous.

Jesus said the publican who said, God have mercy on me a poor sinner; will enter the kingdom before you.

The biggest sin we all have is not having any sin. You want a true diagnosis or a lie? You have a malignant disease - death. But I know someone who is greater than death. Stephen brought some news (Acts 7) he recalls Israel's history, their book, and they gnashed their teeth and killed him. People build walls - false security - they trust in mammon. Whatever money you have moth and rusts will corrupt it. We're only a second away from the whole economy blowing up. If every one of us lost everything we have, there's a good chance we'd be a lot happier. The only reason I say this is because you could go through the rest of your life fearing what you'll lose.

Hannah gave her son back to God - she lent him, Hebrew though she is, for this life. He lived in the temple. Where does your son live? Know ye not ye are the temple of the Holy Ghost.

A lot of time people hide behind walls of words - peace, peace when there was no peace (Jer 6). How's your house? That's not peace, it is just settling for an uneasy truce. My flesh will always say what she did, or they did, or he did, or it did. I'm glad God loves hypocrites and delivers them from their hypocrisy through the wrath of the law. Wrath is a reality. We think wars aren't wrath and they just come about because of Islam. I can understand a case for Islam when

you consider what has come about through the Supreme Court this last week. We promote strange things - killing children in the womb, homosexuality, out and out promiscuity, etc. I can see why Isalm would have a case. I don't agree with them because they are hypocrites. But God uses the Turks when the Germanic people forsook God. The politics you need to worry about is the one with your wife and the church - love shed abroad.

How are your intentions? Remember the prodigal son? At least he had the grace to say, "I'm not worthy." Until all of us can say this we might be older brothers thinking we're worthy because we hung out all those years serving God.

2 Cor 5: Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. But we are made manifest to God. We're seen of God.

The Word of the Lord manifest in your conscience.

Nature, the natural man, we were by nature children of wrath. Nothing has changed for Adam, flesh, the Old Man. When I walk after the flesh that flesh is open to the wrath of God.

Ephes. 5:1-2 (KJV)

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; [2] And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Love is more than a 4-letter word. Love is not storge. "There's nothing higher than a mother's love." Yes there is. Show me a mother that puts the word in her children - this is agape. Her life is one of love. She doesn't have time to babble. Her hands are never idle. There is humility in her spirit. God has done an alien work in her. Humility is never something we can accomplish - it is something that the law, alien work, does in us. It is not a nice thing to have to keep listening to that condemning, stinking voice, the law. I particularly hate it when it's speaking to me. There is a way we don't have to listen to this voice

Let the mind of Christ be in you that is poured out. It is practical. Even in your vocations you should be pouring out and giving glory to God. The world knows when someone is being stingy.

Ephes. 5:3-4 (KJV)

But fornication (in your mind), and all uncleanness (in your mind), or covetousness (in your mind), let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; [4] Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

Deception is the order of the day. Now that you believe you can do this and that and there won't be any consequences.

Ephes. 5:5-8 (KJV)

For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. [6] Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. [7] Be not ye therefore partakers with them. [8] For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

Christian life is daily, ongoing, repentance - conversion. If we say we have no need of God or his Word, or his Word that dwells in my sister or brother, God's provision in the Church, and if I look to my own independence and strength for help, then I can confess this as sin. When I look to my own reason, knowledge, beauty, or talents, will not get me through. Look to Jesus. Confess your sin as sin. Receive forgiveness and be set free to live and be children of the light.

Sacrifice and offering he is not interested in. These are just another way of bargaining with God - trying to get rid of the death sentence. No, it's better to go to the cross - it is the end. Only after the law has exposed our sin can we confess, and be forgiven.

Self-will can be confessed. This poor man cried and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all of his troubles. Anyone with troubles today, cry unto the Lord and he will deliver

Your troubles, the root of them, always is because you think you're' alive.

The Word of God gives us back our fear of God. The Word clearly warns against sin and defines sin as of the heart that we can turn daily to the Lord. Particular sins are good to confess, but it is we, not someone else. If you don't, you'll live in continual dissatisfaction, unrest, driven-ness, and no peace. But if we can admit, and call sin sin, then we can be forgiven, and this is what communion is about - forgiveness of sin.

Everything is already exposed and open. The only one hiding is you. I don't care what you do in darkness. I've got enough, with myself, to live with. You have sold yourself for naught. You've paid double. Your father owns the cookie factory and you stole a cookie. When you're

caught you deny it and blame your wife. God's thinking this is good; this is really where I wanted to get them. The ultimate law is that Jesus has fulfilled every law. The ultimate law is that you've sold yourself for naught if you do not receive Jesus who fulfills every law. All of our attempts to get things through our despair, self-pity, morality, self-appointed works, anger or bargaining, all these tricks, putting our parents on the defensive, you've sold yourself for naught. If you're depressed you need to repent of your sin. God has made all those tricks absolutely pointless. AT the cross the full wrath of God has been poured out on his son - the wrath I should have in my life. When I come to the cross, the body and blood of Christ, and I acknowledge that I'm the one in need of forgiveness, and this is something Jesus has done for me, personally, and it's all done for him, but woe to the man who denies that he has been crucified with Christ for he has to carry his sin.

Romans 8:31 (KJV)

What shall we then say to these things (the purposes of God - what He's done for us)? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Romans 8:26 (KJV)

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

He ever lives to intercede for my sins.

Romans 8:31-32 (KJV)

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? [32] He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all (me), how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Romans 8:33 (KJV)

Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

Romans 8:34-35 (KJV)

Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. [35] Who shall separate us

from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

AMEN

We ended by partaking of communion.

Christ has been delivered up for us - is he going to withhold forgiveness? No. It's only us who have nothing to confess right now. WE withhold from ourselves by having a righteousness of our own for some outward thing we did or didn't do, law.

SOURCE

Sermon Notes - Don O'Connor- 11/6/05

(The message through Jennifer's ears.)