

Sermon on Numbers 21:4–9

Don O'Connor

2 December 2007

It's alright to be okay, sinner, because there is something greater than your sins. If you believe this you would say, "Convict me, Holy Ghost. I delight to do thy will." I actually find it delightful to not murder people. Didn't you used to kill a few people every day? The wages of sin, whether you're a Christian or not, do come home.

Tom Baker is coming. Prepare your heart to get your gift. He likes to deal in paradoxes. The Spirit of the Lord will do what he will do. Tom Baker is like you, a sinner. If you won't allow people to be sinners, you won't get your gifts. Luther and Calvin were sinners. That's all there are on the earth.

How many of you would like to lose 22 lbs, today. Do you know what you're carrying around in your head?

I really like to listen to young people. I was glad when I heard they were doing some C.S. Lewis, and acting parts out. They don't know what they're doing. I'm glad it goes into them. There could be other times, when they grow up, that they will see they are other characters in the books besides the ones they want to play now, like Lucy. Who wants to be Goliath? Who wants to be David? Goliath couldn't help being a giant. God set him up. He was a big man.

Philip. 3:8 (KJV) Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

What is Paul counting as dung? Basically, what he's counting as dung is his deception in thinking he was righteous because of the things he did as a Pharisee. A lot of people are doing a lot of things. No one here would think they are hung up on works. One of the great works people get hung up on is LOVE. How many of you are deceived about love? Dare I quote Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, Pages 30-31, 34. Christian community is like Christian sanctification. It is a gift of God which we cannot claim. Only God knows the real state of our

fellowship, of our sanctification. What may appear weak and trifling to us may be great and glorious to God.

The basis of all spiritual reality is the clear, manifest Word of God in Jesus Christ. The basis of all human reality is the dark, turbid urges and desires of the human mind. The basis of the community is the Spirit of Truth; the basis of human community is the spirit of desire.

What are the desires of your darkness? It's alright to look at it and let the law come into my heart and convict me. I could be living in an unchallenged presuppositional story, and my stories always have an agenda, that wants to decide between Christ and me, or my wife and me, or my children and me. Flesh will always choose flesh. My dark human desire is to believe that blood is thicker than the Word. But it isn't. Many a family suffers great affliction because they don't believe that - they have another mediator than Christ.

The essence of the community of the Spirit is light, for "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5) and "if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another" (1:7).

If we don't walk in the light we don't have fellowship; what we have are appearances. It would be good for some people to see that. Nobody needs that anymore. The world has figured that out. Why would I need to make an appearance before any Christian? If they're a Christian they've read the Bible,

and I can't trick them. I can't trick you, if you've read the Bible, and if you've read the confession. You are a miserable sinner. If not, go to The Champion Church. They have two now.

Human love is directed to the other person for its own sake, (It is need-love. "I'm kind of lonely lately, and I need somebody to love, better find somebody to love, because I'm not getting mine.") spiritual love loves him for Christ's sake. Therefore, human love seeks direct contact with the other person. It loves him not as a free person but as one whom it binds to itself. It wants to gain, to capture by every means; it uses force. It desires to be irresistible, to rule.

Beauty queens go out of their way to get something from the other person. Once they get it, they keep that person alone to subject them to it, like the witch in the Silver Chair. C.S. Lewis was a seer. He's not a theologian by his own admission. He's so delightfully humorous in

uncovering what we are - so gracious in it, that everything is written in the 3rd, 4th, or 10th person. We need this until we mature enough to where we can hear what he called The Big Joke. We all know it. What if my name was Jesus and I killed 3 people? When you say in the name of "Jesus" what do you mean by that? When you hear the name Jesus, do you hear J-E-S-U-S? No wonder you don't get too far with it.

Human love has little regard for truth. It makes the truth relative, since nothing, not even truth, must come between it and the beloved person Human love desires the other person, his company, his answering love, but it does not serve him. Spiritual love loves the other for Christ's sake.

Say there's something wrong with your relationship with your son or daughter; human love may hate that truth. The object of your love could be to smother, enslave, and capture. You can start thinking you're doing a good work loving everyone. I should know. You don't think I'd judge you. You don't think Paul would judge you, do you? What he once thought was gain, was loving God. Do you love God? Are you feeding his lambs and his sheep? This is how we love him. "Man, I fell short this last week, Don." Who did you love? "I was loving everyone around me." Peter did love Jesus with some storge, but without Agape.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." If you don't love truth as it comes and challenges your presuppositions, your hidden life... It says in God's Word if you hate the truth you hate Jesus, and it would be good to know it. He's used to it. He was crucified for loving me. What did He purchase for you?

On the contrary, it continues to desire even when it seems to be serving. There are two marks, both of which are one and the same thing, that manifest the difference between spiritual and human love: Human love cannot tolerate the dissolution of a fellowship that has become false for the sake of genuine fellowship, and human love cannot love an enemy, that is, one who seriously and stubbornly resists it.

Human love likes a false relationship. Don't read about Mrs. Fidget; you might find out she is a he. Mrs. Fidget's whole life is about capturing her children. Like Michael's mother, in The Great Divorce: Michael is mine, do you understand God? He's mine! She has redefined her history. You didn't even want Michael. When you read C.S. Lewis, you're reading on 4 or 5 levels.

You've had plenty of Michaels, plenty of people you thought you could use to further your whatever.

Matthew 7:22-23 (KJV) Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? [23] And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

2 Chron. 18:4-7 (KJV)

And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord to day. [5] Therefore the king of Israel gathered together of prophets four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for God will deliver it into the king's hand. [6] But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might enquire of him? [7] And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, by whom we may enquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.

Jehoshaphat comes to Aha, and asks for a prophet. Yes, we have many prophets, as many as there are people. No, I mean a real prophet. Yes, we have one. What is the spirit of prophesy? The testimony of Jesus. The bible testifies of Jesus, and you have to look at what it testifies about you. Are you a secure sinner?

Human love cannot tolerate the dissolution of a fellowship that has become false for the sake of genuine fellowship, and human love cannot love an enemy, that is, one who seriously and stubbornly resists it.

Have you had someone seriously and stubbornly resist you? Do you love them? No.

Both spring forth from the same source: human love is by its very nature desire – desire for human community. So long as it can satisfy this desire in some way, it will not give it up, even for the sake of truth, even for the sake of genuine love for others. But where it can no longer expect its desire to be fulfilled, there it stops short – namely, in the face of an enemy. There it turns into hatred, contempt, and calumny.

Why do people leave you? Because their wish-dream, their god-project isn't fulfilled. Have you ever hated someone who wouldn't fill your desires? It can be a continuous, ongoing hatred,

and we might not even know it.

But where it can no longer expect its desire to be fulfilled, there it stops short – namely, in the face of an enemy. There it turns into hatred, contempt, and calumny. Right here is the point where spiritual love begins. This is why human love becomes personal hatred when it encounters genuine spiritual love, which does not desire but serves. Human love makes itself an end in itself. It creates of itself an end, an idol which it worships, to which it must subject everything. It nurses and cultivates an ideal, it loves itself, and nothing else in the world. Spiritual love, however, comes from Jesus Christ, it serves him alone; it knows that it has no immediate access to other persons.

You are servants for Christ's sake, not your sake. Human love tries to dominate. It uses intimidation. Mrs. Fidget intimidates when she can't get her way, and she hates what she can't control. Whatever won't bow down to her is evil. But oh, how beautifully C.S. Lewis expresses it. I'm encouraging you to read the book.

The basis of all spiritual reality is the clear, manifest Word of God in Jesus Christ.

Human love, where there is no reciprocation, becomes hatred. When it can't use its subject anymore it becomes hatred.

If you're looking for a gracious neighbor, it would be better that you look for a gracious God. Stop making me your need-meeter. I can't even meet my needs or those of my family, but I have one who can. "Well, who will help me then?" I'll lead you to Jesus, to the Word of God. It starts when you stop blaming.

C.S. Lewis, *Till We Have Faces*, Page 1: C.S. Lewis says that Orual's case is against the gods, not against Jesus Christ. I am old now and have not much to fear from the anger of the gods.

Her whole life was about writing a book, keeping a record, just like Frank. Perhaps your father left. Well, what about your mother? She chased your father away with her human love. It's worse than that. You don't even have to get defensive, it's so bad. Orual is trying to silence the voice of the law accusing her, in her head. She writes about all the things she's done as the queen of Glome and how nobody notices. It's like people in this church who want to be acknowledged for all they do. Pharisees valued the praise of men more than the praise of God. Micaiah, the prophet, Ahab hated because he always prophesied evil.

Romans 3:11-12 (KJV) There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. [12] They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

What makes you so righteous? I do many wonderful things. Look at how good I've been.

Isaiah 58:1 (KJV) Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

Show people something they don't want to see. You are God's people, aren't you? What do you do when a prophet comes around? I kill them. You might be too weak for me to wear a robe. You might want me to take my robe off and come down and say, "Well, we all..." Some people want to use, some want to be used. Some want to abuse, and some want to be abused. How about you? That would never fit into your mind, would it?

Isaiah 58:1-2 (KJV)

Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. [2] Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God. Here's what we've done and you don't even notice the good that we've done.

Romans 3:10-14 (KJV) As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: [11] There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. [12] They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. [13] Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: [14] Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:

This world that we live in puts God on the defensive. "We've done all this. What do we get? We've been loving. We've fulfilled the whole law because we've love dour neighbor. What do we get?"

I am old now and I have not much to fear from the anger of the gods. I have no husband nor child, nor hardly a friend, Just like John Hicks said. Finally she's left alone. She has complete control of her bed. My body, this lean carrion that still has to be washed and fed and have clothes hung about it daily with so many changes, they may kill as soon as they please. The succession is provided for. My crown goes to my nephew. She goes on to tell her whole story

in the book, which comes down to one thing. After she's been convicted of everything she has done in her life, of all the people she's loved, she has to walk before the judges.

Page 304. The Fox and I were alone again. "Did we really do these things to her?" I asked. "Yes. All here's true." "And we said we loved her." "And we did. She had no more dangerous enemies than us."

She finally hinges her whole case. I had only one comfort left me. However I might have devoured Bardia, I had at least loved Psyche truly. (I have a scar, a wound in me, which I did for her.)

"Did we really do these things to her?" I asked. "Yes. All here's true." "And we said we loved her." "And we did. She had no more dangerous enemies than us." And in that far distant day when the gods become wholly beautiful, or we at last are known how beautiful, or we at last are shown how beautiful they always were, this will happen more and more. For mortals, as you said, will become more and more jealous. A mother and wife and child and friend will all be in league to keep a soul from being united with the Divine nature."

How can you love a person, if you don't bring law and gospel to them when they're dying, when they're in death? Storge without agape? There are four loves. The reason I would speak about Agape is so we can have Storge. If you only have agape, storge will end up in hate. Unholy alliances, covenants with death and darkness will be made. They will be underneath the surface and you may not be aware of what's really going on.

I had only one comfort left me. However I might have devoured Bardia, I had at least loved Psyche truly. There, if nowhere else, I had the right of it and the gods were wrong. And as a prisoner in a dungeon or a sick man on his bed makes much of any little shred of pleasure he still has, so I made much of this. And one day, when my work had been very wearisome (she doesn't have a vocation) I took this book, as soon as I was free, and went out into the garden to comfort myself, and gorge myself with comfort, by reading over how I had cared for Psyche and taught her and tried to save her and wounded myself for her sake..

She held onto her lie, her whole justification. What's your living epistle, or dead epistle, about? Is it about all you've been doing? It is evitable, when that kind of thing we call L-O-V-E is our life, there will be reaping. You can't walk with another human being without a mediator. Is the Word of God mediating, or is it the desire of your soul to dominate?

God does put his love in our hearts, but that love is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. The real love we love our children and everyone else with is the fruit of the Holy Ghost. I can grieve the Holy Ghost by continuing in my darkness. There are a lot of ways to grieve the Holy Ghost; just live in a lie. We don't want to know when we are deceived. We want smooth things and deceit spoken to us, and if anyone doesn't speak these things they are not allowed around us. Jerusalem always kills the prophets. Jesus cannot come until the law does.

Charity = AGAPE.

1 Cor. 13:4-5 (KJV) Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, [5] Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

It says that love doesn't seek its own. This is exactly opposite of un-mediated storge, which is directly against God's Word that says love doesn't seek its own. This love is the fruit of the Holy Ghost, the gift of the Holy Ghost that is shed abroad in the heart of someone. You all have it, but you can quench it and that's a bad deal.

The dumbest man in the Bible is the older brother. What makes the older brother so stupid? He spends the next 40 years of his life after the Father has invited him in, in his own party where there is no music - only the witch's song. Remember the beautiful lady? She takes the form of a serpent as soon as she hears, "No, I'm not bowing down to you." Don't you want to kill the thing that killed your mother, that separated your mother, and that put death on your mother? YES! "If you knew her like I did, you'd love her too, Rillian said." He knew her as the beautiful lady, who was going to give him 1/100th of what was already his. She was beautiful in her green gown. The Silver Chair is a good gift. There are useful gifts such as a dagger in it.

This love that we're talking about, the love of God, what is it like?

OBATHOTC, Page 113, Thesis 28: The love of God does not first discover but creates what is pleasing to it. The love of man comes into being through attraction to what pleases it.

"I love you. You're really beautiful. You have some knowledge. You make me feel _____. You meet my needs." In some churches, Jesus is not the center.

"Do you love me," the Lord asks us. Or, are you lukewarm. He'll spit you out for a while because you need to do what you want for a while.

Telling the truth is something you could do, if you're led by the Spirit. Well, I'm lonely, I want to use them, and I need companionship. What if they said in the end, "Why didn't you tell me the truth, warn me? Why did you lead me on?" "Well, you were useful, and I knew if I told you the truth you'd be angry with me. I want all men to speak well of men, and I want my appearance before all men to be great." After all, what is important in this life? What you're living is what your children are going to do. If you make provision for the flesh, they will make a little more. "Well, I don't want my children around certain stories." What stories would they get at your house? "Well, when they come here, they'll find that we are freer than some, and have more understanding of liberty." "When they come here, they're not allowed to have their own thoughts." They're your children. Who are they mad at, fathers, and mothers? They're justified, aren't they? Who are they separated from? Don't you love your children and grandchildren? What are you giving them? There is only one thing of lasting value - love (Agape) - and on some days, it might be a rebuke.

Because the love of God that lives in man

Do you like that phrase? Are you a man? Are you a Christian? A Christian's case is over. Orual's whole argument is the same as mine or yours. God is unfair. God let this happen. Look, I've got a whole book proving all I did for Glome. God looks at the motives and intentions of our hearts for all those things we did. She was defending herself against the gift the gods had. "Tell me I've been being good. Tell me smooth things. Nobody ever tells me that I've been being good." Is there a prophet here? There is one. They want to talk to someone who is a false prophet. "You really are doing well, and the church is doing well, and Babylon really doesn't want to bring you into captivity. Within a year inflation is going to be over, and gasoline will drop to 60 cents per gallon, and it will all be over." I've never seen the righteous forsaken or his seed begging bread. Christians have always thrived in a economic depression.

Jeremiah told them they would go into captivity for 70 years, and if they didn't serve the King of Babylon, bad things would happen.

What's behind it all? Money. The United States has figured out that if we don't get more mathematicians and engineers in this country, the global economy will choke us. China has more. India has more. You don't need to go to college to get a degree. Imagine what colleges are, if you can. What a joke. Ask 90% of the people who graduate from them. Those with a liberal agenda still have hope in the social system; if we could just become more communistic, or socialistic.

The love of God that lives in man, loves just the opposite of human love. The love of God loves sinners, evil person, fools and weaklings. The love of God creates.

The love of God flows through you. There is no claim on God because the gift is in you. What if God gave you \$82K today.? "I've got this money and I'm doing really good now, and you owe me more because I'm really doing good with it and I bought myself a new car." Human love gets envious.

Who do you love?

The first part [of the thesis] is clear because the love of God that lives in man loves sinners, evil persons, fools, and weaklings in order to make them righteous, good, wise and strong. Rather than seeking its own good, the love of God flows forth and bestows good. Therefore sinners are attractive because they are loved; they are not loved because they are attractive. For this reason, the love of man avoids sinners and evil persons. While you were yet sinners, Christ loved you. The older brother is the dumbest guy in the book. Talk about defending himself against the gift; he's got his own book. "All these years..." How stupid we could be to settle for a bowl of pottage, some fleshly relationships, when God offers his Son and everything that goes with his Son. We're stupid, until that happy day when we come home and say, "I have sinned." I'm one of that group - the unrighteous."

Who do you love? Love doesn't seek its own. Why kid yourself. Why write another book on what you've done to be righteous, and how you've been unfairly picked on. Control brings death and separation. Unless our eyes are opened, we will be seeking our own relationships, storge, and the comfort of a fleshly relationship. You think Jesus has come to bring peace? Go ahead.

Every person in the world would say that they love. It's true, but it is storge without Agape. When that wine runs out after at the wedding, what's left? "See you later." The love of man will make people dependent. Beware of children who are overly dependent. They're 18 years old and they still rely on their mother to do things for them. They should be caring for their mother. They've got it backward. I heard a line in an old song the other day: "He holds the lantern while his mother chops the wood." If his mother didn't love him with agape, that's what she's raising. You may laugh, but she likes that. She likes being told about all she's doing for someone. What's the result? She has a little boy holding the lantern while his wife chops

the wood. It gets worse. That love is a demanding love. "You'd better make me look good. You'd better make me feel good. You'd better let me control you."

Mrs. Fidget - she died and a funny thing happened in our neighborhood. All the things she had in bondage were free. If I were dead in Christ, you wouldn't mean anything to me as far as usury. You can do what you want. If your children are 18 and over, you better have brought them up with God's Word in them, living God's Word so that they are not just storge-ized. If not, they will turn back in wrath upon you. What was the problem Adam and Eve had? You couldn't blame their parents. They made some choices. That was the happy fault God already know was going to happen. Let the poor things reap. "Well, if I don't give them this, they'll threaten me." Blackmailers, children are their rulers in the last days. In the last days, men will be haters of God and lovers of self. Have no fellowship with that group. We can't say, "Don't come to church," because they might be convicted. But don't have any fellowship with a secure sinner. There is a difference between a secure sinner and a confessed sinner. Storge makes another into a god, makes minor gods, and this is a direct sin against the First Commandment.

Oswald Chambers: When you love God, it hurts other people more than it hurts you. Now you have a relationship with God, and they, particularly the distant relatives, don't like that their hold on you is broken. They won't get what you have. You might not want to read C.S. Lewis. You might have to get a face.

Stop and think every morning, of the little things you could be thankful for. When you're thankful for those things, others are evident.

Their mouth is filled with bitterness and cursing. According to James, poison comes from the mouth - accusations and slander. What do they hate? Storge without agape ends up in hatred. "I've been good and you're putting a law on me to love my neighbor." It is Jesus' commandment, not mine. Why are you getting mad at me?

Storge insists on being loved rather than loving. Competing loves - the love of the world. The world is very religious. They want to get God in the dock so he owes them something. They want to put you in the dock. What do they say you owe them? A lot. Natural love will tell you not to give your love away, but to save it. "I have more claim on Michael than God does, even if I have to bring him down to hell." Who do you owe? Nothing? I owe nothing to any man, save love.

"I really like the stew Mom, even though it is August 28th, and it's 90 degrees out. By the way mom, why don't we send these shirts to the cleaners?" Many people do many wonderful things, particularly in the name of reaching out. You're not reaching out to people if you're not giving them the law and the gospel. What did you give to them? Peanut Butter. Will they take that to heaven with them? "The trouble in this church is that we don't reach out enough." There's enough people reaching out, meeting all kinds of heartfelt needs. You ought to go in your worst state, and say, "Finally, I've got some serious needs. Meet my needs. I've got a real problem with total depravity. I've got a real problem; I can be praising God and 5 seconds later be mad at my wife, or my boss."

If there is fear in you, you still have hope in the world. "We are good because we do good things, is a self-justifying thing. We love the poor. We are Americans." This may be good in the civil realm, but sometimes it is used to enslave people, or to make a big profit. The people running certain charities make more than what they're giving away.

Everyone around here, wherever here is, belongs to the Lord. You could be clear about that when you talk to people. "You're God's. There's your daughter, God. She has a real problem worrying today. I don't know what to do. I've given her your word, but she won't hear. She's your daughter, God."

What's the solution? Mrs. Fidget is more than willing to do all that she can for you, and she loves it. Who does she really care about? She doesn't bring anyone to Jesus. She has no desire to hear the truth about her love. She's got her children blackmailed, just like parents blackmail their children: "Do what I want, or else...." Whose idea was it to send children to college at 18-19 years old, with no other adult supervision?

Malachi 1:1-2 (KJV) The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi. [2] I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob,

They have forgotten the forgiveness of Christ. Have you had an Esau in you? God brings him down to death, for our sake.

Malachi 2:8 (KJV) But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts.

Malachi 3:14 (KJV) Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? "Well, I've been serving the Lord, and I have more afflictions than people who aren't serving the Lord. I thought it was profitable to serve the Lord."

How have you said that it is vain to serve the Lord? By having a continual complaint?

Malachi 3:14 (KJV) Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?

Those who walk mournfully before the Lord have nothing to be thankful about this morning.

We haven't got our carnal rewards from God. You get that by serving in the world. In the Lord, you get love, peace, joy and the Holy Ghost continually. Well, what I want is someone with some dependence to them. You might get what you want. They belong to the Lord and they are not just for your use. Mrs. Fidget saw her children for her use. If some of you, would do like your children are doing and get into the book, you'd get your gift, although C.S. Lewis is a dangerous gift. He's not a theologian. He's a sower, a singer, like Annie, who weaves thoughts with melodies.

God justifies the ungodly. When will we believe it?

Imagine if Orual or Mrs. Fidget heard this. Orual did all those wonderful things in Glome. Finally, the good news happened and she died. She came before the gods with her book, and there was only one sentence in it that she had been elaborating on her whole life. What was the sentence? The gods aren't fair. "Well, I only have a problem with people." It says that the gods flow in and out of people.

God really gets at her. She's hid it all away in a book.

Romans 4:4 (KJV) Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

This is the whole history of Orual's life, Mrs. Fidget's life, Don's life, and _____'s life. It is so deeply deceptive. It substantiates your offence against man and God. You are rewarded not because of something you do.

Our warfare is not with flesh and blood. Everybody in The Great Divorce is a spirit. Jezebel shows up in Revelation and God has to rebuke the church for letting her speak, because she

had not come to the place where the law stopped her mouth. Your mouth can only be stopped, if you realize that if you have broken one point of the law you're guilty of breaking all the law.

Romans 4:4 (KJV) Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

If you work, you think God owes you a debt. You might think your children owe you a debt. What a terrible thing to put on them. What they owe you is love. "Well, I've slaved all summer long, cooking and sewing, and cleaning, and taking her to the doctor, making sure she isn't crippled and can dance." If you've earned it, it is not a gift. You want to be the dumbest guy in the Bible? Imagine the father saying to you today things like, "Forgiveness is yours," and you saying, "Well, I think I have to work for it a bit, and earn it." God doesn't owe you, he loves you. He justifies, the ungodly.

Romans 4:5 (KJV) But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

To this meeting, or any other meeting, you either come as a sinner or a judge. Which would you prefer? God justifies the ungodly. It takes faith though, to believe you're a sinner. It takes faith to hear the law and then the gospel.

If you hear this, and there is not a confession of being a desperate sinner, it is questionable that you are a Christian. Father, this day, forgive me my sins, my trespasses. For Peter, it might mean 7 x 70. If you don't confess, you're storing up righteousness of your own, and you're writing a book theoretically in your mind because you're only a theoretical sinner. But when you're a real sinner, there is repentance in your heart. God will make it clear to Mrs. Fidget, Orual, or anyone else, what exactly their sin is, the wages of your sin, and what that did for those you claim to love, until you come like the younger brother.

Some people won't come to receiving what the Word shows them, and some are literally on their way to hell, though they might look very together and very loving. They may even call themselves Christians. They may look together and socially loving, and people think of them as being nice, and they are. If they saw someone dead in sin, they wouldn't expose it and save their brother. When you have fellowship as sinners, it is a given, and everyone knows the joke, "I'm wrong." The green lady will never say she's wrong. She'd rather rule in hell than be a servant in heaven. She's not used to hearing no. But her love is seen for what it is. When she hears no, you will know she's not what she appears to be. She killed Rillian's mother. You

princes here, beware of anyone who promises you their kingdom when you do their bidding for them. Beware when they offer you comforting things.

She was really a serpent. What she can't control with reason, she hates. With reason and logic, you can make yourself right about everything. How many of you have come to the point where you know you know nothing as you should? I certainly don't trust in my affections.

Romans 3:13 (KJV) Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

You could lose false burdens today, burdens of guilt. You being condemned and living in the past helps no one. If you repent, I will know it. I will hear a proclamation. "Oh, I'm sorry, forgive me," Where there is no proclamation, I might say what John the Baptist said: "Get away from me you snakes." Christ died for your guilt. He died for your sin. I like that line in the prayer, "Because of his sufferings." I don't want his sufferings to be in vain because of my not receiving what his sufferings purchased for me, and for you.

We don't fellowship as the righteous. It's a mask, a joke, a lie. Look into the mirror of God's Word and what do you see in Romans 3? He leads us from there to having a face. When you have a face, you can see into the face of the Lord. Until that time, how can the gods talk to us till we have faces?

John 3:14-15 (KJV) And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: [15] That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

If you believe on Him, you have eternal life, starting right now. The preaching of the cross is foolishness. What is the preaching of the cross? It is what God purchased for us when he bought us and gave us his Son. The blood of Christ redeemed you, purchased you out of your slavery – eved out of your slavery to love. He brings you into Agape. Then you can enjoy storge, your family, your fireplace, your home, your dinner, etc. There will be warmth between people in families and not a continual cynicism and scorning of one another. Don't bring it to school. We don't want any scorn. I'd rather they be ignorant concerning evil.

Numbers 21 - a wonderful prefigure of Christ.

Numbers 21:3 (KJV) And the Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities: and he called the name of the

place Hormah.

Canaanites are spirits. You can live in Canaan and be a Christian, or in Iraq.

Numbers 21:4 (KJV) And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way.

Who is the way? Jesus. Tom Baker says that people think it is vain to serve the Lord. Where's the peace, the joy, they heard about? There is no one to take to court. Whatever you think you've done, or what you deserve, there is no one to take to court to file a law suit against. Much of the books of the prophets are written as if in court where God has to be vindicated. As long as he gives you money - health, wealth, and prosperity, as an American, God is okay.

Numbers 21:5 (KJV) And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. God made a promise, and instead of believing the promise, they accused God. The manna was Christ, the living Word that brought life. In a church, where the Living Word is not above all, there is a loathing.

Numbers 21:6 (KJV) And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. How many of you are snake bitten today? Families are under attack all the time. God wants real families that have loads of storge.

Has a fiery serpent ever called you on the phone? The Lord sent them. You decide what voices you're going to listen to. If you listen to poison, what goes in will come out. That's your business, and you're right about it being your business. What do you listen to on your television? Is there any poison there?

Numbers 21:6 (KJV) And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. The wicked died.

Numbers 21:7 (KJV) Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.

Who can be saved? No one by keeping laws such as love God and love your neighbor. You've proven it.

Numbers 21:8 (KJV) And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

Looking to Jesus as the author and finisher - the antidote to your death.

As John 3:14 (KJV) And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: Isn't that foolish? Isn't that divine foolishness? What are you looking at today? "Well, I'm not poisoned. I haven't been murmuring like these people. I haven't said it's vain to serve God."

Fiery serpents. Lift up a brass serpent and put it on a pole. And as the serpent is foolishness, as the preaching of the cross is foolishness, that's what we believe in, and nothing but that. If you preach the law for righteousness, then the offence of the cross ceases (Galatians 5:11).

What is so offensive about the cross? It is that Christ has done it. Christ has purchased, like Aslan on the stone altar, Edmund, the one who loves Turkish delight. "It's a good story, but I'm not going to be Edmund." I'm glad you want to be Lucy. C.S. Lewis didn't write Edmund out of the story, and God didn't write the older brother out of the story either. I'm an authority on the dumbest man in the Bible. This is just how I'm constituted, naturally. God's standing there telling me that He gave his Son and I don't have to do anything, and we have an argument about it.

Numbers 21:9 (KJV) And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

We speak a word of foolishness today. Here, God has given us everything, and when it comes to being the dumbest man in the Bible I am an expert on it. We keep going on about all we did, and how unfair God (the father) is. The older brother has got his own book, and he might have to wait 40 years until he dies and goes to the marriage supper - banquet of the Lamb.

Isaiah 53:11 (KJV) He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

Isaiah 53:3 (KJV) He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

The spirits have stirred all men up against Christ, because he takes it out of religion and brings it all down to gift. Christ in his crucifixion and his resurrection, is the last word of God's love

for us.

If you don't have any poison, you don't need an antidote. If you haven't been bit, you can do what this is saying, Isaiah 53:3 (KJV) He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Even God's love is reduced down to being mercenary today. God is only served because of health, wealth and prosperity.

Isaiah 53:8 (KJV) He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. He was cut off for my transgressions, and yours. Isaiah 53:10 (KJV) Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. There has already been a High Priest that has poured out his blood for you. You can't add anything to it. Isaiah 53:11 (KJV) He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Do you have a sin bearer? Are you married? Do you have a new Husband now? Isaiah 53:12 (KJV) Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Well, there it is. Christ has interceded for us. He has born all of your iniquities. If you try to bear them, you're defending yourself against the gift.

In the office God has appointed me; I forgive all of your sins. "How can you, you don't even know what they were?"

It all comes down to this: Sometimes you have to say things poetically because we know too much. These books I'm quoting from were written by men and women of God, and they have a story which is generally in agreement with God's Word. Every story is a card. Sometimes people mix me up with God. They think I'm the trouble maker. You're a trouble maker, of course, if you're walking as a father, bringing law and gospel to your children. Gospel triumphs. Mercy triumphs. These books are just some of my witnesses against your case. How

many of you came today as prosecuting attorneys, defense attorneys? How many came as both? How many came as witnesses for the devil, the accuser?

In the end, it's all a joke. The judge has already been bribed, bought off. The prosecutor needs to go to work in me, to convict and convince the judge about Orual. She's got a hard story. She's been working on it 40 years now. If you had a dad like hers (nothing happens without God's permission), and he kicked you in the stomach and put you in the hospital for 2 weeks, what would you think about God? Adam kicked us all. I don't blame my earthly father. He did pretty well. He knew some things. He was a sinner, but I don't blame the sinner. "I'll show them I'm right!" This will bring hell to you.

The Ace of Hearts is this: All other cards are just a rigged jury. The blood of Christ is what I call poetically, the Ace of Hearts. It negates everything I've talked about for the last 1 1/2 hours. It negates all of your sins. Whatever you've got against anyone in this church, it's all over. Christ has played his card for you. He is the bleeding heart, and he rose from the dead for our life now.

God would have you receive. If you'd like to, stop thinking faith is something you mentally agree to and start thinking but it as something you receive; that he's born your iniquities so you wouldn't haven't bear them today. He knows what sheep will do before the cock crows tomorrow morning, and you don't have one sin in your thoughts, words or deeds that God's blood hasn't washed away. That is the truth. You want to be the dumbest man, just say, "But...."

Don prayed for us before we ended the service.

SOURCE

Sermon Notes - Don O'Connor - 12/2/07

(The message through Jennifer's ears.)