

# Afflicted sinners brought to Christ (Quality: Very good)

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[ 0 : 00 ] With the help of the Lord, I would seek to direct your attention to some thoughts which are found in the prophecy of Zephaniah and in the third chapter in verse 12.

Without a doubt, friends, a most familiar portion of God's word. To the prophecy of Zephaniah, chapter 3 and verse 12. I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people.

And they shall trust in the name of the Lord. I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people. And they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

Zephaniah, chapter 3 and verse 12. First of all, friends, we believe it's a most interesting thought when we look upon to the setting.

Zephaniah, of course, prophesied during the days of Josiah. That was the last good king of which Judah ever had.

[ 1 : 08 ] And you remember he was a godly king. And the Lord had promised that Josiah that as long as he was there and alive, the Lord would not bring these solemn judgments upon to the house of Judah.

But the Lord had also told them that these judgments would come. So in this particular prophecy, he warns them again of their sins and of their departings.

And he certainly sets their sins before them. Well, there was a little ramblin among them. And friends, without a doubt, had a great and a lively concern over the state of Judah.

I do believe they recognized the prophecies of Jeremiah as well as Zephaniah. As they looked upon to the sins of the children of Judah.

And they could rightly bow unto God's sovereignty that the Lord should come in his solemn judgments upon them. But without a doubt, you can well imagine they thought of the future.

[ 2 : 13 ] Whether they had particular sufficient light upon the fact that they would be in captivity for a period of time. But well, nevertheless, I believe their concern was their future.

Would the children of Israel actually return once again to Judah? And would there be a building up? And I believe as every children, as we often look upon our case today and down through all generations.

We without a doubt always do have a concern and should have a concern for the future. Well, I believe you should have a concern here. What's going to remain in the future as one or the other is taken out of this world?

Where is there going to be a building up? Well, I think of my own cause back home. Well, there is only one thing, friends, that we might have to do and that is look to the Lord.

That he will maintain the truth among us and that we do not know what it is to grieve the spirit. And then to find nothing more than Ichabod written upon to the doorposts of the places.

[ 3 : 25 ] But nevertheless, friends, the promise of God stands firm. In spite of all that was a discouragement, we can be trusting in upon the fact that the Lord says, I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Now, in our particular text, we read here where the Lord says, I will also leave in the midst of thee and afflicted and poor people and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

The Lord says, I will. And there's our confidence and there's our rest, isn't it, friend? Oh, the shells and the wheels of God's word should always give us a measure of discouragement.

Even though at times we may be sorely cast down. But we find then that these particular people here, of whom will be lifted in the midst of thee, are the chosen people.

And friends, we ought never to be afraid of speaking about God's electing love. Do ever remember, friend, election doesn't bring a soul out, it brings them in.

[ 4 : 41 ] And when it comes to all the doctrines of grace, what a mercy it is all upon the ground of God's free and sovereign grace, not upon any merit of self.

So, friends, when we look brightly upon to the truth of God's eternal election, first of all, we must ever remember the total depravity of man.

Totally fallen in their fetal at Adam. Sinners by birth, sinners by choice, and sinners by practice. Now we come to the conclusion, what is going to be the future?

What a mercy the Lord will always have a little redmond, which we call according to the election of grace, who will know what it is to know something of that precious fear to the Lord.

There will always be a people who know what it is to seek their God. Well, if they are called out from all of the world, friends, then they will also prove that they are different.

[ 5 : 51 ] When grace enters into the soul, friends, and it's a marvelous thing, when the Holy Spirit enters into the soul of that person, friends, they are not no more their own.

I know in the first beginnings of grace, we can hardly imagine that they may even belong, or they will think of their own soul that they belong to the Lord. Or we may look upon some character, as it were, seem to have been living so at ease, without a concern in their soul.

And yet if the divine grace enters in, it may be such a gradual work that the outward person, the outward world hardly notices that from the beginning.

But grace will separate. Grace is the work of the Holy Spirit that works in the heart of a person. And they will prove that they are not known, they're known no more.

These are those who are left. Now we're going back to possibly the historical setting. You know, in time the Lord brought the children of Israel down into captivity.

[ 7 : 06 ] Now we realize there were three times that they were brought down, and there were three captivities. I know it was one captivity.

The first captivity, it seems like for the most part, there were some of the godly that went along with them, such as Daniel. And then when the children of Judah again rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, he again sent his armies against him and took some more, and finally third, and then finally the destruction of the temple and the destroying of the city of Jerusalem.

But I'm speaking about that little remnant. Well, I believe we don't know too many of the names of that little remnant that went down there into captivity, but I think we know some.

We may believe there was Daniel, his three friends, and without a doubt, a little remnant among them of whom we don't know anything about.

Oh, as we look upon Daniel and his friends, they seem to have survived quite well in captivity. They were brought to some great privileges, to great honor.

[ 8 : 18 ] But nevertheless, we know of this, because I know that Daniel and his three friends knew grace. They knew something of the affliction and the poor that belonged to the people of God.

I often think of that portion of which is found in the book of Esther. A very fitting word. I can lay my hands quickly upon it.

Esther 3 And verse 8. I believe here, friends, it gives a little description of what these individuals are.

For you remember, Haman wanted to destroy these particular people, of course, who were the Jews, and these were some of that remnant, without a doubt, who had served the Lord.

We read this. What he says unto the king, there is a certain people, scattered abroad and dispersed among the people of all the providence of thy kingdom.

[ 9 : 23 ] And their laws are diverse from all people. Neither keep thee the law king's laws. Therefore it is not for the king's prophet to suffer them.

Here is that people, whom we may believe is the truth of our text, where the Lord says, I will leave in the midst of thee and afflicted and a poor people. In other words, they are a separated people.

As we see here in this case in the book of Esther. They are scattered abroad, dispersed among the people and the providences of the kingdom. Their laws are different.

What laws are they under? Well, I realize they're under the laws which are given unto Moses to the children of Israel. But if that is the only thing they had in their mind in observing those laws, they quite, as far as I'm concerned, quite missed the mark.

But by regenerating grace, truly they had to keep the ordinances that belonged to the children of Israel true. But what a mercy when we come under another law, and that is the law of the gospel.

[ 10 : 40 ] A separating power that calls us as a separate people out of this world in a separate walk, a separate way, separate exercises, separate desires.

these are things the natural man knows nothing about. I realize you may have attended the house of God all of your life, and you possibly could get up and give a pretty good sermon.

But if you know nothing of the life and the power of it, friend, you're still outside of the secret. the more and more as I go on in my pilgrimage and I look back, at times I'm amazed as I try to trace the work of God in the soul.

I've often thought of men with all their intellect. And I believe we're amazed at the intellect the natural man has today in science, medication.

medication. But yet, if you would take one of those most intellectual persons, and if he knew nothing of grace, and told him, as it were, to write something of the work of God in the soul or the work of the Holy Spirit, friend, they would be destitute as to how to express it.

[ 12 : 03 ] But as you look into your life, what a strange work. especially as we look into our beginnings. Now I have light, I hope, upon my pathway.

But in my beginnings, I thought I would never find grace. I thought I was determined that the Lord had determined to cast me off through my sins and through my departings.

But yet, now as I look back, Oh, young friend, I think when I was young, the Lord began to make me miserable.

Could I think it's grace? No. But I can only hope for you, young friend among us, that the Lord comes and separates you by his grace and makes you miserable in your own soul.

as you think of your sins and as you feel to be outside of the secret. And a strange, mysterious prayer and cry comes into the soul.

[ 13 : 17 ] You thought the Lord would never hear and never would come. But when the Lord doth appear, Oh, what a mercy. When the Lord clears up those heavenlies, and you're able to look back upon God's dealings with your own heart, friends, there's nothing so melting as a sense of God's grace to a hell-deserving sinner.

So, I will leave. And so, there always will be that remnant here and there to be called by grace.

Now, a thought comes to me. To you who have any concern for your soul, I know this isn't in our hymn book.

We didn't always sing Gatsby's hymns. We didn't know nothing about them truthfully to begin with. We sang from another hymn book. The dear old man would always choose out the hymns that he felt was right.

But I have to leave that. But there was one where you did sing and I hope the Lord made some application up to my own soul. And that is this, pass me not O gentle Savior.

[ 14 : 38 ] Hear my humble cry. While another zour calling, do not pass me by. Oh, I can say this.

If you don't know that particular hymn, but if you know something of that language, I do not want to build anybody up upon false foundations.

But I would believe to say this, friend, I feel you're one of those rendement. One of those whom God, we can say, that has chosen out of this world and separated you by his grace.

I will also leave. Here's love. Here's mercy. Here is grace, friends. Undeserving grace.

Marvelous grace. I will also. It is the Lord that does it. And the Lord will maintain it. So, I will also leave in the midst of thee.

[ 15 : 46 ] A separate people, like those who we read in that portion of Esther. What we notice here that they have different exercises, they have different longings, they have different experiences.

We read an afflicted and poor people. Well, I believe if we look upon the case of our countries and the world today, my, what a lot of afflicted and poor people there are upon the face of this earth.

But as I look in there further into my text, I don't believe they are the ones that are included into this text, because I don't see them trusting or calling upon the name of the Lord.

Truly, I realize there is so the case. When one natural man sometimes brought into trouble to circumstances, and they begin to pray, and after they're out of their circumstances, the prayer is gone.

Or if the circumstances are not taken away, they soon begin to live it and go on in the course into this world. However, I always excite both young and old.

[ 17 : 07 ] Whatever problem or whatever affliction you have into this world, it may not be physically, it may be some circumstances in your life.

Oh, may you know what it is to go to the Lord in the attitude of prayer. And if you will bear with me, I believe it was one remarkable answer to prayer in providence.

After I got out of the service, I could see the hand of the Lord answered my prayer most marvelously, it mounted me. I knew though that isn't salvation, but I thought if the Lord answered me providence, would he not also answer me in that which is vital?

And I believe it brought life and power in prayer before the Lord. But coming back, what are these afflictions which are designated to those who know something of grace who are the separated people, of which I'm going to say the natural religious person knows nothing about?

The first thing that comes to my mind in this affliction is this, and I can use the language of one of the greatest saints that ever lived upon the face of this earth, and that is the great apostle Paul.

[ 18 : 41 ] I'm sure that he said this in his early experience, and I'm sure by the word of God that he also said it in his later experience, and it is this, oh, wretched man that I am, a sense of your sin, a sense of your depravity.

This is the affliction trends, which I believe is found in the words of my text. The Lord can bring affliction, naturally speaking, and bring out prayer, true, and we hope to trust upon that a little later that keeps in my mind, but I'm speaking about that inward exercise.

Yes, that great man of God, in the beginning, yes, but even as he went on in life, he says, oh, wretched man that I am, even there, in his petition.

I realize in his affliction, there were afflicted feelings in his soul, it is true he knew where to go, and for that glorious deliverance, but certainly one who's ever knew what it is to be afflicted by a sense of themselves as sinners, and knowing something of the wretched depravity, they also are those friends who desire to have a remedy, to have a deliverance.

They are those who, by the nature of living faith, in their affliction, it drives them in prayer before the throne of grace, and there we see something of the glory of the gospel.

[ 20 : 29 ] Oh, what a mercy when the gospel first becomes a reality, and I realize I can be very simple, and I am a simple man.

What is the gospel? Well, I realize, and we know it's good news, but I always like to describe the language of the gospel as some of the most simplest language that we find in the word of God, and the one that comes to me is this.

this man came into this world to seek and to save the lost, or the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost. I find him to be a friend of sinners.

I see that in his nature he draws sinners unto himself. Oh, what precious news that is. To those who know something of the affliction of their sins and of their depravity, there's something about the gospel.

Oh, it's good news. It has a sweet sound of the trumpet. It has an inviting news. Ah, but true, there'll always be those obstacles that will stand in the pathway.

[ 21 : 42 ] But isn't it a mercy? When God gives that work, he gives faith to persevere against every other obstacle. I realize Jonah had grace, but I do believe there's times we can even make one of the descriptions of the saints of God in the Old Testament and bring them in as early seekers.

Oh, do you know what it is to be bound? What an affliction that is. The throne of grace seems to be so far off.

You look upon the sweet invitations as come boldly to the throne of grace, and you would, but you dare not presume upon him, but then to find to the heavens as brass.

Oh, that's an affliction the free will of religion knows nothing about. The unconverted don't know nothing about it. Unconverted friend, are you a stranger to the exercises and the longings in your soul?

Oh, what a mercy friend. To begin with, you find the heavens as brass, but then the Lord opens up prayer.

[ 23 : 06 ] And sometimes nothing more than the sigh and groan, and you feel, ah, that's entered in. And that affliction in the measure has a little comfort, a little encouragement.

punishment. But as time goes on, oh, what a mercy, friend, to find access before the Lord, to pour out your wants in your soul before him, confess your sin, tell him your want of him, your desires unto him.

Oh, friends, these are things that the world knows nothing about. And then the trials of life, the temptations that come into our pathway, oh, doesn't all the world have them?

But often, friends, we come to this conclusion, we feel that the Lord is dealing heartily with us, until he gives us that grace to bow under his sovereignty, and to be able to say the will of the Lord be done.

Oh, that poor and afflicted people, they are rich, aren't they? And it is a mercy as how the Lord keeps that alive.

[ 24 : 20 ] Well, I believe we have a good example under the word of God, one whose souls was kept alive continually. The man couldn't be very far away from his God, because if he got very far off, there was an enemy there at his heels, and that is David.

Now, what a mercy, friend, in our affliction. And in our trials of life, we find ourselves to be a companion of that dear man, David.

We see in the Psalms, may I use an illustration, oh, I felt so terrible, I'm so far off from my feeling, and I breathed out to the Lord, and says, oh, Lord, why is they're so silent to me?

And I happened to open my Bible and come right to the verse. I thought, well, you may say that's kind of a negative encouragement, but it did give me encouragement.

I thought, well, I'm not alone. That man of God, David, knew what it was to cry out, why is so silent to me?

[ 25 : 31 ] These are the exercises of these individuals whom God separates by his grace. things. He brings them into circumstances that the world knows nothing about.

Now, what a mercy, friend, you can look back into your own soul's experience, and then begin to realize how the Lord did separate. Well, I'm possibly not keeping things in very good order, but now I thought of another thing.

When the Lord begins to let you see, especially your youth as you grow up, you begin to see something of the vanity and the emptiness of this world, and the things you once enjoyed and found a pleasure in, you find now it seems to be emptied, and you feel an empty void in your soul, the world can't fill it anymore, and you look upon some of the things you once reveled in, maybe you were kept from being taken up with them, and what a mercy, but in your own soul you would have, but when the Lord afflicts you by a sense of your worldly heart, your worldly mind, and you find yourselves, I would do good, but I can't, you find yourself incapable of performing the things of which you feel you should do in your own soul, so you're afflicted, but in that affliction you know what it is, to look to the

Lord in the attitude of prayer, oh, I'm sure that the songs of Solomon are a reality to those who know something of grace, do you know what it is to ask the Lord to draw me, must be affliction there, there must be something in your soul that does not want to be drawn more into this world, you're brought to realize your uttered impossibility to draw your own soul, and you need an idea and a power outside of self, oh, what a mercy, then you know what it is to say, draw me, Lord, and I will run after thee, oh, what a mercy, then, to have that affliction and realize that it is not in self, but it's outside of self, but as I look upon my thought here, friends, when we think about these afflictions which mark out those who know something of grace, these are the same individuals which will also know what it is to trust in the name of the Lord, but before we look upon that particular subject, may I look further into the words of my text,

I will leave in the midst of thee, in this world, a separate people by grace. They'll be in the world, but by the grace of God, they won't be of the world, as I've already tried to describe in the experience, that feeling that empty void within the soul.

[ 28 : 57 ] So, friends, there is that separation, isn't it, by the grace of God. At first, I didn't know. Can I tell you a little of my experience?

things? I believe I was in the senior year of school when I felt more and more of these convictions, and I didn't know what it was.

I was brought up in a godly home. I had a godly father and a godly mother. But coming back, so I made a few excuses of my friends that I couldn't go to some activities of the school, and this and that.

Well, they wanted to know why. I didn't tell them why. I just couldn't. I didn't feel comfortable no more with it. then I was so foolish I was hurt later because they didn't ask me anymore.

I thought when I would have lost my friends. Oh, to young people can I put it this way. You're better without any friends than having the wrong friends, but mine must go on.

[ 30 : 07 ] When God takes his people, he does afflict them in a loving way, a blessed way, so that he may separate them unto himself.

So, they are afflicted. But then we also read in the text, they are poor. Certainly, I know that there are many in the word of God who are very, very rich.

But yet, in their own souls' experience, I am sure that Abraham knew what it was to feel the afflictions of his own reprobity, the obstacles of sin, and the roughness of his pathway at times.

He knew what it was in him to feel himself with poverty and soul. Though he had riches and goods as it were in abundance, but yet when it come to his own soul, he had nothing.

And David said on one occasion, though I'm poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me. But what is it to be poor in spiritual way? it is to find you have nothing like that dear woman with the affliction of that issue of blood.

[ 31 : 24 ] You know, what a mercy. The Lord in time brought it about that she took her last little coin out of her purse. She brought her to the place that all these physicians have done nothing but only made matters worse.

what a desperate condition she was in. She was poor naturally. But we like to make an application of it.

She was poor spiritually. Was it a hopeless case? Yes, herself. But her poverty certainly made room for the appearing of the name of Jesus.

And I always liked that article. Then she heard of Jesus. Friend, there will always come at his appointed time and in his appointed place.

She heard of Jesus. She heard by living faith. She knew her poverty, but she also was brought to realize the richness which was found in that man called Jesus.

[ 32 : 40 ] She knew this, that if she but touched the hem of his garment, I will be whole. And she knew it was all of free grace, without any merit of self.

Her desperate place, her desperate case, made room for the dear Savior. Lord, what a mercy we see that combination going. The work of the holy law within us, bringing us as guilty sinners, but making room for the appearing of the Lord Jesus.

As I've often said, he makes room for himself. That's why he brings his people into trials and temptations in order that he may make himself more manifest himself, that he may manifest himself more unto his own children.

Oh, he will make himself known. He loves his people. He would have fellowship with them. And he knows that in themselves they cannot bring it about.

So he puts prayers, he puts supplications within the soul, and they know what it is to call upon the name of the Lord. Oh, she ventured every obstacle in her pathway.

[ 34 : 02 ] But when she had the view of Christ and everything which is an obstacle in her, she could not. She must press through all that living faith which prevails against every obstacle.

This is given to the poor, to those that have nothing. Remember, friends, there's no blending of the work of God works with grace that never blends together.

And what a mercy. We in our foolish state would always want to blend it together, but the Lord makes a separation. He brings us to see that all of our works is nothing but a filthy rags in his sight, and that we can do nothing unto that salvation.

And I've often said it is a great mercy when we come to this place that we come to realize that salvation is of grace. Come to the end of all self and see it has to be of grace, either that or I perish.

But no one ever perished at the feet of Jesus. Oh, what a mercy the fact that he receives the poor. recently I was trying to speak there from the case of the disciples of John, sent by John to the Lord Jesus, art thou he that should come or look before another?

[ 35 : 32 ] And you remember one of those thoughts that the Lord gave unto them, and it was this, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them. This is the poor in our text.

They want a free gospel. They do not want a gospel that costs anything of their own because they find it's nothing. And if they would put their hand to it, they find it only corrupted.

But it is this afflicted in a poor people who we see in the words of our text. And again, I come across these shells in the wills of God's word.

They shall trust in the name of the Lord. Now, what a mercy if the name of the Lord Jesus has become precious and dear to you.

You see something of his suitability. You see something of his completeness. Well, I realize there are many names that be given to the Lord Jesus.

[ 36 : 40 ] But I would like to just think a little bit about the person of the Lord Jesus. The one which I believe is most precious when they called his name Emmanuel, meaning God with us.

What a mercy then we can know what it is to trust him who in his condescending love can have compassion upon those that are out of the way and to the ignorant.

What a suitability there is in Christ. Again, may I repeat it to the ignorant, to those that are out of the way.

Oh, what a mercy then we think of his condescending love and mercy that he would come to heaven and be a man, man without sin, and come to be a substitute there to die for the people, not that they deserve it, but only upon the ground of free grace.

Who can be touched with all the feelings of our infirmities, who knew what to be tempted and tried in all points, like unto us, and yet without sin.

[ 37 : 55 ] Isn't there a suitability in the dear Lord Jesus? There is, friend. So when we look upon him and his name shall be called Emmanuel, as man we can approach him, as God we can trust him.

Who else could drive out to the devils? Who can as a word give us eyes to see, spiritual eyes? Who else, Lord, could open up our ears that we may hear to the gospel?

We need an almighty God. And therefore, friend, I've often thought, and in my poor ministry I've often tried to ask the people, I wonder what is the most suitable?

I wonder what is the most glorious? As we look upon his manhood or look upon his deity? Well, I believe it all depends on our exercises after the time, isn't it?

When we feel such a depraved condition and are cast down, oh, what a mercy, then we can look upon his humanity.

[ 39 : 03 ] And we may think upon that man, Simon, who was enabled because of that blessed humanity. He could embrace the Savior into his bosom.

Have you felt something of that? Desire? And yet at times you felt, I can say, I love him. But then as we look a little further upon our weakness, and then we are brought sometimes to see I need a mighty God.

A mighty God. And then you realize his greatness. He's God as well. Oh, in other words, friends, we never want to put the one belt on the other.

It's always so needful. And I like this thought too. When the dear Lord Jesus went into heaven, friends, as a great high priest over the house of God, he went into heaven different than he came down from heaven.

When he came from heaven, he was God. But when he went to heaven, he went as a God-man. That same Jesus is there at the right hand of God the Father.

[ 40 : 21 ] Oh, what a mercy we can trust in. He never fails. He's one we can approach. God, and when we feel something of renewing of our sin, what a mercy we can look at again and see something of that precious atoning sacrifice of Christ.

Being a little closer led to the cross of Calvary, viewing him dying in our place, and then watching as it were by living faith.

The soldier passing the spear into the side of Christ, and forth with came blood and water. What a suitable Savior!

Blood to atone and water to cleanse. Oh, the all-sufficiency which is found in Christ. That's the one we can trust for time and for eternity.

And when going back, the trials of life, circumstances as it were mount up, we feel afflicted, we feel poor in our wretched state.

[ 41 : 43 ] but there's one we can go to, who says, come unto me, all ye that labor and heavy laden, and I will give thee rest. We can trust in him upon the word of his promise, upon the word, what he has given in his word.

We can trust him because he ever lives at the right hand of God the Father. The same Jesus, whom John laid upon his breast of Christ, is that same one.

He receives sinners today. What a suitability there is in him. Now, coming back to my thought, what a mercy then, friends, to be one of that little redmond, whom God, by his infinite love and mercy, has made a separation in your soul's experience, and called you by his grace, and those afflictions of which you pass through, the other world knows has the same afflictions, but it's different with you.

Those afflictions the Lord laid upon you, it brought up prayer. Oh, those afflictions that were brought upon the Hezekiah, it did him no harm, did it? It did him good.

and then to be able to walk out the truth, which we often read there in Romans 8 and verse 28, all things, all things work for good to them that love God and are called according to his purpose.

[ 43 : 27 ] Then rightly know what it is to say like David, it's good that I had been afflicted, else I had gone astray. Oh, friend, you know something of the goodness of the Lord.

Do you know something of that blessed Jesus? Do you long for him? But to you who are outside, may the Lord, by his grace, bring you in, bring you into an afflicted state of your own self as a sinner, and bring you to that one.

whom there is salvation only. No other name given among heaven whereby we must be saved. Here's a precious truth, a precious gospel, here in the words of our text, I will also leave in the midst of thee, in this wretched world, and afflicted and poor people, separated by their grace, separated by their experiences, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

And what a mercy. There is no other name given. And what a mercy. We can trust him.  
Well, there I must leave it.

The Lord blesses few remarks. Amen. day of glory.

[ 45 : 06 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.  
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.