



The Sermon

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Genesis 29:1-30

June 12, 2022

"Destiny Meets Disaster"

TRANSCRIPT

Well, we have a great passage we'll be looking at today. I want you take your Bible and turn with me to Genesis chapter 29, Genesis chapter 29, and we'll see how much time that we have today. We'll begin in Genesis 29 and we'll preach through the book of Exodus. Actually through verse 30 of this chapter. Genesis 29, verse 1. The title of this message is "Destiny Meets Disaster."

Beginning in verse 1, "Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the sons of the east. He looked, and saw a well in the field, and behold, three flocks of sheep were lying there beside it, for from that well they watered the flocks. Now the stone on the mouth of the well was large. When all the flocks were gathered there, they would then roll the stone from the mouth of the well and water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the mouth of the well.

"Jacob said to them, 'My brothers, where are you from?' And they said, 'We are from Haran.' He said to them, 'Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?' And they said, 'We know him.' And he said to them, 'Is it well with him?' And they said, 'It is well, and here is Rachel his daughter coming with the sheep.' He said, 'Behold, it is still high day; it is not time for the livestock to be gathered. Water the sheep, and go, pasture them.' But they said, 'We cannot, until all the flocks are gathered, and they roll the stone from the mouth of the well; then we water the sheep.'

"While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. When Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted his voice and wept. Jacob told Rachel that he was a relative of her father and that he was Rebekah's son, and she ran and told her father.

"So when Laban heard the news of Jacob his sister's son, he ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his house. Then he related to Laban all these things. Laban said to him, 'Surely you are my bone and my flesh.' And he stayed with him a month.

"Then Laban said to Jacob, 'Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?' Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. And Leah's eyes were weak, but Rachel was beautiful of form and face. Now Jacob loved Rachel, so he said, 'I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel.' Laban said, 'It is better that I give her to you than to give her to another man; stay with me.' So Jacob served seven years for Rachel and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her.

"Then Jacob said to Laban, 'Give me my wife, for my time is completed, that I may go in to her.' Laban gathered all the men of the place and made a feast. Now in the evening he took his daughter Leah, and brought her to him; and Jacob went in to her. Laban also gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid. So it came about in the morning that, behold, it was Leah! And he said to Laban, 'What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served with you? Why then have you deceived me?' But Laban said, 'It is not the practice in our place to marry off the younger before the firstborn. Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also for the service which you shall serve with me for another seven years.' Jacob did so and completed her week, and he gave him his daughter Rachel as his wife. Laban also gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her maid. So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and indeed he loved Rachel more than Leah, and he served with Laban for another seven years.

What an incredible narrative. Truth is stranger than fiction. This is startling. Let's look at it. But first, let's go to the Lord in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, as we now come to look into Your Word we are aware of our total complete dependence upon You to know the truth, to love the truth, to apply the truth, to live the truth. We need it all taking place in our lives this day. May we not squander this opportunity, but be wise stewards of this text of Scripture. Speak to each one of us, in Jesus' name. Amen.
[End]

The title of this message is "Destiny Meets Disaster," and in these verses we see the providential meeting of Jacob and Rachel. This was a divine appointment that was planned by God from eternity past and orchestrated within time. This was not a chance meeting, this was not a random occurrence, nor was it an accident. This encounter was prescribed by God before the foundation of the world, and He ordered their steps to this well near Haran. It was God who brought Jacob to Rachel and it was God who brought Rachel to Jacob, and it was at the right place and at the right time.

And yet, within the sovereign will of God we see here disaster and human failure. This providential meeting did not relieve the participants of their human responsibility to make right choices within the larger confine of the sovereign will of God. We see here Laban and Bilhah making wrong choices, we see Leah and Zilpah making wrong choices, and we need to be clear on this: God is not the author of sin, and yet God is the author of a plan that does include sin. And even in the midst of the sovereign will of God we are responsible for all the choices that we make. And let's never be passive, we must always be active in our obedience to God; and there is always a price to pay for wrong choices. There are always consequences to sinful decisions. And yet all this is being played out under the confines of the sovereign will of God.

So I want us to look carefully at this passage, and there are four main truths that I want to set before you, headings really, as we walk through this text. And the first thing that I want you to note is "the divine appointment, the divine appointment."

We begin in verse 1, "Then" – all right, stop right there. Immediately following this dream that Jacob had of the ladder that reaches all the way up to the heights of heaven with the assurance that God was with him and that God would go before him and that God would provide for him all that he needs, then immediately, without procrastinating, without hesitation, "Then Jacob went on his journey."

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Now what's interesting is when you look at these words "went on his journey," in the original Hebrew when Moses wrote this, it literally means "he picked up his feet." It's the only time in the Bible this is used, and the idea is that Jacob was so energized from this vision that he had had, this dream rather of God towering over his life and the promise to be with him, it's like he shot out of a canon, it's like he's bolting his way now to Haran. "He went on his journey," - picking up his feet energized - "and came to the land of the sons of the east." That's about 450 miles away from Bethel where he had his dream of the ladder, and so it's been a long journey from Bethel now to just outside of Haran.

And verse 2, "He looked and saw a well." It's a well that in an arid area is of utmost importance to supply water, not just for humans, but especially for the flocks. "He was a well in the field," - where they were grazing - "and behold, three flocks of sheep were lying there beside it, for from that well they watered their flocks. Now the stone" - and this stone now becomes kind of an important part of this story.

"Now the stone on the mouth of the well was large." There would be a large opening leading down into the well, and they had a huge stone. This word for "large" at the end of verse 2, it means "great in extent." It's thick, it's heavy, it's wide, and it would seal shut the well of water to keep other animals from coming from other contaminations to be in there.

And so, verse 3, "When all the flocks were gathered there, they would then roll the stone." Please note, "they would roll the stone." It would take several shepherds to be able to roll this stone in order to have access to the water from the mouth of the well, and water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the mouth of the well. So this was an ongoing thing that had took a team of men to roll the stone on and off.

Verse 4, "Jacob said to them," - to these teams of shepherds; remember there's three flocks here already, and several shepherds for each flock - 'My brothers,' - a very polite way to address these strangers - 'where are you from? Where do you live?' and they said, 'We are from Haran.'" Wow, what a providence this is, that's what he's looking for. He doesn't have a GPS, he doesn't have a map. He's traveled 450 miles from Bethel, 500 miles plus from Beersheba, and he's trying to find Haran, and he so what randomly comes across these shepherds, "Where do you live?" and they go,

"Haran." This is unbelievable. "God is with me, and God is leading my steps."

Verse 5, "He said to them, 'Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?'" And Laban, as you recall, is Jacob's uncle, it's Rebekah's brother. And that's his primary concern, because his father Isaac and his mother Rebekah have said, "You've got to go to Haran to escape being killed by Esau, and you will find someone there to marry. So just head up there and it will be courtship city for you," so to speak.

"And they said," - this is another providence - "they said, 'We know him.'" This is unbelievable. "You're from Haran, and I ask if you know Laban, and they go, 'Oh, yeah. Yeah, we know Laban.'" And so Jacob said," - verse 6 - 'Is it well with him?'" - And that word "well" you may recognize is the Hebrew word "*shalom*." "Is he prospering? Is he healthy? Is he at peace? Is life good to him?" - "And they said, 'It is well. He's doing very well.'"

And then at the end of verse 6 they point to the horizon. This is another amazing providence. "There is Rachel his daughter coming with the sheep." Now Rebekah has already said to him, "You need to go to Haran and marry one of the descendants of my brother Laban," and it's almost like she is just being served up on a silver platter by the invisible hand of God; and at that very moment, at that very moment they said, "Well, here comes Rachel now." This is a divine appointment. Can you not see the invisible hand of God at work? This is a setup. God has orchestrated this entire meeting. God has moved Jacob 500 miles to Haran, He's now moved his wife-to-be from Haran now out to this well. God is bringing her to him.

And this is the way God operates, this is the way God works. God delights to bring the woman to the man by providence. It was that way from the very beginning. In Genesis 2:21 God did this with Adam. What was Adam's part in finding Eve? He went to sleep, OK. So all you single guys here today, you are well-qualified to find a wife, it's just nap city.

So, we read in Genesis 2:21, "So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man." God just put him out, put him to sleep. And in verse 22, "The Lord fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and God brought her to the man." This is what God is doing with Jacob; God is bringing Rachel to Jacob. This is like a FedEx delivery on the front porch.

And I think of Solomon, Proverbs 31:10, "An excellent wife, who can find one?" You could spend the rest of your life searching for an excellent woman, and the question implies you're probably not going to find one. Why? Because, "Her worth is far above jewels." Oh, you could go find a wife, you just won't find an excellent wife unless God's involved, unless directs your steps, and unless God brings her to you. And that's what's going on here. God is just reeling in Rachel and plopping her right in front of Jacob.

So, look at verse 7, "He," - Jacob - 'Behold, it is still high day and it is not time for the livestock to be gathered. Water the sheep, and go, pasture them.'" And I don't think it's reading between the lines here too much to suppose that as Jacob says this, he's wanting these shepherds to go away, so he can have some one-on-one time. He needs a prayer partner. He needs a prayer partner and his mother needs a daughter-in-law.

So he sends them away. "But they said, 'We cannot, until all the flocks are gathered, and they roll the stone' - and please note "they," until the shepherds; more shepherds come to help roll the stone from the mouth of the well - 'then we will water the sheep.'"

Before we move any further I just want to say this should be a word of enormous encouragement to those of you who are single here today, that God really does direct the traffic and orchestrate the affairs of providence. and God will bring the right person to you in God's perfect timing. And what you need to be focused on is not so much finding the right person, but for you to be the right person. And it may be God is waiting on you to become the right person that you need to be in order to meet this person He has picked for you; and it may be that God is working on that person as well and maturing her or developing him, such that at the right time He will bring you together. God plays both ends into the middle; and that is what is taking place here. And you should be greatly encouraged that God will bring the right person to you. You just need to keep your teeth brushed, OK, and your heart clean. Selah, pause and meditate.

All right, now second, I want you to note "the immediate attraction, the immediate attraction" in verse 9. "While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came." So she's no longer on the horizon, she is now drawing near until she has now approached Jacob. "While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, as she was a shepherdess."

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Verse 10, "When Jacob saw Rachel," – let's just pause here for a moment. I did a word study on "saw." I mean, he checked her out. The word means "to inspect," "to look at in order to consider." This isn't a glance, this is a gaze.

"When Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep," – and please note the order here: he saw her first, and then the sheep, not the other way around. And notice what it says in verse 10 – "Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well." He is now so energized that he can move mountains having just seen Rachel. I mean, Rachel has flipped his switch. He single-handedly rolls away this massive stone that they were having to wait for the other shepherds to come to be able to move it, and it's because he has an adrenaline rush and a burst of energy, and he's probably showing off a little bit as well.

And so he just flips that big stone over to the side and maybe gazes back at her, "and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother." Now verse 11, "Then Jacob kissed her, and lifted his voice and wept." I mean, there's a lot going on here. I mean, there's some body live services going on here. I mean, he kissed her, which was in that culture a show of affection and a proper greeting; yet with what follows, there's some volcanic action going on here. "He kissed her, and lifted his voice and wept." I mean, he just has an emotional outburst. And this word "wept" means "to shed tears." And he is realizing this may be the woman, this may be the right place, this may be the right time.

And so, verse 12, "Jacob told Rachel that he was a relative of her father," – that was a pretty good line to use with her – "that he was Rebekah's son." Well, "She ran and told her father." She must have been feeling something as well.

So, verse 13, "So when Laban heard the news of Jacob his sister's son, he" – Laban – "ran to meet him," – Jacob – "and embraced him and brought him to his house. Then he" – which is Jacob – "related to Laban all these things." He related, "How your sister Rebekah told me to come to your house and to look for a wife. And I made it to Bethel, and God appeared to me in a dream, and God has propelled me north and to the east to where you are, and so I'm here by divine appointment." And so he relates all this to Laban.

Verse 14, "Laban said to him, 'Surely you are my bone and my flesh. I mean, we have blood ties.' And he" - Jacob - "stayed with him" - Laban - "a month."

Verse 15, "Then" - after this month stay - "Laban said to Jacob, 'Because you're my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing?'" So obviously during this month Jacob has a work ethic. Jacob is an industrious, hard-working man, and he's been working during this month, no doubt probably helping with the sheep and helping care for them and whatever chores need to take place. And so he says, "Should you really serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall be your wages? Set your salary."

So, verse 16, here's going to be the salary, "Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah." And you know what "Leah" means? Cow. I mean, do you really want to meet a woman whose name is Cow? Utter the thought. Sorry, I didn't mean to milk that one. Butter or not. "And the name of the younger was Rachel." Now "Rachel" means "a female lamb." So who are you going to be attracted to, the cow or to the female lamb?

So we get a little bit more information. Verse 17 tells us who he's going to be attracted to. Verse 17, "And Leah's eyes were weak." Now that's a hard word to translate, and there are a few places where it is translated as "weak" in the Old Testament. But as you know, there are multiple definitions for words - a primary, a secondary, et cetera. And this word also means "soft" or "tender" or "gentle," and it's translated that way other places in the Old Testament. And the idea here is she's got kind of soft eyes. It lacks a sparkle in her eyes; there's not a glistening in her eyes. She's got kind of a tired set of eyes.

"But Rachel was beautiful" - she was, in fact, stunningly beautiful; and we learn two things about her beauty - "of form." I looked up this word and it means "shape," "figure," "outline." I mean, Rachel's got an hourglass figure. She is sleek and slender, "and beautiful also of face." I mean, she's got a form like an hourglass and face like an angel; just a beautiful face to look at. I mean, she's extremely attractive. And so this catches, this catches Jacob's eye. And you know, a part of our being made in the image of God is that we have an eye for beauty. That's not wrong what Jacob's doing. God has an eye for beauty.

I'm reading a book at night right now by Francis Schaeffer called *Art and the Bible*. And God's design of beauty and God's love for beauty even in His own creation; and we are made in the image of God, with an eye for beauty and an appreciation for beauty. When I travel to other cities to preach they ask me, "What do you want to do in the afternoon?" I say take me to an art museum. I've never had a class in art, I don't know anything really; it's just you immediately instinctively recognize the genius of beauty when you walk into a very well-established art museum.

That's a part of being made in the image of God, and that we can enjoy looking at God's creation. And that's exactly what Jacob is doing here. I mean, 1 Samuel 16:7 says, "Man looks on the outward appearance." Well, that's the whole point. Man does look on the outward appearance, and that's a part of an attraction of a man for a woman.

And so at this point Jacob is unmarried, he's single. You want to know how old he is? Seventy-seven years old. So guys, there's hope. There's some measure of hope. I mean, he's like the millennials today, he just didn't get married. And so here he is, an eligible bachelor, and he is attracted to Rachel who is considerably younger. Matthew Henry writes in his commentary that she's scarcely marriageable. And so this older man Jacob sees the beauty of this younger woman Rachel, and he's just immediately drawn to her.

So note, third, in verse 18, "the marital arrangement." "Now Jacob loved Rachel." And this word really carries the idea "loved her on all different levels," but it also includes a physical attraction to Rachel. "So he" - Jacob - "said, 'I will serve you,' - he says this to Laban - 'I will serve you seven years for your daughter Rachel. That's the salary I want. That's the wage, that's the paycheck I want. I don't have a cent to my name, I've had to travel 500 miles to be here, I haven't brought any hard assets with me, so here's what we will do.'" And it was customary when you would marry a woman in this day that you would give the father who gives away the daughter, you would give him a substantial gift based upon really her desirability.

Well, Rachel is so attractive and so desirable and so beautiful that he says, "All right, here's the deal. I will work for you for seven years. And what you would give for me as a salary cumulative for seven years, that will come to you, that'll be my wages; and after seven years, you give me Rachel." And this really indicates the intensity of his affection and his

attraction to Rachel, that he's basically willing to climb any mountain and forge any river and cross any desert, that he would have this woman.

So, verse 19, "Laban said, 'It is better that I give her to you than to give her to another man; stay with me.'" So he accepts the terms of this offer; and it's a pretty good deal for Laban. He gets free labor for seven years, after which Laban will present Rachel to him.

So, verse 20, "So Jacob served seven years for Rachel" - in other words, to have Rachel's hand in marriage - "and they seemed but a few days." Wow, he was so in love with her, he was so attracted to her, that this seven-year period of time just flew by as if it were overnight, because his heart is just racing and pounding for this woman.

And it says at the end of verse 20, "because of his love for her." He's willing to do anything to have her. And this word "love" is a different word for love, and it means "passionate love." Because of his fervent, blazing, burning love for her. And what we learn here is that love makes hard sacrifice become easy sacrifice. When you love someone, any sacrifice you make for them is easy; it's not hard, it's easy. Love for another makes the sacrifice we make for them to be easy.

First Thessalonians 1:3 speaks of the labor of love. Paul commended the church at Thessalonica for their labor of love. And to understand those three little words "labor of love," it means "the labor that is produced by love." It is love that is the engine that is driving the labor. And so true love works hard for the one that you love. True love sacrifices much for the one you love. True love expends energy for the one you love. True love cannot sit still, true love has to be moving out to do and to serve the one you love; and that's epitomized here with Jacob. And so as you would love your spouse, as you would love others, there needs to be an outburst of labor for them.

And so, fourth and finally, we come to verse 21, "the sinful actions." Because we can't stop this narrative right here, we have to extend it on. And in verse 21, "Then Jacob said to Laban, 'Give me my wife, for my time is completed. The seven years is now up. I've given you blood, sweat, toil, and tears for seven years. I have busted it out in the field, I've had my shoulder to the plow. I've taken care of your sheep, I have watered them, I've led them into pastures to graze. I've done chores around the house. I have

awakened early, I have stayed up late. I have paid the price, I've given myself to you in servanthood, so the time now is for the paycheck. The time now is for the payoff. I now want Rachel.'" So you'll note there's no response from Laban; strangely silent.

So, verse 22, "Laban gathered all the men of the place and made a feast." This would be a wedding feast; and in this culture it would be a week-long wedding feast in which there would be singing and dancing and eating and drinking, and it would just be a wonderful wedding feast."

Verse 23, "Now in the evening" - meaning when it was dark, it's late at night, when Jacob is tired, when Jacob has no doubt had wine - "he took his daughter," - Laban - "took his daughter Leah," - not Rachel, Leah - "and brought her to him," - on this what would be his honeymoon night - "and Jacob went in to her." That's a very euphemistic way of saying he consummated the marriage. He had a physical relationship with her and went in to her. And when he would wake up the next morning he will not have a clue that this was Leah and not Rachel.

Now you may say, "How could anyone mistake a cow for a lamb?" Well, a couple things. You note, it says at the beginning of verse 23, "It was evening," it's dark. There's no artificial lights there. When it's dark out in the country, it's dark. But second, women wore a veil. We saw that earlier in chapter 24. So she probably had a veil as she comes into what would be the bedroom; and Jacob may have had too much wine. And so the combination of all of this, I think we can understand he might not have known this was Leah. And it will be from this relationship with Leah, he actually consummates the marriage. And there's no revoking of it, that from Leah there will come six sons and one daughter, and these six sons will be the beginning of six of the twelve tribes of Israel. If you want to know how the tribes of Israel got started, it's through the deception of what Laban just did. And so they had six sons, you'll recognize these names: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun. Those are all names for the tribes of Israel. And not only is Laban a deceiver, but Leah is a deceiver. She knew what was going on, she was a part of this roush.

So, verse 24, "Laban also gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid." So he gives Leah this, in essence, wedding gift of a maid, who will serve her now in this new relationship. And just to add to the layers of sin that is going on, Jacob will impregnate the maid, and she will have two sons, and they will be two sons from which will come two tribes of Israel.

Those two sons are Gad and Asher. So there's a lot going on here, layers of deception and, really, immorality.

Verse 25, "So it came about in the morning" - meaning the next morning - "that, behold, it was Leah!" Can you imagine the shock for Jacob, waking up the morning after your honeymoon and finding out you are married to the wrong woman? You talk about marrying into the family; man, he married into the family alright. He's in shock. He's worked seven years for Rachel, and he ends up with Leah.

"And he said to Laban, 'What is this you have done to me? This is unthinkable that you've done this to me. You have deceived me.'" Now think about who's saying this. It's Jacob the deceiver who has deceived his way through life to get the blessing. And so now what goes around, comes around. Now the deceiver has been deceived.

"He says, 'Was it not Rachel that I served with you? Why have you deceived me?' But Laban said," - and now Laban lies through his teeth - 'It is not the practice in our place to marry off the younger before the firstborn.'" He could have told him that seven years ago. So he's had free labor for seven years and now comes up with this lame excuse that, "Well we needed to marry the older sister first."

So he says, verse 27, Laban, "Complete the week of this one," referring to Leah; continue, in essence, to sleep with her, and the hope is that he will impregnate her and that there will be a family that will be started so as to bond their relationship by having children. "So complete the week of this one," - meaning Leah - "and we will give you the other" - referring to Rachel - "also for the service which you shall serve with me for another seven years. So if you really want Rachel you're going to have to give me another seven years." And only a man who deeply loves Rachel would go through the insanity of these terms. "You've already deceived me once, what other deception will you pull on me after another seven years?"

But, verse 28, "Jacob did so and completed her week," - meaning with Leah - "and he" - Laban - "gave him" - Jacob - "his daughter Rachel as his wife." So after the week of honeymoon was over with Leah, he actually then gives Rachel to Jacob on the condition that "you will work another seven years for me." Listen, Laban is an under-the-table card dealer here, I mean he is cutting the deck both ways.

So, verse 29, "Laban also gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her maid." And yes, you guessed it; Jacob will impregnate the maid Bilhah and she will bear two more sons who will be the beginning of two more tribes of Israel – the tribe of Dan and the tribe of Naphtali. So this is soiled; there's immorality. This is dirty; and all this within the divine appointment that God has ordained for Jacob and for Rachel.

So, verse 30, "So Jacob went in to Rachel" – meaning had a physical relationship with her – "went in to Rachel also." And Rachel will give him two sons, and these will be the other two sons who will begin the other tribes of Israel – Joseph and Benjamin. So after the seven years, Jacob is 84 years old.

But notice what it says: "Indeed he loved Rachel more than Leah, and he served with Laban for another seven years." This is an incredible account. It shows the divine sovereignty of God to orchestrate this whole scenario, and it also shows the sinfulness of man, and that within the sovereign purposes of God He allows man to go his own way at times. And yet God will override it all and bring about His purposes and His plans for the future.

So, what should we learn from this? Well, I think there's two things that we should learn, is that God has two divine appointments for you. The first divine appointment is that you're here today, and it is God who has directed and ordered your steps here. There's not a one of us who is here outside of the direction of God. God has brought you here for a purpose, and that purpose among other things was to hear this text brought to you. And I'm not certain how this connects with your life in where you are, but God has something very important and very specific to say to you from this passage.

And I will say if you're here today and you are single and you are without a spouse, which would be many here today, be reminded that God establishes divine appointments for you to meet the right person; and if you have not yet met that right person, it is because it's not yet the right time, and it's not yet the right place. The place may be right here at Trinity Bible, but it may be that God is having to mature this other person to bring them to the point where they would fully appreciate who you are and be where you are spiritually; or it may be the other way around. But God establishes divine appointments to bring people together. So you should be encouraged to know that God sovereignly is at work in the affairs of providence, and He will lead you to the right person.

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But there's a second. There's a second divine appointment that every one of us in this room have: "And it's appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment." You have an appointment to die and you have an appointment to stand before God in the judgment. The prophet Amos says, "Prepare to meet the living God."

And a time is coming if Christ delays in which you will die. Your time on this earth is very short, your days are already numbered. The hourglass is turned upside-down, and I don't know how many grains of sand are left in the top part of that hourglass, but they are being pulled down, and they'll never be replaced back at the top. You only have so much time left. For some here, it's a very, very short amount of time. And it may not be true of the oldest among us, it may be true of the youngest among us.

Are you ready to meet God? Are you ready to stand before God? And on the last day when you stand before God, what will it be like? Will you have an advocate who will represent you before God? Will you have one who will plead the merit of His blood on your behalf, that will cover all of your sins for you to be accepted into heaven? Or, will you be without a savior, will you be without an advocate, and will you be there to defend yourself? But there is no case you can make to defend yourself, because your sins are as high as the heavens, and God has recorded every single one of them.

The only hope that you have for that divine appointment on the last day when you stand before God and the books are opened is that you have come to know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior in this lifetime. He is the Savior of the world. There is no other hope for anyone to have to find acceptance with God and entrance into heaven apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ alone. And so if you've never come to the place to recognize, "I'm going to stand before God one day. I'm going to give an account for my life. And all of my sins have been recorded, and I will have to give an account." And there is no pardon for sin if you are without Jesus Christ.

So if you've never committed your life to Christ, what a glorious time this would be, even this morning, while we're in this awesome place, for you to bow the knee within your heart and to say, "Lord Jesus Christ, I repent of my sins, I surrender my life to You. Take my life; I commit all that I am to all that You are." And if you would pray that prayer in the silence of your heart, Christ would receive you, and He would wash away all of your sins. And on that last day when you stand with that divine appointment before

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God and before Christ, you will never have to face any of your sins. So may you believe upon Jesus Christ and receive the fullness of His forgiveness and grace. Let us pray.

[Prayer] Father in heaven, how we praise You and thank You for the way You order our steps, and that You have led us here to this place today. I pray that You will speak to every heart here today, that Your Word will find penetrating power into every soul. And for those here without Christ, Lord, I pray that You will save them today. So may this be a day of salvation for many here at Trinity Bible Church, in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.