

CHEST OF JOASH SUNDAY (December 3, 2017)

RAGS TO RICHES

OPEN: When left to itself the garden turns to weeds.

- ✓ The evolutionist would have us think...things are evolving and getting better...
 - But the news on TV tonight would suggest otherwise...evil exists today because the heart of man is sinful and selfish.
 - It didn't take long after God created the world that wickedness began to spread.

Genesis 6:5-7 (NKJV) - ⁵ Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. ⁶ And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart (it broke his heart). ⁷ So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them."

- The worldwide flood is a demonstration of God's justice...and how He feels about sin.

1) Man's **Problem**. *(Pro Presenter Slide Bulletin Outline)*

a) The 30,000-foot view: this world is messed up.

- ✓ Isaiah the prophet told us of the day when people **would say that evil is good and good is evil, that dark is light and light is dark (Isaiah 5:20)**. There is much confusion today.
- ✓ When society ignores the truth, they travel deeper into darkness.

Romans 1:21-22 (NLT) - ...they knew God, but they wouldn't worship Him as God or even give Him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. ²² Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools.

Romans 1:24-27 (NLT) - ²⁴ So God abandoned them to do whatever shameful things their hearts desired. As a result, they did vile and degrading things with each other's bodies. ²⁵ They traded the truth about God for a lie. So they worshiped and served the things God created instead of the Creator Himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen. ²⁶ That is why God abandoned them to their shameful desires. Even the women turned against the natural way to have sex and instead indulged in sex with each other. ²⁷ And the men, instead of having normal sexual relations with women, burned with lust for each other. Men did shameful things with other men, and as a result of this sin, they suffered within themselves the penalty they deserved.

- ✓ It is easy and comfortable to condemn the sins of others...especially when we are not guilty.

b) The 3000-foot view: We are messed up.

- The Bible tells us that **all of mankind has sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23).**

- ✓ Need a reminder? In Galatians, we find a “grocery list” of sins:

Galatians 5:19-21 (NLT) - ¹⁹ When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity (porneia), lustful pleasures, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery (pharmakeia...mood and mind altering drugs), hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

- ✓ While we may not be guilty of everyone of these sins...I imagine there are a few on the list you struggle with...

c) The three-foot view: I am messed up.

- It is easy to point out the failures of others but truth is we need only look into the mirror.
- Jesus once said: **Matthew 7:3-5 (NLT)** - ³“And why worry about a speck in your friend’s eye when you have a log in your own? ⁴How can you think of saying to your friend, ‘Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,’ when you can’t see past the log in your own eye?⁵ Hypocrite! First get rid of the log

in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye.

❖ When I understand my weaknesses, I will be better prepared to help others with their struggles.

- I saw this truth while reading in Hebrews:

Hebrews 5:1-3 (NLT) - Every high priest is a man chosen to represent other people in their dealings with God. He presents their gifts to God and offers sacrifices for their sins. ² And he is able to deal gently with ignorant and wayward people because he himself is subject to the same weaknesses. ³ That is why he must offer sacrifices for his own sins as well as theirs.

1) Our problem is sin.

- This world is messed up.
- We are messed up.
- I am messed up.

2) God's **Solution**. *(Pro Presenter Slide Bulletin Outline)*

- He would be justified if He just wiped us out...praise God He is loving and compassionate.

✓ Back to our Genesis story...even though God's heart was broken over man's wickedness...

Genesis 6:8 (NKJV) – But Noah found grace (unmerited favor) in the eyes of the Lord.

- God came up with a way for sinful man to be reconciled...to make peace with God.

✓ Not by keeping the law...years of history has shown that our best intentions fall short.

✓ God would become one of us yet maintain His blamelessness.

Hebrews 2:14-15 (NLT) - ¹⁴ Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being

could He die, and only by dying could He break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. ¹⁵ Only in this way could He set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.

Hebrews 2:17 (NLT) - ...it was necessary for Him to be made in every respect like us, His brothers and sisters, so that He could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God. Then He could offer a sacrifice that would take away the sins of the people.

- God gives us Jesus, His Son, so we sinners might be forgiven and find acceptance with God.
- What did this require of Jesus?
 - ✓ Paul tells us about His generous grace: **2 Corinthians 8:9 (NLT)** - ...Though he was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, so that by His poverty He could make you rich.
 - Jesus set aside His heavenly glory, divine prerogatives and left His place on the throne to take on human flesh and die the death of a criminal on a cross in order to make it possible for us to become children of God. (**Philippians 2:6-8**).
 - He has made us spiritually rich and included us in an eternal inheritance...once beggars, now sons and daughters of God.

3) Our **Response**. (*Pro Presenter Slide Bulletin Outline*)

- We are not robots but are given a free will...we must make a choice...
 - ✓ Do you acknowledge that you are messed up...that you are a sinner?
 - ✓ Do you believe that God sent Jesus, His Son, to earth for you?
 - ✓ Will you repent of your sins and receive Him as your Savior?
 - This gift is received by faith...

Romans 6:23b (NLT) - ...the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NLT) - ⁸ God saved you by His grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. ⁹ Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.

- As a recipient of God's grace, we become grace filled people (generous people).
 - ✓ Out of gratitude we give our time, talent and treasures (resources) back to God.
 - ✓ We love so we give. We practice giving all year long not just at Christmas.
 - Believing that tithing is the "training wheels" of giving we start there.
 - ✓ We offer our finances so we might advance the Gospel.
- We give a Christmas offering to express extravagant love to the One who was rich but became poor so we who were poor might be made rich.

CLOSE: God's gift was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger (wooden box).

Tweet from Terry Powell:

Gift Wrapped

God sent the world a gift, wrapped in human skin.
Placed in a manger at a Bethlehem Inn.
A son who assured us that righteousness would win.
Christ was "born to die," God's solution for sin.

John 3:16 (NKJV) – For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

- We will now bring our gifts and lay them in this wooden box (chest).

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Message Notes
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