

Get Ready for the Ride of Our Lives
November 26, 2017

I **SLIDE** Our Ride so far

A) Our Journey

- 1) We began this year with my stating that it was time to rebuild
- 2) On Jan 1, the Lord has us turn to Romans 1:18-27
- 3) These are the same verses with which we are ending the year
- 4) Then we moved to Elijah and Elisha
- 5) The Lord used those messages to prepare us for a change in leadership
- 6) Then, Jesus told us to prepare a way in the wilderness

B) Over the past few months, we have taken a closer look at the wilderness and darkness that has engulfed our nation

- 1) These messages were not to discourage us but to prepare and encourage us
- 2) God is also warning us that as we move forward, we must be careful not to lose our way.

II The Truth

A) Time to Rebuild

- 1) First message of the year stated that we had to rebuild using the Truth as our foundation
- 2) Not part of the truth
- 3) Not our enlightened interpretation of the truth
- 4) The Truth, Whose name is Jesus Christ

B) **SLIDE** Romans 2:1-4 (NIV) ¹ You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. ² Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth.

- 1) When Paul was talking about the evil ways of the Gentiles, the Jews were nodding their heads agreeing with him

- 2) When Paul was talking about the evils of the legalism and self-righteousness of the Jews, the Gentiles were nodding and agreeing with him
- 3) Paul reminds us that God's judgment is based upon truth
- 4) The Truth of Jesus Christ is applied equally to each and every person
- 5) Accepting Jesus Christ does not give us a cushion whereby we can judge others or where we can receive extra grace that excuses our actions

C) **SLIDE** The truth applies to each person equally

- 1) **Romans 2:11 (NIV)** ¹¹ For God does not show favoritism.
- 2) Nothing on this earth that we can do or earn will cause God to show us favoritism
- 3) Even when we accept Christ, we are not more loved than others
- 4) We are separated out of the world because our sins are forgiven
- 5) But we are not placed under a different truth
- 6) All God's judgement is based upon THE TRUTH
- 7) **Romans 2:6 (NIV)** ⁶ God "will give to each person according to what he has done."
- 8) Baker Mayfield
 - a) Many OU fans make excuses because he is their quarterback
 - b) Others vilify him because they don't like OU
 - c) This is the tendency Paul is addressing: religious justification

D) **SLIDE** ³ So when you, a mere man, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment?

- 1) For this next year, I see the battle for the soul of this nation intensifying
- 2) Even now we can see one part of the church judging another part saying, "You have to act like me," or "You have to abide by man's doctrine," or "You are living the old word."
- 3) Jesus' church is built on the foundation of Truth as set forth by the life and the words of the Christ Himself

- 4) **SLIDE** Matthew 7:24-27 (NLT) [Jesus said,] ²⁴ "Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. ²⁵ Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. ²⁶ But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. ²⁷ When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash."
- 5) Jesus describes two groups
- 6) All will hear the truth, one way or another
- 7) Some will listen AND follow His truth
- 8) Others will hear BUT will not follow
- 9) We are not wiser, smarter, or better because we choose to follow His teaching because we cannot do that on our own
- 10) We do not follow because of our ability or will power
- 11) We follow because of His grace, mercy, and forgiveness
- 12) We follow because of the help of the Holy Spirit
- 13) God's judgement fell on the entire earth when He sent the flood
- 14) Noah and his family were spared because they obeyed the word of God
- 15) I believe God's judgement is coming if this nation does not repent and change her ways
- 16) That brings us to the next verse
- E) **SLIDE** ⁴ Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance?
- 1) Do we remember the cry of Habakkuk?
- 2) **Habakkuk 1:2-4 (NIV)** ² How long, O LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save? ³ Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. ⁴ Therefore the law is

paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.

- 3) Paul reminds us that the delay we see is proof of God's kindness, love, tolerance, and patience
- 4) He showed that patience and kindness to me for a long time
- 5) Do I now resent His showing that to others?
- 6) Are we growing impatient because God is not making them pay now?
- 7) Are the wicked getting away with anything? No. No one does
- 8) Now is the time for the church to shine Christ's Light so others can see and understand the love and kindness of the Christ
- 9) Because God's kindness brings us to repentance
- 10) It is God's kindness that will change people, cities, and nations
- 11) So, our challenge this year is to make straight a highway in the wilderness that is paved with kindness, which is not the same as tolerance

F) **SLIDE Matthew 16:15-18 (NIV)** ¹⁵ "But what about you?" [Jesus] asked. "Who do you say I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

- 1) We will all be asked this question, and, I think, more than once
- 2) Who do you say Jesus is? Not was, but IS?
- 3) There is only one right answer: He is the Christ, the Son of the Living God
- 4) We are to speak this answer AND live this answer.
- 5) This is the ROCK upon which He will build His church
- 6) This Rock is the only foundation that will stand the shaking that is coming
- 7) The church built on this Rock, on this Truth, will stand will not be overcome.

8) This is the Rock upon which we are to build that highway through the wilderness.

G) Christmas

1) I enjoyed putting up the lights this year

2) Christmas has not changed; I changed

3) Night in Bethlehem

4) We are presenting Christ to our community

5) We are building that highway in the wilderness

6) We are proclaiming that the Christmas story is not just a story but the Truth

7) We do this through our actions

8) We will put Bethlehem on display

9) We will tell the Christmas story

10) Most importantly, we are to be living proof that the story is real