

THE BEMA

[Music]

boy have i had a day what a day of all the days this was
the day literally the day
in all of human history there's never been a day quite like this day but for you to fully
understand i've got to take you all the way back
to the beginning started like a lot of days have recently i got up before my wife and kids
because i had to get to work to get to work on my proposal skipped breakfast that's not
all that
unusual lately either been skipping a lot of stuff been skipping my kids games church
family dinners but i got to get this proposal done because if i land this account there's a
partnership in it
for me and i want to provide for my family so i'm really driving hard on this thing so
early this morning i'm driving into work stop and go traffic got so much to do
i get to my office building park my car the sun isn't even fully up yet i go
through the front doors of my office complex and they're in the front lobby is uh joe the
security guard joe um
i don't even know joe's last name maybe it's security guard good morning mr
matthewson that's my
name by the way daniel scott matthewson good morning mr matthewson hi joe hi what
are you doing today sir i'm doing
fine you joe has the lord being good to you i know he's been good to me you know he's
been good to me joe
joe quotes his bible verse to me right you know the good book says that the lord is my
strength and my shield
my heart trusts in him and he helps me my heart leaps for joy with a song i will praise
his name holy
holy holy is the little too sunny early in the morning
for me you know candidly the guy drives me absolutely crazy
so i get up to the 38th floor my office is on the 38th floor and
when i get to my office i see the cleaning lady maria is still here and i've told her a
thousand
times when i get in in the morning i want my office clean and i want her gone because i
gotta work
i've got so much to do especially today because my proposal is due at two and i've gotta
finish it
but i can't like verbally tell her no i don't want you here because well i'm
i'm a christian so i'm supposed to be nice so i'm going to do it non-verbally i

don't know if you've ever tried this or not but i just walk in ignore her completely sit down at my desk and get to work
communicating with every fiber of my being i don't want anything to do with you don't talk to me don't look at me i'm just working away
she's looking at the pictures on my desk your children they are so beautiful yeah thanks thanks and your wife what is her name again she's fine
so you know how she gets the hint and she starts to leave but when she gets to the door she pauses
and says mr matthewson you are a good man and i pray for you and i pray for your children all the time
i just wanted you to know that um
okay so now i'm feeling guilty right because i don't have time for her but she's praying for my kids but i don't have
time to feel guilty because i have to have this proposal done i'm presenting it at two so the rest of the morning
is just a complete blur i've got people coming and going from my office all day long i had a bunch of people working on the
project they would bring me their portion i'd put it in there some would bring it it wasn't quite right i'd send them back to finish it
do it correctly they'd come back a little later i'd put it back in and by noon i had it all finished it was
beautiful i had two hours i'd skip breakfast so i was starving i'm thinking i'm gonna go out and get something to eat
head downstairs through the front lobby wave to joe the security guard out into the parking lot and i'm about
to open my car door and that's when it happened
poof jesus came back just like that
jesus came back now when i was a little boy in my sunday school classes my teachers at odd told me
one day jesus is coming back but one day sounds kind of perpetually future you know what i mean this wasn't future this was incredibly present jesus came back
jesus came back on oh you know the date's not important what is important is that he showed
up the details of the second coming of jesus well we don't have time to get into all those and it's a whole story in and of itself but what i can tell you about is what
happened to me next i had this
rush of warmth go through my body i started to feel myself lifting into the air the earth started to fall away below me
[Music]
i looked around me and there were people [Music] millions of people perhaps billions of

them we found ourselves in a room it was a
unique room a room unlike any i'd ever been in before this room actually grew with the
crowd
as the crowd got bigger the room got bigger always enough room for everybody
millions and billions of people milling around way down there i could see what looked
like a great white throne and
lots of activity around it and they started dividing the people
here into two groups some went to the right some went to the left
the direction you went was determined by this big book they were reading out of it said
life on the outside and it was just full of names and as they read a name that person
was ushered
to one side if your name was not found in the book you were ushered to the other side
i waited my name was red
and i was ushered into glory
the people on the other side of the room oh they were all crying and some
silently weeping others sobbing uncontrollably they were begging they were
deal-making
it was awful
but by god's grace i along with millions of other saints
were ushered into heaven how do i describe heaven to you people
much more eloquent than me through varying degrees of success over the centuries
have tried to describe
what heaven might be like a couple of them were actually even taken there in the power
of the spirit to see it and even what they wrote in
the bible is hard to fully understand so i'm not even going to try but what i can tell you
is i saw family reunions unlike anything i'd ever seen before because it wasn't just like
the family
reunion at the lake there were people in the family reunions that had died decades
earlier
centuries earlier huge family gatherings on the scale of millions and millions and millions
it was
remarkable and a little emotionally exhausting to be honest after a while i just felt the
need to go
and spend a little alone time i needed to find somewhere where i could just be alone
you know i uh didn't feel like i was alone i looked around i didn't see anyone but
i could tell somebody was there so finally i just said it is somebody there hello
who's there i'm uriel uriel who or what are you
i'm one of the heavenly beings an angel really it's nice to meet you you're
healed never met an angel before well i've known you for a long time daniel how's that
since the day you were

conceived i was commissioned to care for you since that moment oh wait so you're my guardian angel well we don't use that terminology up here but if you want to call me that that's fine and i went to give him a big hug and well that wasn't going to happen i'm not quite sure how to describe him he was like a hollow person made of light you could see him but you couldn't touch him so glad you're here i've got so many questions and so he taught me the ropes of heaven he said daniel communication is different here daniel we don't need to use verbal communication up here we can just think things and hear each other really can i try that please okay okay uh did you hear the one that's good isn't it it worked it was really really kind of cool and he told me that time is different too time is elastic in heaven for instance something that might take five years on earth could be done in minutes and something that might take months could be done in seconds everything is so different here daniel your eyes in heaven have zoom lenses something could be 30 miles away and you can see it like it was right in front of your face oh that was going to come in really handy in a few moments and you'll see why he also told me that transportation is different here as well he told me that he could pick me up and i could actually fly i said let's take a test spin and oh this is incredible uh daniel daniel yeah we need to talk about the bama yeah the what the bema the judgment seat of christ oh i already went through that there was a big room it was like a growing room and there was a white throne and yeah yes that was the great white throne judgment but soon there will be a completely different kind of judgment for everyone in the church in fact judgment probably isn't the best word to describe it is well that conjures up in the minds of those new to heaven the possibility of rejection or punishment for their sins this is more of a celebration well the image was taken from a seat in the ancient world of earth it was usually located in the center of town and it had a bank of steps leading up to it different activities took place there

magistrates ruled on cases awards and prizes were handed out great accomplishments were celebrated

well there is a bama seat here in heaven and soon jesus will sit upon it and every child of god will mount those steps and have a personal conversation with jesus uriel this is terrifying to me you need to tell me exactly what's going to happen there daniel you have nothing to fear this isn't a punitive judgment you're not a defendant that's on trial because of your sin your sin has been covered by the blood

of christ this is a reward judgment it's like at the end of the olympic games when you get to stand on the platform and receive your reward that's what this judgment is about

christ is going to commend you for what he did of eternal significance through you it's really stunning actually he is going to reward you for his work through you i was just starting to try and get my brain around this whole bema thing when all of a sudden pure and powerful a trumpet sounded through the heavens [Music]

what was that uriel it's time it's time for the celebration christ is calling everyone to the bama

let's go and uriel picked me up and we started to fly and i looked to my right and i looked to my left and there were thousands millions of other believers being flown in the same direction i looked down millions of christians running towards this little circle off

in the distance as we continued to get closer i realized that was a terrible description it was

neither little nor just a circle it was big huge miles and miles across the size of a city the size of a metropolitan area and it wasn't just a circle it was it was more like a stadium a magnificent stadium

muriel set me down outside the gate i can't go in any further what do you mean you're my angel you go

everywhere i go no this is a special moment just for the bride of christ but we angels will be watching up ahead we'll be celebrating with you but go in and enjoy your brothers and sisters in

christ oh there was a strange looking guy standing outside the gate he had a sign over his head that said

questions about the bama ask me well i was in very unfamiliar territory

here and i needed all the help i could get and there was no one else in line so i said hey i have a question ask away well first of all i'm daniel your name is saul to some paul to others

so paul okay so the next thing you're going to tell me that you're from tarsus saul of tarsus

yes the apostle paul no way i always dreamed that i would get to sit down with the apostle paul and ask him questions when i got to heaven but i always assumed that there'd be like a 10 hour waiting line and there's no one here i i get to ask paul a question right and then i couldn't think of one oh i got one i got one the thorn in your flesh what was that next question come on paul everyone wants to know the answer to that question i know but do you have any questions about the bama

um well you know it's a relatively new concept for me you know what i i do have one i'm not sure exactly how to ask it but i i've okay i've read most of your letters um romans was really long um sorry but i i read enough to kind of get the feel for what you were trying to get across and it was this whole idea of grace right that

god correct me if i'm wrong but god is for us because he loves us right and so just because of his kindness he gives us things we don't deserve that's right and there's nothing we can do to earn them

it's nothing we do to repay them he just gives it to us and salvation's the best example but

then there's a whole bunch of other stuff too right so it's all about what he does not about what i do right right okay so that's grace but then this bama thing what i understand of it is it's about what i do so that sounds about works and performance and i don't see how the two go together can you explain that's a good question when you think about what jesus is about to do

you realize it is yet another example of his grace now remember i wrote in my letters that

christ died to redeem and that anyone who trusts in him for salvation is rescued from sin forgiven and recreated as a new person right all by grace okay now i told you also that jesus then by his spirit indwells the believer and lives his life in and through them all right that he goes out ahead of us and prepares good works for us to do that our role as believers then is to trust him surrender to him allow him to do his work in and through us

all right remember what jesus said to his disciples shortly before he was crucified he said i am the vine you are the branches if a man remains in me and i in him he will bear much fruit apart from me you can do nothing nothing you see any fruit at the end of a branch finds its life in the vine and a branch separated from that vine meaning not surrendered to jesus can do nothing of eternal significance so think of it this way as jesus transformed you and

expressed himself through you fruit was born he did it right and now he is going to reward you for what he did i don't know that sounds oddly like grace to me it's just remarkable isn't it how many creative ways god comes up with to show grace to us paul that was really helpful thank you you're welcome i'm going to head in i think we're about to start do you want to sit with me no thanks i'll be in a bit okay but go ahead the line's for me thank you that was really really helpful i appreciate that

[Music]

wow this place was bigger on the inside than it was on the outside billions of seats all of them quickly filling in with my brothers and sisters way off in the distance in the middle there was a platform and on that platform was a throne my new telephoto eyes i could zoom in and see it as though it was just 20 feet in front of me and then started kind of scanning the crowd and i would zoom in and i would look at someone's face it was like we were at starbucks sitting across the table we were that close to each other and i was amazed at the immensity and the brilliance and the diversity of the church of jesus christ the seats were quickly filling in and i thought i'd better find somewhere to sit i found a row excuse me with an empty seat i'm so sorry excuse me excuse me it's kind of like coming in late to church you know excuse me i'm so sorry i found my seat there was this anticipation growing inside me i looked around and all the seats were filled every single one there were no extras whoever was supposed to be here was here there was a joy and a love and a worship that was starting to bubble up inside me i didn't know how long i was going to be able to contain it i shook the hand of the man next to me and he said hello my name is joseph young so when and where are you from what a funny question when and where are you from well that's a very appropriate question if you think about it this is a gathering of the entire church of jesus christ over thousands of years plus old testament saints as well all in one place at one time so you can't just say where are you from you have to know what period of history people are from as well so i told them daniel from the united states at the time that jesus came back and then i said so when and where are you from i am from the 18th century from china i told him i didn't realize there were many christians in china at that time and he told me there were some very brave missionaries who came across the oceans and then all the way inland to his little village and there they shared the good news of jesus and as soon as he heard the gospel he knew it was true and he gave his life to christ to receive forgiveness of sin and

new life in the spirit and jesus transformed his life transformed his family and everyone around him he told everyone he met about christ one day the guy he told happened to be a member

of the secret police and he was arrested and sentenced to death

you mean you died for your faith yes it is true i was killed with many other people who share the same faith and i hung my head and he asked me what

was wrong and i told him i never suffered like that i he said

daniel don't worry it's for god to choose who suffers and who does not for those he chooses he gives the grace

for those he chooses not well praise be to god what i was feeling wasn't shame it was

more like disappointment it was like i was missing out on something it's like in christ

he got to suffer for christ and so his intimacy with christ went deeper than i experienced and i

thought what a difference a day makes i never looked at suffering like this when i was

on earth while we were still talking a huge angel walked

to the front of the platform with a big staff in his hand and he pounded the staff on the platform

[Music] he got our attention and he said welcome

to the bama and please welcome the son of man

the son of god the king of kings the lord of lords jesus messiah

the christ the alpha and the omega behold the lamb of god who takes away

your sin and jesus walked in

oh i've never beheld such glory you have to understand with my new eyes

i could see him as though he was standing right in front of me

many of us fell on our faces others just stood frozen in awe

jesus walked to the front of the platform and he said oh my beloved ones

my precious ones how long i've awaited this day oh what a celebration we're going to

have but first my father

how do i describe what happened next i understand now why john struggles so

much in the book of revelation to describe what he saw in heaven and his vision

because trying to describe heavenly

things with human language it's impossible but i'm trying to tell you the story so i have to give it a try

so here goes something kind of resembling a cube

kind of came over the back of the stadium it was huge it was opaque but inside there were colors i'd never seen

before colors outside the human spectrum they were beautiful and inside the colors

there were moving parts and

inside those moving parts there were other moving parts and it just confused your

senses even to look at it but you couldn't take your eyes

off it on each of the corners there were magnificent winged creatures i assume they were the cherubim and the seraphim that the bible describes the angels that worship
god 24 7 for all of eternity they were ushering in the presence of god i don't know about you but i always imagined finally one day seeing god the father and he would look a little bit more like a grandfather you know with long white hair long white beard long white robe everything long everything white kind of sitting on a rocking chair and i'd get to kind of crawl up in his lap and snuggle but then i remembered a sermon i'd heard years earlier on earth where the pastor told us that god the father is an omnipresent spirit that means he's in spirit form and he's everywhere he doesn't have a physical body so what we were seeing here was by god's grace a partial manifestation of the presence of god the father apparently he wanted us to see that he was there [Music]
the angels on all the corners started chanting holy holy holy is the lord god almighty holy holy holy is the lord god almighty and we joined in holy holy holy is the lord god almighty
and then music started emanating from god himself beautiful music coming straight from who he is and the angels started to sing with the music and as soon as we started to figure out the song we did too and we were all drawn to our feet to worship the king of kings and the lord of lords
[Music]
is [Music]
king of all the nations
[Music] jesus [Music]
is
[Music]
[Music] jesus
[Music]
[Applause] [Music]
[Applause] [Music]
this
[Music] [Applause] and
blessing and glory
[Music] [Applause]
me [Music]
do [Music]

[Music] oh
salvation [Music]
is
[Music]
jesus
[Music]
oh [Music]
our shall rise
[Music]
blessed [Music]
me
[Music] [Applause] [Music]
around [Music]
cheer up
[Music]
down
[Music] [Applause]
[Music]
oh [Applause]
[Music] [Applause] is
[Applause]
oh [Applause] three plus
[Applause] [Music]
[Applause] [Music]
yes [Music]
so
[Music]

i have no idea how long we worshipped for could have been centuries for all i know
time is elastic in heaven remember and time we have [Music]
we made our ways back to our seats i was reflecting on the times that i would worship
back on
earth and i realized i never really worshipped back then there's always something that
bugged me
something that got in the way i never just let myself go and worship if i'd known i was
practicing for this day and every day
that comes after this i would have worshipped jesus differently i if i could go back
i would worship jesus differently after experiencing this [Music]
speaking of jesus he walked to the front of the platform
and he said beloved it is time for the judgments

to begin but before we start i want you to know exactly what's going to happen next every single person in this great gathering will come before me one by one alone in front of everyone else when you come here to meet me face to face we'll have a private conversation just between you and me while that's going on everyone else will receive a brief story of who you are because i want you to get to know each other because well you're going to be spending a lot of time together so what will we talk about in our conversation you're wondering well a number of things first of all we'll talk about your priorities during your life on earth i don't know if you remember but in my love letter to you i that you called it the bible in my love letter to you i told you that your time on earth would be very short it was wasn't it really short and while you were there i told you that i wanted your heart and your mind set on things here not there i wanted you focused on things of eternal significance not temporal trivialities and so one of the things we'll talk about is all those moments you were focused on me and my kingdom and we'll celebrate all those today then we're going to talk about your stewardship you remember the day that i saved you the day i rescued you i poured so many blessings into your life and i taught you that the reason i was giving you those blessings was so that you could share them with others we called this stewarding them so many different opportunities you were given so many different gifts and resources and time we're gonna have a conversation about how you invested those things do you remember that sermon i preached on the side of the mountainside that one day some of you were there oh yeah some of you were there and my disciple matthew was there too and he wrote down the sermon and recorded it in his story about my life and so the rest of you in the church had the opportunity to read that in the book of matthew in my love letter one of the points in that sermon here's what i said to you remember i told you this do not store up for yourself treasure on earth where moth and rust destroy and thieves break in and steal instead store up for yourself treasure here in heaven where moth and rust cannot destroy and thieves cannot break in and steal because here's why i told you this because where your treasure is

there your heart will be too you see i know this about you wherever your treasure is your heart follows and so i told you give
give generously because that's storing up treasure here and then i knew your heart would be here too your heart would
be heaven bound many of you did this you sent up great treasures and you'll receive all those back today you can worship me with them you can enjoy them for the rest of eternity they're yours
don't worry i won't be comparing you one to the other because every single one of you had a completely unique set of gifts and
resources and time and opportunities so we'll just have a conversation about what in the power of the spirit
you did with what i entrusted to you
this is the day that i reward you for what i did
through you receive my grace and be glad i'm going to be handing out some crowns today too they'll be the crown of righteousness this will be given to all of you who longed for this day and patterned your life around it coming some of you will receive the crown of
life this is for those of you who are persecuted for my name's sake remember in that sermon on the
mountainside i told you for many of you following me will bring persecution but to have courage because one day you would be rewarded for the persecution you receive my friends this is that day some will
get the crown of glory this crown is given to those of you who shepherded my people in the church and i'll be handing out also the crown of faith
for everyone who persevered to this day and i'll obviously be handing out lots of those won't i oh and by the way you'll also receive
your heavenly body today yes you'll be glorified
this is the very last step of the whole process of salvation that i started in your life many years ago from some of
you no more aches no more pains
no more creaking bones no more wheezing when you're heading up the stairs some of you will have a hard time getting up these stairs not one of you will have a hard time going back down
you will be magnificent you will be brilliant just wait you won't believe it
it's time it's time to begin i will call you down name by name
prepare your heart for the bama
jesus went back to his throne and sat down
you could hear the proverbial pin drop i couldn't believe how quiet it was i'm not sure anyone was breathing all of us were completely convinced that our name would be the first one

called the angel slowly walked up to the front
of the platform and took his staff and slammed it into the ground three times
timor-less germanicus the angel called timulus down and his
angel picked him up and flew him all the way down to the platform to the foot of the
steps
timlas worked his way up the steps until he was face to face with his
savior [Music] they started to have a conversation i have no idea what they were talking
about we couldn't hear anything but the most amazing thing happened while they were
talking this
biographical sketch kind of came over my mind and i could see who this guy was
he was born in leon france in the third century part of the roman empire at the time a
time of great persecution for the
church he was a poor man a smith by trade but there were lots of poorer people
around him and he gave of his meagre means very generously to them
he was persecuted for his faith he was put on a rack and bent backwards he was
scraped this means part
of his skin was removed and then and he was thrown to the wild beasts and
as they were devouring him he raised his hands to the heavens and he said
jesus i'm yours jesus came off his throne and put his
hands on his shoulders and timothy fell to the ground and jesus lifted him back up
said oh timothy i love you so much and he gave him the crown of life for the persecution
that he'd experienced and he said be glorified and in that instant he was transformed
into this magnificent
thing and he flew back to his seat under his own power and he was like the north star in
a
blackened sky and all of us were looking around thinking that's gonna happen to me
and another went and another went and another and another thousands millions and
every single one of them i got their story
just brief summary story in my mind but i felt like i'd known them my whole life
it was remarkable and then
palm pania pompano was from the first century rome
[Music] she was one of the first if not the first of the senatorial class to put her
trust in christ [Music] she was a christian even before paul arrived in rome wow
her friends made fun of her her husband did too but through her steadfast love and her
simple witness he eventually came to christ and they planted a church in their home
and this church survived for three centuries and thrived there in rome wow
and jesus gave her the crown of glory for shepherding his people and he said be
glorified and she was and she was
transformed and she went back to her seat and the angel came again
william carey [Music]

if ever there was an unlikely hero in christendom it was william carey
an impoverished shoemaker in england in the 1700s he barely had two pennies to rub
together but what he had
the passion for the lost especially those around the world that have never heard of jesus
and the rescue that he provides he figured out a way to get to malta and
he started the mission work there and then he booked passage all the way to india and
he was the very first one to take
the gospel the good news to the people of india he was known on earth as the father of
modern day missions because his example lit a spark under a
slumbering church and around the world there was a great mission movement as a
result and jesus did something amazing with him
he came and he put his hands on his shoulders and he said if anyone is here at the
bama because of my work through him
either directly in india or through the great mission movement please stand now and
billions of people stood all around it and they all started clapping and cheering and they
were saying
thank you william thank you and as you can imagine he was overwhelmed
and jesus held him and whispered something into his ear and he was glorified and he
was
transformed he went back to his seat and the angel pounded again
angela moser as soon as angela's name was spoken there was a fluttering of angel
wings above the stadium there's electricity in the air the angels were all so excited
and so i thought to uriel uriel why is everyone so excited is there something special
about angela yes she is something special
why what did she build what did she give why did she start what did she lead
none of those things none of the things that in earthly categories you think are
successful
she was a very different kind of person
angela's story was that she remained single by choice to care for her aging mother and
her special needs sister
she was a school teacher 20th century germany and she volunteered behind the
scenes at her local church but the thing that made angela famous in heaven was her
prayer
life in fact uriel told me the ten thousand demons quake at the
mere mention of her name because of the power of her prayer she prayed for everyone
all the time for the loss and for the ill for those who are hurting
jesus came and put his hands on his shoulder and said oh angela i'm so pleased with
you well done my good
and faithful servant be glorified and she was transformed
in an instant i went back to her seat

joseph ray robinson

joseph was born in the deep south when racism was still a scourge in our nation because of his race he wasn't allowed to be educated so his mother taught him to read at home

using the bible as her textbook she also taught him to memorize scripture by the time that jesus came

back he had memorized almost two-thirds of the whole new testament amazing he had eight children so he worked diligently to provide for them he shined shoes

he drove limousines he worked as a security guard in office buildings

oh it's joe it's joe the security guard from my office building

i learned in his story that he didn't get bitter about not being able to go to school he just decided because scripture made

him feel so full of joy that he would try and spread that joy by just sharing scripture with everyone

he met he did this for everyone and i found out here at the bama that there were seven people

from my office building that were believers today because of the quiet witness of this man

talk about misreading someone what a jerk i'd been jesus raised him up

off his knees said well done my good and faithful servant be glorified and he was transformed in an instant and

flew back to his seat

yeah my cleaning lady maria was deserted by her husband

shortly after her fourth child was born so she worked two sometimes three jobs

just to provide a stable home for her kids a place where she could raise them to know and love jesus and all

four of them did [Music] as i was learning her story something

remarkable happened the lord allowed me to see the impact of maria's prayers on my family's life i saw what changed in my kids worlds because she prayed for them it was

remarkable and as i watched i realized that she had prayed for my children

more than i had how humbling is that and i thought oh my goodness a woman i

wouldn't even look in the eye this morning tonight i want to spend a thousand years with oh

the difference the day makes and jesus said well done my good and faithful servant be glorified and she was transformed went back to her seat and another came

and another and another and thousands and millions more and every one of them i learned and i loved

them and as i looked around the stadium i found myself thinking boy there's more lit up people than unlit up people my turn has got to be coming soon

daniel scott matheson

oh boy my angel uriel picked me up and flew me down to the front of the platform
yes i was very aware that the entire history of the christian church was looking at the back of my head [Music] but they all very quickly faded away when i looked jesus
who stood in front of me
he said come closer daniel
we were face to face
we had our conversation it was a conversation i'd seen millions of times before but this was my
conversation and he said to me daniel even though this is called the judgment seat of christ i want to make sure you
really understand that you will not be judged for your sins today
i was judged for your sins many years ago i carried your sins to the cross and i received god's wrath for you instead of you your sin is dealt with covered by my blood i will not mention your sin today
that's great thank you jesus here's what we are going to talk about
we're going to talk about your life in me your priorities and your stewardship how you invested in the
power of the spirit for my kingdom purposes everything that i entrusted to you the time i gave you daniel i gave you 48
years 36 years of which where after you became a believer in me
i gave you spiritual gifts the gift of teaching and encouragement the opportunities i gave you the
abundant resources i poured into your life okay lord you might be wondering about the timing of this daniel why do we do this here at the end of time well it's impossible to know the full
impact of someone's investment until that investment is fully played out for example you might invest in a
person and then they might pour into another person that person might pour into another person
you will be celebrated for all three of those people rewards will be given for all three of those people and as far as it goes out as he told me this i couldn't help but think of the judgment of d.l moody he lived a couple hundred years before me on earth and went a couple million people before me
in the judgments and he was a guy that had the gift of evangelism and when surrendered to the
spirit scores of people came to christ and all of them stood up and cheered for him at the bama but i also learned that he started a little school it became known as moody bible institute and their leaders in the

church were trained and they went out and god used them to impact people and then god used those people to impact people and deal moody received rewards for people all the way down the line spanning out centuries and i thought isn't that like a gracious god to reward us like that he then went on to share with me the process of how this was going to work and at this point he referred to a passage in the bible that paul wrote to the church in corinth and that passage literally described what i was about to experience it was a word picture and jesus used the same word picture he said daniel you trusted me for salvation when you were 12 years old so you laid me as the foundation of your life then i then wanted you to build your life on me and i told you in the bible you can build your life with worthless materials like wood and hay and stubble those things represent things done in our own strength things done in the flesh sinful things things done with ill evil motives all that kind of junk or you can build your life with precious stones silver and gold that represents life in the spirit as i express my life through you doing eternally significant things i want you to imagine daniel that i'm going to take a huge flame thrower and i'm going to put it over your life and all the wood the hay and the stubble will just be burned up incinerated before your eyes gone forever but the precious stones the gold the silver in the fire will be purified and what you'll have left are treasures for all of eternity okay sounds great well daniel are you ready to start no um not yet can i have a few more moments well daniel there's millions more people waiting and we've got to keep this thing moving you know okay i get that i guess i'm as ready as i'm ever going to be let's start have you ever heard the expression my life flashed before my eyes well my life flashed before my eyes when everyone else was up here it seemed like they're their conversation with jesus lasted like a minute maybe a minute and a half at the most mine lasted 48 years i guess time really is elastic in heaven we lived my entire life over again except this time we saw it from jesus perspective instead of mine i saw the little house that my parents brought me home from the hospital too [Music] i watched the first 12 years of my life burned up just incinerated before my eyes because i wasn't a believer yet so i couldn't do anything of eternal significance i was a pretty normal kid

loved to play hang with my friends love sports love music too
but mostly what i noticed during these years was selfishness sin when i saw my sin i
glanced at jesus
and i noticed that the expression on his face hadn't changed still full of love and grace
and i realized he couldn't see my sin
it was being burned up before my eyes it was covered by his blood he couldn't see it it
was so great
then he let me see the moment the moment i said yes to him
as a young boy i was coming to grips with my sin and how it had separated me from
god and reading the bible one day in
john's gospel and all of a sudden it hit me jesus didn't just die for everyone he
died for me he wanted to wash my sin away i wanted to live inside me
[Music] i didn't know all the fancy words but i got down to my knees on the side of my
bed and i just said jesus rescue me save me wash my sin away
come and live inside me and here at the bama i could see the supernatural
transformation that took place i could see myself passing from death to life i could see
myself moving from
dirty to pure i could see that i was a new creation i could see my name written in the
lamb's
book of life it was my defining moment and when i looked at
jesus his eyes were full of tears tears rolling down his cheeks and he said oh daniel
i love you so much thank you for saying yes to me
i said thank you for no jesus thank you for dying for me thank you for rising again thank
you for
transforming me and living inside me and thank you for coming back for me jesus thank
you and he thanked me and i
thanked him and we thanked each other back and forth and it was such a precious
moment
and then he said well daniel now we can get down to work now you've been redeemed
my spirit
dwells within you so that i can express my life through you and together we can do
things of eternal
significance so let's see how you did and then we kind of watched the next 36
years of my life we don't have 36 years to go through it
together so i need to summarize this for you somehow i think what i'm going to do is
i'm just going to share with you some observations these are things i noticed but then
jesus pointed them out to me too at the
bama there were things i think i knew when i was living on earth but they certainly didn't
impact the way i lived at all

and these are the things that well if i could go back and do it again these are the things i do different okay

so the first one was this that what jesus thinks about me is really all that matters

what jesus thinks about me is really all that matters i know it's a cliché but

i really was living for an audience of one jesus opinion of me should have been more important than everyone else's opinion of me combined but that's not the way i lived

from when i was a kid i always had this need to be accepted by everyone else i

wanted to be in the in crowd and so i would do anything i needed to do to get accepted by them

a lot of times that led to sinful behavior sometimes just silliness i had the hair wars with my parents you

know just to be accepted i did the craziest things with my hair you know

it got kind of ridiculous after a while but then i got to college and uh the trend continued i had this

friend his name was jerry we played basketball together we hung out together we were inseparable we were going to room together all four years

and then pledge week came and the coolest frat house on the whole campus came and wanted me to pledge and

they didn't want jerry i looked at jerry he said oh go ahead daniel it's okay i'm like okay and off i went i pledged with them i

never looked back come to think of it jerry just kind of drifted away from me we weren't friends

anymore here from the bama i could see the pain

that caused jerry i was oblivious i thought boy the opinion of those

people in that frat that i didn't even know was more important than this guy that i loved and this

relationship that i lost i thought boy if i could go back and do it all again instead of just doing what

people told me to do i would pause and i would wonder wonder what jesus thinks about this and then i

would ask him jesus what do you think about this i looked at him i said jesus why was i like that

why were other people's opinions so important to me he just looked at me and he said daniel

i am the bread of life unless you feast on me you will seek

to feed your hunger with other people but if you would have just nourished

yourself on me if you would have spent time with me if you would have found your life in me then

daniel what they thought would not have mattered at all

another thing i noticed at the bema is that people really matter to jesus like big time people matter to christ and investing in people i learn is really really important if you think about it it makes sense people by definition are eternal beings they last forever and so when you invest in a person you are investing in something of eternal significance you're making an eternal difference i didn't tend to think of people as someone to make an investment in i kind of looked at people as scenery in my life you know like all the world's a stage this is my play i'm the main character it's my story you play bit parts wife you're here to make me look good kids you're here to make me look very impressive everyone at work you're here to make me successful me me me me me jesus didn't look at people like that he looked at them as precious eternally significant incredibly valuable worthy of loving and serving and sacrificing for so when you invest in a person that's really celebrated here at the bama big time there was this one time oh what a great moment at the bama this is for me it was in high school my senior year actually i was a guy in my church his name was randall he was a businessman in the church but he volunteered in our youth ministry he asked me one day if i would like to be discipled i said sure i had no idea what it meant he just got together with me taught me the bible he helped me discover my spiritual gifts of teaching and encouragement and then encouraged me to use them in the youth group showed me how to have a quiet time this was just the richest time of spiritual growth in my entire life so awesome one of the things he taught us was to look out for kids that weren't necessarily fitting into the youth group one day prompted by the spirit i went over to talk to sandy who obviously wasn't fitting into the youth group i asked her if she'd like to get connected and she said yeah but i just don't know how to do it i said you know it's not that hard and i just introduced her to some of the other kids in the youth group and she was connected in no time and just here watching this it was like so awesome to see god use me that way it was such an encouragement and i looked at jesus and i said lord whatever happened to sandy kind of lost track with her oh daniel she's so excited for your judgment to get over she can't wait to thank you for the profound impact you had in her life my knees buckled me really

yes he went on to tell me that he gave her the gift of evangelism and
so as she went on with life she was sharing christ with people all over the place and at
one point in my judgment
jesus had all the people that sandy had led to christ stand up and they all thanked me
for
being used in her life and jesus gave me all these rewards for all this i'm like wow
this is awesome she married a really cool guy had a great marriage raised a lovely
young daughter
who grew up to be a godly woman and she had an impact on all these different people's
lives jesus rewarded me for all of that stuff
this was the highlight of my day
and i was just basking in this joy of it all i was thinking back to
that wood hay and straw or stubble and how that stuff is just being burned away
so many wasted moments in my life just incinerated but moments like this where i just
said
yes to the prompting of the spirit and then jesus used me to pour into someone oh
unbelievable what god can do when we simply say yes to him
i'd love to tell you i've got tons of those stories i don't i my relationships
unfortunately were mostly like my relationship with peggy
after i joined that frat house i started to kind of get led the wrong
direction i drank a lot messing around with girls
and then peggy came into my life she was so different she was not a partier
didn't sleep around she was pure and innocent i loved that about her but hanging out
with me it didn't take
long at all for her to get corrupted and could see the joy leaving her life we
had a hard time getting along we started to fight fights got really nasty i was just cruel to
her
one day she just broke up with me [Music]
just like bitter enemies she just walked out of my life and i i hadn't even thought of
peggy
again until this very moment standing here with jesus and i just i was looking for a rock
to crawl under
there aren't any rocks at the bama just so you know [Music]
said jesus what happened to peggy
and he said you know daniel she really struggled had a number of failed marriages and
he said it's my fault jesus it's my fault he said no it's not daniel yeah it is it's my fault
daniel it's not your fault peggy like everyone else is responsible for her own
choices you were responsible to her not for her
still what's tragic daniel is you had an opportunity to point a

young woman towards me and for whatever reason you pointed her in the exact opposite direction and that is tragic so what happened to her Jesus I was almost afraid to ask well shortly after her third failed marriage in a pit of despair and despondency someone shared me with her really yeah and she asked me to rescue her did she say yes yes and she's here Daniel and she wants to talk to you oh no no I don't want to talk to her Daniel Daniel relax she's already gone through her judgment all that stuff has been burned away she can't even remember it there is grace abounding in the heavenlies it's going to be a great reunion I promise okay and I found myself thinking boy if I could do it again if I could go back and do it again I would invest in people and I would make sure I pointed them to Christ because that's really celebrated here at the Bama it's another thing that I noticed at the Bama an observation that I made that was that everything looks different from here everything looks different at the Bama perspective is everything you've heard the expression you couldn't see the forest for the trees standing here from the Baymar I realized I walked around my entire life with a huge oak tree one inch in front of my nose couldn't see the forest for the trees and the oak tree was just my life me me me my stuff up here at the Bama completely different perspective I'll share with you one example that Jesus and I watched together there was this guy in our town his name was Derek Hogan he was the top guy in our industry one day he called me and said hey Daniel come over I want to have a conversation with you so I drove over quickly to his office now I don't care what it takes just get it done goodbye now Daniel I ask you here to offer you a job you're a great salesman and you'd be a valuable asset to this company well I wasn't really expecting to hear that I have a job with another company and Daniel with the percentages that we pay in commission you will double your income in no time at all you'll have an expense account company car and trust me when I say you will move up faster here than you will where you are right now that's very attractive offer I probably need to learn more about the position I need to talk to my wife I just need a little time to think don't wait too long this hopper won't stay on the table forever

excuse me i need to get this janice what no i'm in a meeting yes
i was so excited this is the opportunity of a lifetime right but i needed to go and talk to
john
mitchell uh he was not only my boss he's a long time family friend he was
the guy who gave me my first shot right out of college when no one else would and i
went to his company and i actually
did really well for him i brought a bunch of accounts that he didn't have and
was one of his top salesmen but i owed it to him to have a conversation so i went and
chatted with him
come in daniel buddy how are you come in have a seat i'm well oh thank you thanks for
grabbing a couple minutes with me i uh don't really know how to say this other than just
coming out and saying it
so here it goes um decided to go work with derek hogan
derek really well that is big news
you know he kind of gave me an offer and i can't refuse
well this was this was so sudden is there anything i can do i i don't think so i don't
imagine how
you could compete with what he's offering me so no
okay well if it's that good i guess i won't try to talk you out of it but i want you to know
how much you're
gonna be missed here oh thank you i mean thank you for saying
that thank you for all you've poured into me over the years you've been so generous
with your time and i just
really appreciate that have you thought this through daniel you know i i really i really
have
and it's the right thing to do and you know if you're concerned about me kind of coming
back and stealing
customers the relationships i've formed over the years please hear me i would never do
that to you john you have my word i promise
i know you wouldn't okay if this is what you really want do
this thank you
started with derek hogan the next day and his demeanor instantly changed he had a
really hard edge to him he
raised the quota up a lot higher than he told me it was going to be he demanded i work
ridiculous hours
but you know i was actually pretty good and i did everything he asked me to do i not
only reached the quota i exceeded it i became his top salesman in no time flat
in fact i was just about right before jesus came back i was just about to land the biggest
account in the
company's history which seems like completely irrelevant right now

i was doing so well financially i would i'd gone up two house sizes in three
years you should have seen the car i was driving
my membership to the country club bought a boat when the team was in town my feet
were on the court baby
hanging out with all the coolest people in town which i've already told you was really
important to me
i was living large i was so excited i wasn't seeing much of my family but i figured it was
just temporary
until i got this thing nailed down then we'd be able to go all over the world and have
great vacations i'd
take care of that later big tree right in front of my face
but here from the bama i could see the whole forest i could see what was going on all
around me i could see derek hogan
for who he really was he's a slimy businessman all he cared about was the bottom line
and he would
trample over people if he needed to to get there one day he said go and get that
account
i said i can't get that account why not because it belongs to john mitchell and i told him
that i wouldn't steal his
customers you wrote a non-compete contract with him i didn't sign anything i just gave
him my word
oh well if that's the case go get it no i'm not gonna get it yeah you are gonna get it no
yes no yes go get it or
clean out your corner office
so i got it i pulled it away from him
it wasn't hard i still had all the relationships but what i didn't realize was
how breaking my word broke my relationship with him we never even talked again after
that
and that was the death blow to his company i didn't even know it had failed
i just found myself thinking you know if i could do it again if i could go back and do it
again
[Music] i would ask jesus what he thinks i would invest in people and point them to jesus
and i would ask myself every day what would this look like at the bama
what would the perspective be on this on that day i would ask jesus to let me
live for the day instead of whatever day that happened to me
[Music] the rest of my life kind of sped by i'm afraid
burned up incinerated before my eyes i was consumed by consumption making money
spending
money fine clothes good food wonderful trips vacations houses

i could go a whole month without having an intimate conversation with my wife i could skip 12 games in a row of my kids but i was making it i was living large and it was just burned up before my very eyes and then
jesus came back and that was it
jesus said daniel your judgment is complete step forward and i will summarize it and then i'll glorify you okay
and he said daniel i gave you financial resources that were far beyond most people's wildest imaginations i don't know if you knew this or not but you were in the top one percent of the wealthiest people that ever lived on the planet earth i had no idea it's unfortunate that you weren't more content with what i blessed you with compared to what i gave you you gave very little to my kingdom purposes gave very little to me
i gave you godly parents and youth workers and pastors and teachers that poured into you pointed you to truth and grace in me and you ignored them mostly because you were so focused on getting ahead
there were times daniel when you let me live and love and lead through you and i think you learned today that those times were the most joyful times of your life i would have liked for you to enjoy more of those daniel i had so many more of those for you
[Music] daniel my summary of your life in me is that you left your first love
i fell to my knees i thought i'd never be able to rise up again
he was right i had left my first love i'd asked him to save me and then i'd ignored him i'd resisted the prompting of the spirit and the work of the spirit in my life i'd driven around in my oh so impressive life with him in the back seat telling him to be quiet whenever he tried to speak into me i couldn't even look in his eyes i had left my first love [Music]
but i felt him lifting my hands up pulling me to my feet he forced me to look in his eyes and they had not changed still full of love and grace and compassion his smile still plastered on his face he said oh daniel yes you left your first love but your first love never left you
[Music] thank you jesus daniel remember there is no condemnation for those who are in me and there wasn't there was no condemnation in his eyes

just love and pure acceptance daniel the old has gone
behold i make all things new and tears started flowing down my cheeks
and they weren't tears of condemnation but they were tears of regret
he had so much for me that i missed
i felt the pressure on my head [Music]
a crown he'd given me a crown
it was the crown of faith the crown given to anyone who persevered to the end
and i thought another example of grace the only reason i persevered to the end jesus
was because you
carried me here and he wiped away the tears
and i never cried again and then i felt a lightning bolt go
through me and i was glorified
in that moment of time all the wood and hay and straw all that stuff that had been
burned up
was completely obliterated from my memory i could never think of it again all that was
left was
jesus and me and him and what he had blessed me with and he stood behind me and
he put his
hands on my shoulders and he said this is daniel scott matthewson in whom i am
well pleased
and the whole place went nuts everyone started cheering
and praising the lord and congratulating me and i flew back to my seat in my own
power this time and i looked down and i saw my wife and
i saw my kids and my kids were looking up at me and they were doing this and they
were saying that's my dad
that's my dad and i flew back to my seat
and everyone around me was patting me on the back and congratulating me and i
thought oh this is heaven
this is what it's all about oh jesus
i saw someone way down by the platform he had four crowns on his arms like this he
had all four of them
he started running up to the platform and he threw them down at the feet of jesus and
then another went and another and another
thousands more and i thought of my crown it was the most precious thing i'd ever had
by far
and all i wanted to do was throw it at the feet of jesus because i knew it was the ultimate
act of worship
so i quickly flew down cast my crown and worshiped him
worshiped him with my brothers and sisters [Music] as we sang praises to the king of
kings

and the lord of lords

[Music]

amazing grace

[Music] like me

i lost

[Music]

[Music]

[Music]

me [Music]

[Music]

towards grace

[Music]

is

[Music]

me

me

is [Music]

worth is

[Music]

new see to him

[Music]

is sing a new song

to him heavens must be seen

is

you are my everything and i will adore you

[Applause]

oh [Music]

flashes [Music]

to you the only ones

[Applause] oh

[Applause] [Music]

[Applause] and i will adore you

[Applause] [Music]

is [Music]

jesus your name is

[Applause]

[Music] with all creations i see

praise

[Music]

is [Music]

you are my everything and [Applause]
is [Music]
you are my everything and i will adore you
ah we worshiped for ever
okay maybe not quite that long but it seemed like forever and we found our way back to
our seats
and jesus rose from his and came to the front of the platform
and he said oh my bride i love you so
the marriage feast of the lamb is almost finished being prepared oh
are we going to enjoy this celebration together i will give you a trumpet blast to call you
to the feast
but now i'm sure you've got some catching up to do go and enjoy your reunions and in
that
moment billions billions of glorified souls rose to the sky it was like the most
amazing fireworks display you've ever seen and i flew over the top of the stadium and i
knew
amazingly i knew exactly where i needed to go when i landed i saw my wife
and my children and my parents and her parents and my grandparents and
her grandparents and we had this family reunion it's incredible
and then john mitchell daniel buddy the businessman that i'd broken my word
to there's no anger no grudge just like the
father of the prodigal son welcoming his boy home
sandy daniel i just wanted to thank you for the impact you had on my life
no i want to thank you for being impacted by me you were like the only one i so needed
you today thank you it's so
good to see you
peggy there's no shame
no anger no bitterness just love and grace
started to walk and we were talking and while we were talking i heard a sound in
the heavenlies i i wondered if it was the trumpet blast calling us to the marriage feast of
the
lamb but it didn't sound like a trumpet at all oh no it was a terrible sound oh no
my alarm clock no it was a dream no it couldn't have been a dream i want
to go back and that woke my wife up and she grunted and rolled over and
and i kissed her on the head
and i said you're not going to recognize your husband when you wake up sweetheart
i started to walk down the hall and went into each of my children's rooms
they were sleeping [Music]
and i said daddy's home

i went into my living room and i grabbed my bible i read the whole sermon on the mount of matthew's gospel and i read the parables of christ in luke's gospel and i read 1st corinthians 3 and 2nd corinthians 5 and some of the passages in revelation and i realized my dream it was it was a picture of biblical truth i remembered how many times during my dream i'd said something like you know if i could go back if i could do it all over again if i realized i was back i get to do it all over again

jesus i just want it to be different now [Music]

i got down on my knees it's right there by my couch so i felt like i needed to pray a prayer of commitment telling him that i wanted it to be different and i'm thinking that some of you might be feeling the same way coming to grips with the bama might have led you to a place where you want to live differently now so if that's where you are and only if that's where you are i'm going to ask you to do one of two things either join me on my knees if you can figure that out where you're sitting or if not just stand up right where you are and put your right hand in the air saying me

jesus me i want to live differently if that's who you are go ahead and do that right now and i'm going to pray a simple prayer and i'm going to ask you to pray this prayer out loud after me

once again not worried about what other people think just having a chat with jesus right now right

just pray this from your heart if this is the desire of your heart lord jesus thank you for dying for me thank you for coming back to life [Music] thank you for rescuing me and living inside me jesus i want my life to be different from now on i want to be concerned about what you think not what about everyone else thinks

[Music]

i want to invest in people i want to point them to you jesus [Music] and i want to think how does this look at the baby give me a bama perspective every day lord jesus christ jesus i can't wait to see you face to face

i want to live for that day not this day i can't do to my own strength [Music] lord jesus i surrender myself to you have your way with me i'm yours

[Music] just stay right where you are lord i feel led to pray this prayer too because i'm sure there are people here who have never said yes to you for salvation and i want to give them a chance to do that

they can do this out loud if they want or just in the quietness of their own heart just
praying this prayer after me lord
jesus i believe that you're god lord jesus i believe that you died for
me lord jesus i believe that you rose again from the dead
and i believe that you can wash my sin away and i believe you can live inside me and
change me do it now jesus i pray
write my name in that book and live through me for the rest of my
life [Music] i surrender myself to you my king
[Music] and we pray all these things in the
powerful and precious name of jesus
[Music]
amen
[Music]
is [Music] [Applause] [Music]
above [Music]
jesus [Music]