

20-0712a - Detailed Summary

20-0712a - *Breaking Barriers: Christ's Peace for All Souls*, Mike Mathis

Bible Readers: s1Fname s1Lname and Tom Freed

This detailed summary by Grok, xAI, (Transcription by TurboScribe.ai)

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Breaking Barriers: Christ's Peace for All Souls

Summary of Transcript (0:04 - 27:23)

Scripture Reading:

Tom read from Ephesians 2:14-18, and the preacher, Mike, delivered a sermon addressing themes of peace, unity, and the universal value of all souls in the eyes of God. The sermon wove together scripture, personal reflection, and contemporary social issues, emphasizing Jesus Christ's role in breaking down barriers and the importance of aligning with God's teachings. Below is a detailed summary of the sermon, organized by sections with timestamps for clarity.

Scripture Reading* (0:03 - 1:13), Tom Freed

Ephesians 2:14-18

Tom opened the service by reading Ephesians 2:14-18, which describes Jesus Christ as the embodiment of peace, uniting disparate groups by abolishing the enmity caused by the law of commandments. The passage highlights how Christ reconciled both Jews and Gentiles into one body through the cross, granting access to God through the Spirit. This scripture sets the foundation for the sermon's focus on unity and peace across human divisions.

Summary

Preacher: Mike Mathis

(1:18 - 6:53) Introduction and Context: Social Media and Social Issues

Mike began by welcoming the congregation, both in-person and those joining by phone, expressing his honor in presenting the sermon. He introduced a Facebook post that caught his attention amid the ongoing pandemic and social unrest following uprisings and riots since March 2020. The post featured two images: the top showing Jesus saying, "Blessed are the poor," and the bottom responding, "Not so Lord, all lives matter." Mike initially commented on the post, mistakenly thinking Jesus did not say "Blessed are the poor," but corrected himself after researching Luke 6:20, which confirms Jesus' words: "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God."

Mike clarified that Jesus' statement does not elevate one class above another but reflects the receptivity of the poor to Christ's message due to their lack of worldly power and possessions. He contrasted this with Matthew 5:3, which says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the

kingdom of God,” noting the close alignment between the two passages. The poor, both materially and spiritually, are often more open to God’s message, but Jesus ministered to all people, regardless of status.

(6:53 - 9:27) The Rich Young Ruler and Jesus’ Universal Ministry

Mike expanded on Jesus’ impartiality by referencing the story of the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-22), who asked how to inherit eternal life. Jesus instructed him to keep the commandments and, when the ruler claimed he had done so, to sell his possessions and give to the poor. The ruler’s sorrowful departure due to his attachment to wealth illustrated that Jesus addressed individual needs without dismissing anyone, rich or poor. This example reinforced that Jesus’ teachings apply universally, offering guidance tailored to each person’s circumstances.

(9:27 - 13:19) Correcting Misconceptions: “Not So Lord”

The sermon addressed the problematic phrase in the Facebook post: “Not so Lord.” Mike emphasized that saying this to Jesus, who is God (John 1:1, 14), implies that humans know better than their Creator. He admitted his own error in initially questioning the “Blessed are the poor” statement, acknowledging that he, like all people, needs correction. The phrase “Not so Lord” reflects an attitude of rejecting God’s authority, which Mike warned against. He stressed that God’s way is superior, and humans must align with divine instruction rather than assume they have a better path.

(13:19 - 16:04) The Lost Message of Unity

Mike critiqued the Facebook post’s approach, noting that its message—“all lives matter”—was undermined by its disrespectful tone toward Jesus. A more effective approach, he suggested, was a later post showing people from diverse cultures in a circle, accompanied by Acts 10:34-35: “God shows no partiality, but in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.” Mike affirmed this message with an “Amen,” emphasizing that God’s impartiality should guide how Christians address social issues. The sermon called for using Jesus’ teachings appropriately to promote fairness and unity across all cultures and backgrounds.

(16:04 - 19:52) God’s Impartiality and Peter’s Lesson

Drawing from Acts 10:34-36, Mike recounted how God taught Peter to overcome his prejudice against Gentiles. In a vision, God presented a sheet with all kinds of animals, declaring them clean despite Jewish dietary laws, instructing Peter not to call anything unclean that God has made clean. This vision prepared Peter to accept Cornelius, a Gentile, and share the gospel with him. The passage underscores that God accepts people from every nation who fear Him and act righteously, reinforcing the sermon’s theme of breaking down barriers through Christ.

(19:52 - 22:12) Christ as the Source of Peace

Returning to Ephesians 2:14-18, Mike highlighted how Christ’s death on the cross abolished the division between Jew and Gentile, creating “one new man” and establishing peace. He posed a rhetorical question: if Christ could break the barrier between Jew and Gentile, why can’t He break down modern divisions? Mike urged the congregation to follow Jesus to achieve peace and unity,

emphasizing that Christ is “Lord of all” (Acts 10:36). This universal lordship means no one should be looked down upon for their differences, as Christ’s sacrifice enables peace across all divides.

(22:12 - 25:00) All Lives and All Souls Matter

Mike addressed contemporary social movements, affirming that “Black lives matter” and “police lives matter,” acknowledging the mistreatment of Black individuals and the importance of police for societal order. However, he noted the broader message of the original post: “all lives matter.” He took this further, declaring that “all souls matter,” regardless of background, citing Mark 8:36: “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?” This scripture underscores the eternal value of every soul, urging the congregation to prioritize spiritual salvation over worldly divisions.

(25:00 - 27:23) Call to Action: Obedience and Faithfulness

In closing, Mike called the congregation to action, urging anyone who has not obeyed the gospel to believe, repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38, Mark 16:15-16). He also encouraged those already in Christ to remain faithful unto death (Revelation 2:10) and for erring believers to return and seek forgiveness. The sermon concluded with an invitation to act on these spiritual imperatives during the closing hymn, emphasizing the urgency of aligning with God’s will.

Conclusion

Preacher Mike’s sermon on July 12, 2020, masterfully connected biblical teachings with contemporary issues, using Ephesians 2:14-18, Luke 6:20, Acts 10:34-36, and other scriptures to underscore Christ’s role in fostering peace and unity. By addressing a problematic social media post, he highlighted the dangers of challenging God’s authority and the need for humility and correction. The sermon affirmed the value of all lives and souls, urging the congregation to embrace God’s impartiality and respond to the gospel’s call. This message remains a powerful reminder of Christ’s transformative power to break down barriers and unite humanity under His lordship.