

## I. THE DEEPEST FEAR: SEPARATION

- A. The Marketing of Fear: Advertisers capitalize on “loss aversion” the psychological principle that the pain of losing something valuable is twice as powerful as the pleasure of gaining it.
- B. Identifying the Hope: What we hold with “clenched fists” reveals where we have placed our hope.
- C. The Distracted Society: We often live uninterested in nearness to God, ignoring the grave danger of meeting Him as Judge rather than Savior.

## II. THE SEVERITY OF GOD'S JUSTICE

- A. The Necessity of Suffering: God did not “waive” the penalty for sin; His holiness demanded it be paid, and Jesus paid it once for all (**1 Peter 3:18**).
- B. The Weight of Substitution: Jesus endured the brutal weight of abandonment, by His friends and by the Father, to absorb our separation (**Isaiah 53:6, Matthew 27:46**).
- C. The Finality of the Sacrifice: Christ suffered “once”; there is no repetition of His sacrifice required to atone for sins.

## III. THE GREAT EXCHANGE: RIGHTEOUS FOR UNRIGHTEOUS

- A. Our Natural Condition: We are “unrighteous” at our core, deceitful and spiritually sick (**Jeremiah 17:9, James 2:10**).
- B. The Merit Myth: Before a Holy God, we have no merit; we only have “demerits” that require expulsion from His presence (**Isaiah 64:6**).
- C. Foreign Holiness: Because God's holiness is a different category of being, our darkened minds often bristle at His justice instead of trembling before it (**1 Timothy 6:15-16, Acts 5:1-11**).

## IV. THE KINDNESS OF GOD'S RECONCILIATION

- A. The Ultimate Goal: Every clause of 1 Peter 3:18 points to one anchor: “that he might bring us to God”.
- B. Drinking the Cup: Jesus took the “cup of the wine of wrath” so that we would not have to drink it to the dregs (**Jeremiah 25:15-16, Matthew 26:39**).
- C. The Assurance of Life: Being “made alive in the spirit,” Christ ensures that in Him, our separation is no more.

## V. LIVING IN NEARNESS

- A. Practical Pursuit: We pursue nearness through daily prayer, immersion in Scripture for adoration (not just information), and gathering with the local body.
- B. Looking Outward, Not Inward: Assurance is found by looking to Christ's finished work, not by introspective searching of ourselves.

## SERMON REFLECTIONS

1. The "Demerit" System: How is our sin like getting "demerits" at school? Can we ever do enough "good things" to erase them ourselves?
2. The Mountain of Sand: If a tiny bird moved one grain of sand every 1,000 years, how long would it take to move a whole mountain? What does this teach us about the word "forever"?
3. The Best News: Jesus' goal was to "bring us to God." Why can't we get to God without Jesus' help?
4. Distraction vs. Danger: The sermon mentioned three young men who ignored the message because they were distracted by their phones. Why is being "disinterested" in God such a grave danger?
5. Marketing Identity: Why do advertisers target our "fear of separation" (separated from being popular, beautiful, etc)? How does this "loss aversion" principle apply to our spiritual lives?
6. Unjust Suffering: How can a Christian's patient suffering for doing what is right serve as a "remarkable witness" to friends who don't know Jesus?

## ATTRIBUTES OF GOD I HEARD *(CIRCLE THE ONES MENTIONED)*

Good	Wise	Wrathful	Merciful
Just	Jealous	Faithful	Perfect
Holy	Gracious	Patient	Love
Other:			

## KEY WORDS *(WRITE WHAT THESE WORDS MEAN)*

Atonement—  
Holiness —  
Merit —  
Propitiation —  
Reconciliation —

## NOTES OR DRAWINGS ABOUT WHAT I HEARD