



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

"Inconsistencies in Modified Calvinism, Part V"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Since this is the last time that I am to speak to you, I want to express my appreciation to you. Looking out over the audience tonight I see you are somewhat of a different audience. You have on your new clothes and you're looking presentable tonight, and Martha and I have both enjoyed being here. And I'm not going back to Dallas. We're going to stick around until the end of the conference, but I just want to say we appreciate very much the fellowship of the opportunity of speaking to you. This is the third of the messages on Four Point Calvinism or Amyraldianism. So let me launch out and try to go as rapidly as we can.

I want to acknowledge before we launch into this something I said before, but I think it's very important to say it. That those generally who say, "I am a Four Point Calvinist," though generally speaking, in my opinion, they don't understand what they are talking about, they are genuine Christians and so consequently they should be recognized as such. And we should treat them as our brothers and sisters in Christ. And I would like to say also that those who are genuine Amyraldians, and there are not too many of these among those who say, "I'm a Four Point Calvinist," that they really belong within the general sphere of Calvinism in the sense that they believe the things that Calvinists believe with one or two exceptions, and universal redemption is one. But they do believe in

particular application of the truth and the nature of man, as Calvinists believe in the nature of man and so on. So it is true that Calvinists have generally regarded them as belonging within the orthodox Calvinistic fold. In fact, in the case of Moise Amyraut himself, in the 17th century he was acknowledged to be by his fellow men in council to be an orthodox man, that is a believing Christian man. And so we want to be sure to make that point.

Amyraldians historically and through the years have appeared to have the aim of toning down orthodox Calvinism. Although, in the process of that attempt they have fallen into the errors of the general reference of Christ's death, a misunderstanding of the doctrine of substitution, and the location of divine election within time and some other things. The issue of Amyraldianism or Four Point Calvinism is important, because it touches directly upon the glory of God's mighty power and saving grace. The failure of God to secure his intentions detracts from both of his attributes, being completely opposed to express statement of his word. Warfield contends, "If it," that is the atonement, "does nothing for any man that it does not do for all men, when then it is obvious that it saves no man, for clearly not all men are saved. The things that we have to choose between are an atonement of high value or an atonement of wide extension. The two cannot go together. And this is the real objection of Calvinism to this compromised scheme which presents itself as an improvement on its system. It universalizes the atonement at the cost of its intrinsic value, and Calvinism demands a really substitutive atonement which actually saves."

Jim Packer commenting upon the disagreement and mistrust intention among evangelicals over the difference between Calvinism and Arminianism says, "Nor is it any wonder that tension should exist when each position sees the other as misrepresenting the saving love of God. The wonder is rather that so many Christians who profess a serious concern for theology should treat this debate as one in which they have no stakes and need not get involved. I think Edward John Carnell, former President of Fuller

Theological Seminary was right when once he said, 'It's better to be divided by truth than united by error.' Both of the warring theological camps may lay hold of the sentiment, while remembering to hold their convictions with Christian courtesy. To repeat the clarification of the issue here, it doesn't relate to the sufficiency of Christ's saving work, to the applicability of it to each man's need, to the design of Christ to provide benefits to all men, or to the universal offer of salvation in good faith to the lost. It does relate to and only relates to the intension of the God-head in the saving work. Did Christ die as universal redemptionists hold to make salvation of all men possible and nothing more, or did he die as Reformed particularists hold, to actually and certainly save his elect people. That is, for the purpose of saving those whom he actually does save."

Now, if you have the outline before you, I'm turning to Roman III in it, the Hermeneutical and Exegetical Failures of Amyraldianism. And first the hermeneutical failures, and I'd like to just mention very briefly first of all, the hermeneutics of irrationalism and then we'll look at *a posteriori* methodology, and finally we will look at the hermeneutics of possibility or conditionality. But first, the hermeneutics of irrationalism. The Amyraldianism are referred to by Warfield as "post redemptionists" since they introduced the decree of election subsequently to the decree of redemption in Christ. The structure of the decrees is logically inconsistent and thus unstable Calvinism, so Professor Warfield has said. It's impossible to reasonably say that God gave his Son for all men alike and equally, *egali mor portous* and at the same to intend that only the elect already chosen by him, for there is no subsequence in time in God's decrees, should be saved; God's covenants to save all men and only the elect at the same time.

Amyrault acknowledged that the structure of his system appeared inconsistent, but he refused to try to solve the illogic. One cannot escape into paradox as some have tried to do. We do not deny paradoxes, but there are differences in paradoxes. To confess the truth is, let me go back just for a moment, to confess the truth is not to explain it. Paul Jewett has said with reference to a paradox, "A mystery confronts us on every side.

Formal logic would suggest that where we have a paradox, we have a screw loose in our argument. But there is a difference between paradoxes that result from fallacious arguments and paradoxes that mark the limits of human thought. We don't deny paradox in the sense that there is a limit to human thought and we must acknowledge that as Christian men and women. But Amyraut's paradox is one that results from fallacious argument."

Now secondly, the *a posteriori* methodology; Amyraut and his followers insist that the discussion of election and predestination must begin not in the eternal decree or decrees of God, but as an *ex post facto* explanation of why some responded to the gospel and others do not. Or why the salvation destined equally for all does not reach all. Now, we say *a posteriori* argument, we mean an argument from effect to cause generally associated with inductive reasoning, and also an argument based initially on experience. Again, it's Warfield's contention that the understanding of Amyraut involves a chronological relation of precedence and subsequence among the decrees, the assumption of which abolishes God. And this can be escaped only by altering the nature of the atonement. And therefore the nature of the atonement is altered by them and Christianity is wounded at its very heart.

As you can see if you have two decrees of God and one follows another, you have a problem in the nature of an eternal God, who from eternity knows precisely what his will is and what his plans are. Election by this analysis has become an event in history, because the general decree, the antecedent decree is the decree that all men be saved through Christ's sacrifice. The subsequent decree is that only the elect be brought to the knowledge of the Lord. So election, or the second decree, becomes by this analysis an event in history, contrary to the express statements of Scripture such as Ephesians 1:3-11 and also 2 Thessalonians 2:13. Let me remind you of those texts in case they be a little hazy in your mind. But Ephesians 1:3 says, "Chosen in him before the foundation of the world." And 2 Thessalonians makes the same statement that God has from the beginning,

and I'm taking the reading apo arches there instead of apo arcane. Apo arches, from the beginning to salvation, so that the decree of salvation is an eternal decree.

And thirdly the hermeneutics of possibility or conditionality. In view of the fact that Amyraut's antecedent will that Son die for all equally is a will conditional upon the faith of men, it's clear that the substitution of the Son for sinners is not efficacious. The death of Christ is considered that which normally makes salvation possible. And I'd like to go over again a point with reference to that. And I'm reading a footnote in the notes that I have here, and it has to do with my old teacher, Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer of Dallas Theological Seminary. Dr. Chafer in his systematic theology speaks of the death of Christ as rendering men "savable." That's his word; and then as making the salvation of all men "possible." That's his word in another place; and as making the salvation of all men "conditional." That's another word in the same general context; and then as making salvation "potential in its application." Notice these expressions, savable, possible, conditional, potential. Now, it's clear that Chafer is offering Amyraldian views, although he never mentions the Amyraldians. He's following Ralph Wardlaw. And I don't know whether he really knew that Wardlaw was an Amyraldian, because he never mentions that fact. But he's following Wardlaw's views.

In an amazing statement he says, "The substitution of Christ," I'm quoting him, "what partly absolute and partly conditional in proportion to man's capacity of choice and responsibility." And I don't know exactly what that means, and I don't know anybody who does know precisely what that means. And you must remember that Dr. Chafer, I have the greatest of regard for him. Dr. Chafer was a Bible teacher, had never had a theological course in his life, and began to teach at Dallas Seminary. And what he did is what you or I would do, he got as many books as he could and he read those books as best he could. He frequently did not know what theologians would call "the state of the question." He did not have that background, and so he made statements that were understood only by Dr. Chafer, if they were understood by him sometimes you might

think. [Laughter] But at the same time he was a great man of faith and very charismatic as an individual, and young men recognized in him the Spirit of God. And so he had a great influence for that reason. He says the cross, for example, is not the only saving instrumentality, rejecting the cross as that which makes the salvation of the elect certain.

As for answering the question, "How may judgment fall upon a person after Christ has born that judgment?" Well, he said, "That is," and I'm quoting him exactly, "that is but one more mystery which the finite man cannot understand." That's precisely what he said. So if you were to say, "If Christ has born our judgment why do we have to bear judgment thereafter?" He would say, "That's a mystery." That man whom I loved and still love, and I'm looking forward to seeing him in heaven for his Christian gifts and graces, even cited John Owens famous conundrum on, you've probably had it cited to you many times concerning unbelief and faith, and tried to answer it by suggesting that the sin of unbelief is "particular in character" thus to be treated differently from all other sins of unbelief. And that's how we escape Owen's conundrum. So it's very interesting to read.

Warfield's question is the appropriate response, as I mentioned today, but what obstacle remains in the way of the salvation of sinners except just their sin. And if this obstacle, their sin, is removed are they not saved? A system that present God as both placable and man savable, but which does not save anyone will not do. So now I would like to turn to the exegetical failures of Arminian and Amyraldian claims. And Arminianism and Amyraldianism merge at this point, because we're going to talk about universal redemption, for that is the view of Arminians, and that is the view of Amyraldians.

And first of all, as I say, the exegetical failures, and first of all from the term "all" or "every." Augustinians do not deny that Christ died for all men. We don't deny that. They deny that he died equally and with the same design for all men. He died that he might stop the immediate execution of the penalty of the broken law upon our whole apostate race. He died that he might secure the blessing of common grace. The denial of

universal atonement does not mean the denial of any relation of men to his death. The real question is, as we've been laboring to try to point out, is for whom did he offer himself a sacrifice? The word "all" has different meaning. It means in some contexts all, of all sorts, Acts 10:36; Acts 20:27. In other contexts it means all of some sorts, Romans 5:18; 1 Corinthians 8:1, 15:22; Ephesians 4:6. In other contexts it means some of all sorts, Mark 11:32; Romans 14:2.

To take one illustration of all, take the statement in John chapter 12 and verse 32. This is a text that is often cited in discussions and I'll read it to you out of the original text in John chapter 12 and verse 32 we read, "And I, if I shall be lifted up from earth, will draw all to me," *pantos*, all men, translated all men. "Will draw all men to myself." Now, if you'll just reflect on the use of the term drawn in the Book of John you'll discover that every time that word is used it refers to an effectual drawing. That is, the drawing succeeds. It's used of drawing fishes into a net, for example. It's "No man can come to me except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him," effectually draw. So this is a word that mean "effectually draw" in the Gospel of John. And so if one is drawn, he is saved. But not all are saved. Even our adversaries admit that, not all are saved. Thus the all is that of all without distinction and not all without exception. The reason for it all is the statement in verse 20, where we read, "And there were certain Greeks who were of those who were ascending up," who had come up to Jerusalem, "that they might worship at the feast." And the fact that the Greeks appeared gave our Lord, who of course, as the God-man, entered into the following of the will of God, just as you and I might do it. He recognized that when the Greeks now began to show an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, that the time is soon at hand in which he will die and the gospel will go out to the ends of the earth. He's already said in the preceding chapter about the sheep of the flock, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring," Gentiles.

And now when the Greeks appear, it's a sign that the time of the sacrifice is coming. And that's why in a moment he will lift up his heart in prayer to God in a prayer

very similar to the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane and finally make this statement that, as verse 32 has put it, "If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself." So in this case it's all without distinction, not all without exception. We have other passages in which that same type of thing is set forth; in Hebrews chapter 12 in verse 9 we have a similar kind of thing. But anyway, in this instance that seems to be plain. 1 Corinthians 15:22 is an illustration; 1 Timothy 2:6; Hebrews 2:9 where the text states that he died that he has "tasted death for every man." And then in the preceding context there follow the words that explain that statement, "sons" in verse 10, "sanctified ones" in verse 11, "brethren" in verse 12, "children" verse 13, "seed of Abraham" in verse 16. When he says he tastes death for every man, he's talking about every believing man, the seed of Abraham, sons, children, sanctified ones, and so on.

Elementary logic courses, someone has pointed out, teach us that adjective of quantity, all, every, some, any, are ambiguous. All the angles of a triangle equal two right angles, and all the angles of a triangle are less than two right angles are both true statements if the word all is regarded collectively in the first instance and distributively in the second. Isn't that interesting? All the angles of a triangle equal two right angles. All the angles of a triangle are less than two right angles. Both true depending on the way in which you take the terms. So though theologians have been distrustful of the larger efforts of speculative reason, no one can escape such logical analysis at the elementary level. So when we talk about terms like all and every, we must learn to examine the context.

Now secondly, from the term world; the argument here is simple. The term world it is argued should be given, generally speaking, its universal sense of every individual. So we are told, John 1:29, John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 5:19, 1 John 2:2. It's not denied that world does not always mean all individuals, but it's argued that the burden of proof rests on those who hold it is not to be given its normal sense of everybody. An answer, particularists point out that it is used a hundred and eighty-five times in the New

Testament and often in other than a universal sense. World may refer to the world of believers, John 6:33, "Those to whom life is given," the world of non-believers, John 14:17. I have other texts for most of these things. Evil and godless men, it's used of the accursed world under Satan. It's used of the non-Jewish world. In some cases it seems to mean simply the general public. In other words, it's the particular context that determines the precise sense of the term world.

Thirdly, from 1 Timothy 2:4, 6; some had taken the fourth verse to refer to the divine will of benevolent desire, especially in the light of the generally weaker verb, *thello*, which is used in this context, but it's not necessary to do this. A.M. Stibbs, who is not noted as a strong Calvinist at all says and writes in this connection, "It does not say that God has determined that every single man must be saved, but simply that his general desire for mankind is that all alike shall enjoy salvation." So let me say just a word about the statement in 1 Timothy chapter 2 verse 4 concerning men. The statement reads, "Who wishes all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. The "all men" the expression that is used there in verse 4 and the "in behalf of all" in verse 6, "Who gave himself a ransom in behalf of all" the testimony for its own seasons, both refer to all men without distinction, not all men without exception. That's evident from the distinctive emphasis of the paragraph. You'll notice that we begin in the first verse by "I beseech you therefore that prayers be made for all, and supplications, prayers, intercessions, giving of thanks in behalf of all men, in behalf of kings and all who are in authority that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness. So right at the beginning we have an indication that these words refer to all men without distinction, not all men without exception, because he talks about kings and then in verse 7 Paul winds up that paragraph by saying, "For which purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle. I say the truth, I do not lie, a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth." So what he is talking about are distinctions within individuals.

Owen's comments at this point are rather interesting, "In that very chapter where mean so eagerly contend that the word all is to be taken for all and every one, though fruitlessly and falsely as shall be demonstrated. Name 1 Timothy 2:4 where it is said that God shall have all men to be saved, in that very chapter confessedly the word is to be expounded according to the sense we give, namely verse 8, and 'I will therefore that men pray in every place.'" That's an interesting statement. Right in the very same context, "I will that men pray in every place," which Owen points out, "It cannot signify every individual place in heaven, earth, and hell. And it of all of us confessed doesn't need any proof, no more than when our Savior said to cure every disease in Matthew 9:35. There is no need," Owen says, "to prove that he did not cure every disease of every man, but only all sorts of diseases in his ministry." So even in the very context that we're talking about, the term all is used in the very sense that Augustine and others down through the centuries have given.

But so often what we do, my Christian friends, is we read the text and we don't think about the text and its context and about the usages of the terms in the rest of the word of God. You could even notice from verse 5 in connection with verse 4 a reason why that must mean all men without distinction, for the apostle goes on to say, "For there is one God and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." That "for" explains the non-exclusivist will of God. He desires men from every rank and tribe, station, from Jews and Gentiles, for there is only God; not one for this nation and another for that nation, as for example Hindus say. So he would have all men to be saved, all classes of men, for there is one God. It wouldn't make sense to say he'll have everybody to be saved, because there's one God. That wouldn't flow. But if we say all kinds of men, for there's one God. In other words, over all kinds of men, it makes perfectly good sense. The apostle is arguing, I think, along the lines I've suggested.

If one were to claim that the text meant that it was the will of God that all men be saved, the proper response would be, why is it not accomplished? Who hath resisted his

will, to use the words of the apostle in another context? Augustine in the *Enchiridion* has some interesting things to say about the text, tongue in cheek incidentally, he suggests, I think it was tongue in cheek. He didn't say, "My tongue's in my cheek," when I say this. But it seems to me that he does when he suggests that since God's will does not come to pass in the case of the meaning opponents have given to it, it appears to be due to, Augustine says, an embargo of God's will by the human will. And that pretty well let's you know that he doesn't believe in the frustration of his God.

Now, we turn over to 2 Peter chapter 2 and verse 1. And I hesitate to say much about this, because it is true that my chauffer has written on this point [Laughter] and I don't want to say anything that would upset my chauffer. I think that there are several ways to understand 2 Peter 2:1, and I would like to set it out that way for you. We come to one of the favorite muskets of the Arminian universal redemptionists. The context has to do with Peter's prophecy of the coming of the false teachers. Does not Peter say here that the Lord purchased them? And since they are obviously unsaved, verse 3, verse 20 through verse 22, sets them forth. Then must we not say that the atonement is universal, for all without exception. In other words, he has bought them and they are unsaved, so do we not then affirm universal redemption. He has bought these unsaved people. Shall we turn to people who are unsaved today and say, "You have been bought by Jesus Christ?"

Now, one must admit the argument has force. In fact, I used to say in my soteriology notes many years ago, thirty years ago. I taught soteriology at Dallas Theological Seminary, and in the course of doing it I wrote out notes on the course for the semester. I look back at some of my own notes, and the note that I had for 2 Peter 2:1 was, and these are the words in my notes thirty years ago. "The force of 2 Peter 2:1, 3, and 20-22 cannot be gainsaid." In other words, that proves universal redemption. And now thirty years later I gainsay it. [Laughter]

What may we say? Well, first of all the word *agoraz* translated "purchased" here in the Authorized Version text, the New American Standard Bible has "bought." In a redemptive context always refers to the actual purchase of individuals. Actual purchase, so what we then have, and incidentally it refers to the actual purchase of believers of course. Now, some of the passages are 1 Corinthians 6:20 and 7:23 and Revelation 5:9 and chapter 14, verses 3 and 4. If we who believe in the perseverance of the saints use this text against particular redemption, must we not also use it against the perseverance of the saints? In other words, if it's really true he bought unbelievers in the sense that these individuals have been professing teachers, and it's an effectual purchase, and they now are in unbelief, then it appears to me that we must also use it against the perseverance of the saints. The text is still a text for the Arminians, but it's not a text for Four Point Calvinist or Amyraldians.

Now second, what does the text mean? Well there have been several suggestions. First of all, John Gill and others have contended that the term *Lord* here is a unique term. It's found in the Greek text. It is the Greek word *despot* s, translated "Lord" in the Authorized Version, "denying the Lord that bought them." It is translated by the New American Standard Bible, "master." And it refers to, according to Mr. Gill, the Father, not to Christ, since every instance but one clearly refers to the Father in the New Testament. Possibly Jude 4 is an exception. We don't have time to go into that. Mr. Gill also points out that the word *bought*, when used of spiritual redemption, usually is found in context with some mention of the method or the price of the redemption, usually bought with a price or something like that.

And he points out that that word is not found here. It's likely therefore that it refers in this context to a physical redemption. John Gill has noted that Peter's words rest on Deuteronomy 32:6, something often overlooked. In other words, the background of the statement is Deuteronomy 32:6, and in that text it is stated that God acquired Israel out of Egypt that she might become a covenant nation. Thus the meaning here would be

that the false teachers, like the Jews of old, acquired by the redeeming work of the Lord out of Egypt and blessed with many mercies are aggravating their sinfulness of unthankfulness by denying the master who acquired them for his covenant people through their pernicious heresies and lascivious lives. In other words, Gill looks at it in that context and looks at it as these Jewish Christian false teachers have been acquired because they belong to the nation Israel, God having acquired Israel as his nation by the redemptive work in Old Testament times.

As Gordan Clark says, "Peter was saying 'God rescued you from Egypt.' Do you therefore repay him with heresy and immorality?" Now, it's possible to hold that view, and I don't object to any one who want to hold that view. Second, probably the most common view is that the author speaks of the adversaries according to their profession of faith, an interpretation called the Christian charity view. Quite a few instances of this are found in the Bible, in for example 2 Chronicles chapter 28, and verse 23 reference is made there to the God's of Damascus which smote him. I'll turn to that passage in 2 Chronicles chapter 28 in verse 23 so you can see precisely what the force of Christian charity is that we're talking about. In verse 22 of 2 Chronicles 28 the text reads, "Now in the time of his distress King Ahaz became increasingly unfaithful to the Lord." This is that King Ahaz, "For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus which had defeated him, because the gods of the kings of Syria helped them. I will sacrifice to them that they may help me," is what he said. "But they were the ruin of him and of all Israel."

Now notice, he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, which defeated him. Now the facts are that the gods of Damascus did not defeat him or did not smite him. It was the Lord who did. But that, of course, was what they thought. And the author of Scripture puts it in their words, their own gods; his own gods that he was enamored of smote him. Our Lord appears to take that approach in Matthew 9:13 for he said he did not "come to call the righteous but he came to call sinners to repentance." Well there are no righteous, but putting it in the mouths of what we often say, he came not to call those that we

regard as righteous; he came to call sinners to repentance. So in Christian charity the word is taken in the sense that it commonly has in such contexts.

Now it's of interest to note that Ralph Wardlaw, the Amyraldian that we've been referring to, takes the Christian charity view. He believes that Peter speaks of the teachers "according to professions and appearances and according to the credibility of the profession in the estimate of Christian charity." In other words, they said they were bought by the Lord Jesus Christ but they're false teachers. And so he says that's a legitimate interpretation, and he's our Amyraldian adversary so we'll accept him at his word. In other words, we don't really have a problem with this text.

There is a third interpretation that I'd like to suggest to you not as one that I hold, but that I've thought over. I've wondered if the text may be explained in another way as well. Could not the expression bought have a broader sense? That is, could it not refer to the cosmological significance of the sacrifice of Christ along the lines of Hebrews 2:5-9 and Revelation 5:1-14? By our Lord's sacrifice has not the Lord regained for man his right to rule over the created universe, the effective reign, which he was promised and then lost in the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden? By his sacrifice our Lord has made certain the fulfillment of the great prophecy, the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and it was Christ, and he will reign forever and ever. In that sense he's bought every one. He's acquired the whole cosmos, everything, even the false teachers come under his sway. And so if we take that broader sense, that's a possible way of understanding it too. I think you can that the text is no problem. Even my adversaries agree that the Christian charity view is acceptable to them, and this text is not a legitimate argument against particular redemption.

So turn over 2 Peter chapter 3 and verse 9 now. This is one of the truly debated texts and debatable texts of the whole controversy. In 2 Peter chapter 3 and verse 9 the text reads that "The Lord is not slow with respect to the promise as some men count slowness but is long suffering," and I'm reading the Greek text. There's a little different

rendering in some, "toward you, not willing that any perish, but all have room for repentance." Now the part of this text that is debatable is the expression translated by the Authorized Version, "not willing that any should perish." It does not refer, in my opinion, this text, to God's benevolent will toward all. It refers to God's decretive or secret will for believers. And I'd like to support that by noticing these things.

First of all, not the general context. What is Peter seeking to do? Well in the first part of the chapter he has been speaking with regard to the future, and he's said that in the last days there are going to come scoffers, and they're going to say, "Where is the promise of his coming, the coming that you have been talking about, you Christians." And Peter suggests that there are answers that can be given to them. In the first place he says these people have forgotten that there did come a flood. These individuals say since the beginning of creation nothing has happened. And Peter first of all says, "You forgot the flood." The flood was a distinct visitation from God in heaven into our human society.

But the second thing that you have forgotten is the character of time with God. So he states there, "Let not this one thing escape you beloved, that one day as with the Lord is a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." So if for example, we have two thousand years from the promise of the coming of the Lord, then it's as if the Lord made the promise of the second coming the day before yesterday for divine time. So what Peter is suggesting then that, it's rather incidentally that the crutch of the scoffers is the doctrine of uniformity, a doctrine that's still a factor in the struggle between science and Scripture? But what he's suggesting, of course, is you have the wrong idea about divine intervention in society. You have the wrong idea about time.

Now secondly, he says, "But is longsuffering toward you." Now the Authorized Version has "to usward." And the reason for the difference is not that they didn't know how to translate Greek, it's simply that they have a different text at that point. They read eis hemas, which means "unto us" and most of the versions, edited texts today, read eis

humans or "to you." So that phrase must be underlined. The apostle is speaking of the individuals to whom he wrote his letter. He's talking about believers, to you. And in verse 8 what does he call them? He calls them beloved. So the individuals of whom he's talking are beloved individuals, and they are the ones to whom he is speaking. And so he's speaking of believers. And the third word that I'd like for you to note is that word translated "willing." It's the strongest word to express God's will. Back in 1 Timothy chapter 2 we have other words that can be rendered something like "wishes all people to be saved." But this one "willing." The NASB, seeking I think to soften the stronger sense has "not wishing." The NIV has "not wanting," because the translators generally, I was one of the translators of the NIV, the translators generally believe in universal redemption, not all of them but generally. But that's usually the strong word for to will or decree, implying the deliberate exercise of volition. The term is harmonious with unconditional election, but not with conditional election.

The fourth word that I would like for you to notice is the word that concludes the text where he says, "Not willing that any should perish but that all should have room for repentance." That word is a term that translated by the Authorized Version "should come to repentance." The New American Standard Bible, "to come." But it's a word that has the idea of having room for. It's even translated similarly to that in other passages like Mark 2 and John 2:6 and chapter 8 verse 37, translated "have no room for" by the NIV in John 8:37. So what does this text mean then? "He's not willing that any should perish but that all come to repentance." Is this a statement that God is not willing that any one...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]