

Return to Sender

Sermon Title: **Return To Sender**

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Speaker: **Nathaniel Hawthorne Bronner, Jr.**

Notes: Change Title 2X, speaker name if different, replace xxxx with sermon number 3X then delete this line

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PASTOR NATHANIEL: Amen, amen and amen. Bow your heads.

Dear Father, upon this day, I pray that You use me. Everything that I have in me, dear Father, bring it out and pour Your spirit within it, that Your spirit may be poured out upon the people. Give them revelation and wisdom and insight to make changes in their lives, in their relationships and in the world. Upon this day, dear Father, I pray in Thy Son Jesus' name, amen.

Amen, amen. I had asked James to go back and get the song sheet, and we were going to do a song before I began ministering today. The reason for that, C. Elijah mentioned that they will not be having the men's meeting on next Sunday or the Dollars and Cents' class on next Saturday. The reason for that is that we have our annual beauty show. It is one of the largest shows of its kind in the world; so it takes all of our energy and all of our time, and we are just really swamped, and we minimize any extra activities during that particular season. At this show, I will be bringing the Word at 8:30, the church service begins at 8:30. So all of you here are welcome and invited to come.

This time, God has instructed me to do a little something different. Normally, we have a very elaborate program. We have singers and guests from all over, world-renowned. This year, God told me the more I narrowed it down to just me and James, the more powerful His spirit would flow. As I prayed about that thing and thought about it, first of all, C. Elijah preached Friday on obedience and the blessing of obedience, and I said whenever God tells you something, it is always a strain; and when He said "the whole program", He meant the whole program. That means we've got to handle the praise and the worship, the singing and all of that stuff. And both of us are already snowed under with enough to do, and to tackle that additional burden was a hassle-and-a-half.

James said "Ooh, I don't know about that, we've just got so much to do," and there was every reason in the world. Then God began to show me even the message that is come out of that and why it needs to be done that way.

It is strain sometimes to be obedient. So I even recommended Brother Ivan; James and I may do the praise service for the Weekend Word this coming Friday; but we need a little practice.

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: I mean, I am a man that believes in spirit; but we need a little practice before we get out there in front of thousands of folks. Wouldn't you recommend we need a little practice? I mean, I believe in all of the power of the

Holy Spirit; but you need a little practice and, in most of it, you need a lot of practice.

But I understand this thing is not a thing of talent; it is a thing of spirit. And I believe fully in what God has said and in what He has told us to do. Even as I told you I would be speaking for the rest of this month dealing with relationship, even that is symbolic, because it is two people. Even on our program, it says "Two Brothers, One God". We are brothers even in this ministry, and there is a symbolism in that. God sent the disciples out two by two. C. Elijah and I minister here in the church together, and at the show James and I will be ministering together. So it is a ministry where two people are involved and wrapped up. And God says, "For where two ... are gathered in My Name, there I will be in the midst of it." That which I am speaking on this month is the relationship of two. It is so difficult oftentimes for us to get those two folks together.

As I begin this morning, I begin with an incident that happened to my wife last week when she was shopping in a store way out in north Atlanta. As she was there, a lady came up to her, and the lady asked her was "Are you a Bronner?" And she said, "Yes." And she said, "And your husband, is he the one that did that thing about the sex with the hand?"

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: And Puddin' said, "Yeah, that's my husband." She said, "I saw that on television," and she went to talking to Puddin' about that thing. It was interesting, how it opened up. She said, "Yeah, I saw it and my husband saw it, and both of us were staring. We were watching this." And she said, "I've got some things to say about it, and I just want to let you know, I don't agree with what your husband said." She said, "I don't agree with it all about all the stuff about this sex. I just don't agree with that, and I was sitting there watching it with my husband," and she said, "and my husband is a minister." She said, "My husband agreed with everything he said!"

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: "And he was sitting there talking about 'That's right, that's right!'" And my wife was telling me what the woman said. She said, "Look, my husband told me that my first responsibility was not out in a work world, it was not only in the church; my first responsibility was to see about him."

Now, people, this was a minister's wife. This is what the minister's wife -- I am not going to say that. But she basically went on to tell my wife that they fundamentally had a disagreement about that message and that fundamentally the man wanted her really to be more responsive and to have more activity in the sexual arena, and

she didn't. It boiled down to simply this: the message that I brought last week really was somewhat divisive, because there were people on two different sides.

If you remember the test that I asked all of the couples to take, the test was simply to put each other's hand in the other's hands and to either press or tap from one to five times, based on their sexual satisfaction with their lives. Tap one time if they were just not get nearly enough sex and it was way too low. Tap two times if it was just a little too low. Tap three times if it was just right. Tap four times if they were getting a little too much sex. And tap five times if they were getting way too much sex. I told them basically that at least that would give them a communication and an opening of dialogue in terms of how well-satisfied each other were, because they may not even know!

Someone came to me after church and said, "Well, Pastor, suppose the man was holding the woman's hands, and he did not squeeze or tap nary a time?"

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: I said, "Whoa!" But fundamentally what it boiled down to this: anyone that tapped three times or less agrees with what I said. Anyone that tapped four times or five times had a problem with it.

The lady asked Puddin', "Where did he get that stuff out of the Bible about the flesh anyway?" She said, "I don't know anything in the Bible about any flesh or any sex!"

I wanted to ask the woman, "Do we both have the same Bible?" But, you see, oftentimes much stuff is in the Bible, and it is really not so much even the Bible as it is the Church. You see, most of our teachings, even with dealing with sex in the Church, they fundamentally boil down to simply saying, "Don't do that." We very, very, very, very rarely hear them talking about the other side of it. Most of the time, it is talking about abstinence, it is talking about remaining a virgin, it is talking about not fornicating, it is talking about coming out of homosexuality and lesbianism; it is talking about all of these things. Normally, 95% of the words that we hear coming from the pulpit even concerning sex is, "Don't do it." But 95% of the folks that are listening to it are often married. And to them and to the married couples, with the exception of adultery -- don't do that! -- they have to hear a different message, because even within the Church --- and I was worried about the message being too rough for the audience last week. Some of my grandmother's friends were here, and my grandmother is over 90 years old. Some of her friends were here, and I said "Oh, my goodness! We've got those people who are the octogenarians sitting out in the audience." I said, "My goodness! I've got to talk about sex to them. I don't know how they are going to take it."

One of the oldest ladies in the group came up to me after service and said, “Son, that sure was a good message.”

(Laughter and applause.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: She said, “We need that kind of message bad!”

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: And she said “Can you come down to our church and preach that same message?”

(Laughter and applause.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: I didn’t expect that, and she said the things that I said even the pulpit ... she is down in a small country town, in a small one-room country church. And she said down in that small country town in that small one-room country church she said the pastor has gotten a congregation member four months’ pregnant. And that is in a small town!

You see, all of you thought that kind of stuff only happened in the big city. All of you thought that only happened to well-known preachers. But that stuff is everywhere, and it is happening to some of everybody!

So she said, “You need to come down, and you need to preach that very same message about those cold beds down here in this little country church.” It is real, and there are some things that are happening everywhere, people, in the world. She wanted to know where did I get the stuff about flesh and sex in the Bible; maybe she just didn’t hear it, and maybe some other people just didn’t hear it. So I felt led even to expound upon that so that you understand some things. As I begin to study it, it opened up even some more stuff in my mind. Some of this stuff, folks, is going to be stuff that you have never heard; that, I can guarantee you. It is going to be deep. Turn to your neighbor and say, “This is going to be deep.”

CONGREGATION: This is going to be deep.

PASTOR NATHANIEL: “But it won’t be boring.”

CONGREGATION: But it won’t be boring.

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: Now, see, sometimes deep stuff is boring. This is going to be deep, but it won’t be boring.

Turn in your Bible to the Book of Genesis in the 2nd chapter, beginning with the 23rd verse. I am going to show you just some things going through Scripture dealing with some of the underlying beginnings even of sex so that we will understand some things and so that we can get an understanding.

Even Puddin' gave me something. She put a sheet on my computer last night, and it was something she had pulled off the internet. She was ordering this book that had all this stuff in it. Puddin' said, "I'm getting ready to get with it." It had all this stuff in it, and Puddin' had this long list of things in it. If you want to know what book that was, you can ask Puddin' about it, and I am sure she would be delighted. The married couples, she will be delighted. She is looking at me real funny there, shaking her head; but she will be delighted to let you know.

But, people, this is real, because pastors have problems with this. You see, even the one person that came up to her out in public, that was a minister's wife, and that minister was sitting there watching television, telling his wife, "This man is telling the truth. Our sex life has some cold beds in it." And this is coming out of a man of the cloth.

Now, people, you know if preachers are having problems with some cold beds ... and maybe that is why that preacher down in that country town has that congregation member pregnant. His bed was cold, and he is of the flesh! And when you are starving for something, sooner or later something is going to happen!

So everybody that tapped four or five times needs to hear me. You need to understand that thing has to come in the balance; but oftentimes to even bring something in balance, we must have knowledge of the thing.

In Genesis, Chapter 2, beginning at the 23rd verse: "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed."

There are several significant things about this verse. The first thing that is significant about this verse is, these are the first words the Bible has that Adam said. In the Bible, as I began to understand it more and more, God gave nothing in this Word that was not significant. Every number, every order, every word, has a meaning. These were the first words that Adam said.

Now, the Bible says that Adam gave names to all cattle and the fowl of the air and to every beast of the field. It said he gave names, but it doesn't say where he said anything until we get to that. But, see, his just giving names, fundamentally he was

working. So Adam was at a job. But the first thing that the Bible had were Adam has said something, the first quote of Adam, he said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man; therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave into his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

That's the first thing that Adam said. He goes, "This is my woman, and she is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh" -- first words! Do you know when you have a child and he is trying to speak, do you know you remember well his first words? Those were Adam's first words! It is as if Puddin' was standing there in the Garden of Eden, and I said, "Puddin', you're bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." It is the first words the Bible has that Adam said. The first words he said had to do with the union and with the bonding and with the recognition of his wife. First words! And he did that right after he had worked, giving all the creatures names. He had a job first, and he recognized his wife and who she was second.

Now, in the verse preceding that 23rd verse of the 2nd chapter of Genesis, in Genesis, Chapter 2, Verses 21 and 22: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man."

Now, this is the deep part. Never heard this before, because I had never seen it before; but I had always wondered the question, "Where exactly did God get the rib?" I said, "Well, where exactly did God get the rib?" We often say that God took the rib from the side of the man, and the things that were done in the Garden set a pattern for all generations. When the snake was made to crawl on his belly, the snake has been crawling there ever since. When man was made to work by the sweat of his brow, he has been working ever since. When a woman was made to give birth in pain, she has been giving birth in pain every since. Everything that happened in the Garden set a precedent, and it continued out throughout even now.

So, I ask you, "Where did God get the rib?" I don't know how many of you have ever studied biology or how many of you have ever seen a picture or have ever seen a real skeleton. If you have ever seen a real skeleton or a picture of a diagram of the skeletal structure of the human body, one thing that you will notice is this: there is no missing rib. I wondered that for the longest. If the pattern was set and everything that was done in Genesis and everything that was done in that Garden has continued, where did He get that rib? This was a thing that a scientist thinks of. See, most people, that doesn't cross their minds.

First of all, the Bible says that He took one of his ribs. Now, if He had taken a pair of the ribs, then I could say, "Well, obviously something from the ribcage, He just

took a pair from each side”. But if you ever look at a skeleton, there is no missing rib! So I said to my self, “Where did the Lord get this bone from?”

If you look at the asymmetry, there is not a bone missing from the tip of a man’s finger to the top of his head, to the tip of this side, to the bottom of his toes. There is no missing bone! He set the pattern in Genesis, and I said, “Wait a minute! Something doesn’t add up. Now, if the pattern continued,” I said, “maybe this was the one thing that set no pattern. But I doubt it, because God doesn’t do anything like that.” I said, “Everything else set a pattern, and if everything else continued, where is that rib?”

And the thing bothered me. And it has been that way for years, and I often wondered every time I looked at a skeleton, “Where did God get that rib?” because there is no missing rib!

I thought about it. I said, “Now, maybe Adam had an extra rib on one side to start with. Now, that is a possibility. Maybe he just had an extra rib hanging on one side, and God just took that extra rib and made a woman. That’s a possibility, but I doubt it. I doubt when He created the man if He made an extra rib on the left side or an extra rib on the right side; I doubt it.

Maybe when He said He took one rib, maybe He meant He took a pair of ribs. But I doubt it, because everywhere else where He meant two, it said two! If He had meant He had taken two ribs to make a woman, then He would have said, “And the Lord God took two of Adam’s ribs”; then I could understand the skeletal structure, because it would be balanced and there would be a rib missing on both sides. But every time that I look at a skeleton, I cannot find that missing rib!

Maybe Adam grew the rib back! But I doubt it. Everything that God did in that Garden of Eden was just like it was, and that thing perpetuated; so it still went over and over and over in my mind, “Where did God get that rib?”

First of all, people, we are under the impression that God took the rib out of the side of man; but when you read the literal Word of the Bible, it doesn’t say He took it from the side. You see, we just assumed that; but if you go back and you look at it and you look exactly at what God said in Genesis, Chapter 2, Verse 21: “And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man.”

It doesn’t say He took the rib from the side. A rib really meant a curved bone. So it doesn’t say that He took that curved bone from the side! We assume that, because we figure that is the only place He could have gotten it from. But the Bible never said that. And if you ask any biologist anywhere can they find a missing rib from

the chest cavity, they cannot. Everything in the Bible if you understand science correlates, because God is the One that made science. That is why Solomon, who was wisest man in the world, was a scientist if you ever read and understand Solomon, how they came to Solomon and he explained the birds and the animals and all of the things of nature. Solomon was a scientist. If you understand science, you will start to see some things a little bit different, and it will raise a question in your mind, "Where did God get that rib that He made woman with?"

Now, this here is getting into the deeper part of things. Throughout the skeletal structure, there is no missing rib on either side of man; but there is a missing bone. It is a bone that all primates have. It is a bone that all flesh-eating animals have. Every creature in nature has this bone except man. There is only one bone missing out of the whole skeletal structure of man compared to rest of the animal kingdom. There is one missing bone.

It gets deep, people. I said, "Lord, have mercy!" when I saw the revelation on that thing. It gets deep, and it is hard for us even to understand it. Because we are so programmed into some things, it is hard to open our eyes and open blinded eyes to see some things that are clear if you just understand them. Throughout all of the animal kingdom, my aunt, who was a biology major, if she was here, she could verify that. There is a bone missing from man that every other flesh-eating animal, every other primate, every other monkey, every other gorilla has. There is a bone missing from man, and man is the only creature in the mammalian kingdom that does not have it. It is the only bone of a man's whole body that is missing. It bears in with biology. If you know that and if you look at the skeleton of any other creature and you have all the bones there, there is one bone that's gone.

I am going to read you a definition from the Encyclopedia Britannica. The definition is of the word "baculum", B-A-C-U-L-U-M. "Baculum" by definition is "the penis bone of certain mammals". The baculum is one of the several heterotrophic skeletal elements; that is, bones disassociated from the rest of the body skeleton. It is found in all insectivores; that is, all creatures that eat insects: shrews, hedgehogs, bat, rodent; and all carnivores; all mammals that eat meat; and in all primates -- all monkey species, all gorilla species. It is found in all of these species, in every species with the exception of man.

If you know the biology, the thing is clear: man is missing a bone! But the bone is not from the side; it is right down the middle! The bone is missing from all of the rest. If you don't believe me, go ask a biologist. You don't have to take my word for it; go ask a biologist. Now, you won't see it if you go to the zoo and you see the skeleton of a saber-toothed tiger, because the bone is a disassociated bone. It is the only bone that is free, that it is not attached to the rest of the skeleton; but the penis of every other mammalian creature, of every insectivore, of every carnivore, has a bone in it -- everybody but us.

Why is that? You will see if you compare a man's physical structure with that of a gorilla or with that of a monkey, the only other thing that a monkey is missing from us is primarily the opposable thumb; everything else, they have. But the skeletal structure, the body structure, all of the organs, everything else is there. There is one big difference. They have a thumb; it is just not opposable. Their thumb cannot do this; it can only go like the rest of the fingers. But they do have a thumb, but we do not have a baculum. It is missing, and it has been gone, people, I present to you, since then. I think that is where God got the bone!

Now, that is something deep. I told you it was going to be deep, but nobody is asleep.

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: I know you have never heard that before, but it is backed up with science, because if you ask most people what a baculum is, they have no idea and they have never heard of it. But when you know the truth and even when you know the nature behind it, it starts making sense. God never said He took it from the side. We said that, but not the Word. I believe God got it straight from down the middle, and man has been missing that bone ever since. Now, people, that have some great meaning behind that. You see, it changes it, people, because if the Lord just took a bone from the side and gave it to you and made it out of that, it is not quite the same. But if He got it from there, that puts a different view on even the Biblical conception and origin even of sex.

Let me tell you what difference that makes just in terms of a biological and an emotional and psychological difference. You see, every other animal that has a baculum, they don't need to be sexually excited for the penis to be erect, because it has a bone in it. I know some of you are saying, "The Lord has cheated us."

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: "He gave all these other creatures bones. They have a bone in the middle of theirs, and I have to get Viagra and get all kinds of rooster pills and herbs and everything else, and the other creatures have bones." You see, when you start looking at it like that, you can see you really gave up something. You see? We have no bone! The other creatures with a bone, it will stay solid and firm because it is a bone!

You see, people, sometime there is an inner spirit that does not come to consciousness that will manifest itself even in our slang terms; and we don't understand it, but deep down there is a spirit, there is an older ancient knowledge, that comes through where it was known, and even in slang street terms we call the

sexual act bone. Whoa! And, you see, sometimes when you see this stuff, it's kind of interesting. You know, at first he was sounding kind of crazy; but, yeah, we do call it that."

As you start to open your eyes to some of the things, you will begin to understand it God removed the bone from the penis of the man! Now, whether that was the bone or not, I cannot absolutely say! I believe it was, but I cannot absolutely say; but you don't have a bone, and everybody else does. That, I can absolutely without a shadow of a doubt say. Every other creature that is even close to man physiologically and even those that are different, even down to a little bitty shrew, everything that eats flesh has a bone in the penis but you. Now, something's happening with that. Can't you see that? Every creature has two eyes, has a nose, has a mouth; they got every other thing. We have every other thing they have. Why do we not have the bone?

When you start thinking about it, it starts to make sense. You don't have a bone. A man will not stay erect unless he is excited; unless he has desire for the woman, you don't have a bone! If you had a bone, you wouldn't need that. But that is why man is the only creature on the face of the Earth that can have sex outside of the estrous cycle of the female.

God took the bone out, so you would be attached. You could not even procreate unless there was a desire for the other party. God took the bone out! And when the bone was removed, it had to be in mind, and it had to be in spirit.

That gets deep; I told you it was deep. And when you understand these things, we will begin to see even the importance of sex in our relationship. It is real, it is important, and it draws a man and a woman closer and closer and closer together or it can push them further and further and further apart. It has the power to do both, and that is why those taps in that hand were so important: so that husband and wife would understand whether they are on one track or whether they are in one accord with the area that puts them into being one flesh.

Over in Matthew, 19th chapter, this is the verse that I read last week. You have heard this one many times. Matthew, beginning at Verse 4 in the 19th chapter: "And He answered and said unto them, Have ye not read". You see, when he said "Have ye not read", He was talking about Old Testament Scripture. This is Jesus talking, and He was answering someone and said: "Have ye not read? Have you not seen what God said in the beginning, that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female and, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

He said, "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother". What cause? What cause? Because He made them male and female, that's the cause. He said, "For this cause, you shall leave your father and mother." You know, if both of you were men, you wouldn't need to leave your mother and father. If both of you were ladies, you wouldn't need to leave your mother and father. For this cause, because He said He made them male and female, and for this cause they shall leave father and mother and the two shall become one flesh.

See, sometimes it is hard for us to envision or it is hard for us to believe that the Bible, when it meant "one flesh", we sometimes just shut our minds to the fact that that was talking about sex. You still don't believe it? Some folks still go, "Oh, Pastor that is just not talking about sex. That is not talking about sex; it is just talking about coming together and holding hands."

That is not talking about just coming together and holding hands. Go to 1 Corinthians in the 6th chapter, and you will see there another example of this "one flesh" thing. From the very beginning when God set the whole thing in order, He set it up for man and for woman, for husband and for wife, to come together in sexual harmony. At 1 Corinthians, Chapter 6, beginning at the 15th verse -- and this is Paul speaking. We have heard this verse reading before, but he said: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith He, shall be one flesh?" Get that verse good: "What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot".

Now, some folks don't know what "harlot" means, because this is Old Testament language. A harlot is a prostitute. That is a woman that sells her body for money for the purpose of man's sexual gratification. A harlot is a prostitute! Now, a man joining himself with a prostitute is not going to her for Scripture reading. He is not going for prayer. He is not going for Bible study. He is going for one thing.

So sometimes you have to break this stuff down, because some folks will say, "Well, you know, he could have been from the church, and he could have been going over to the prostitute, praying with the prostitute. You don't know, Pastor Bronner, that he was going to the prostitute for sexual purposes. He could have seen the prostitute and seen the prostitute needed saving, and he could have been over at the prostitute's, joining with the prostitute, trying to save her. That's why." No, it wasn't, either. You can twist it all kind of ways. When Paul was talking to the man, they were not talking about their going over trying to save the prostitute. So get that real clear: he was talking about the man joining themselves with a prostitute having sex: "What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh." Do you see that clear? Is there anyone that cannot see that "the two shall be one flesh" is talking about sex?

Now, sure, in there it has some higher meanings, just like all of the stuff in the Bible has three or four different levels of higher-level meaning; but you always have to begin with that root meaning. The root meaning of what Jesus is talking about, the root meaning of what Paul is talking about, the root meaning of what God meant in the beginning was coming together in sexual union.

Now, if you look at the 17th verse of that 6th chapter of 1 Corinthians, the verse right after “shall be one flesh”: “But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.” See, he says when you are joined in with the Lord, you’re one spirit; but if you joined in with the harlot you are one flesh, and when you join with your wife you are one flesh. It is showing that you join with the harlot and the wife, and both of you become one flesh in the same manner. Can you see that? He is talking about sex.

Sometimes we’ll get just so holy that we can’t believe that the people back then were even having sex. Sometimes, people, it is like this. I mean, sometimes if we even look at our parents, my mother is so sanctified. If I was not standing here, I would not have believed that my mother had ever had sex ...

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: ... because there is a block in the mind of sometimes this great holiness. If I was not standing here, I would not believe in myself, because she is too holy!

See, sometimes, people, we associate holiness with having no sex, and that is just not the case! My mother had six children; so at least at a very bare minimum ...

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: ... at rock-bottom, bare, absolute minimum, I know my dear holy, spiritual, sanctified mama, at very minimum, at the very least that is biologically possible -- because I know at the time of artificial insemination, clinics everywhere operate. Now, maybe if it was indeed modern terms and that way, I could say, “My mother never had sex. She went to the clinic, and she just got artificially inseminated. Not mama, nope!” Your mama had sex. And your mama had sex. As you are standing here, you are sitting here as a result. There’s only one person -- well, as a matter of fact, there are only three people that walked this Earth that did not get here as a result of sex. That was Adam; that was Eve, and she had the bone; and there was Jesus. Everyone else that has walked this Earth has gotten here as a result of sex.

Now, some people will say, “Well, you know, I went swimming and somebody had done something in the water, and that got up in me. I haven’t had sex.” Oh, no!

I never will forget that a doctor was practicing, and a man brought in his teenage daughter. She was having some nausea in the morning and all that, so the doctor ran a test and came back and told the father, he said, "I am sorry to tell you, sir, but your daughter is pregnant." And the daddy said "No way!" He said, "There is no way my daughter is pregnant. My daughter is a virgin ... just no way!" So the doctor just walked away, and he opened the window and started looking out the window. The daddy said, "Why did you just walk away from me for?" And he said, "Well, the last time this happened, a star appeared in the sky and three wise men showed up."

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: Every other time other than Bethlehem, there has been some sex going on, pure and as simple as that.

"But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." In the very next verse, Paul says in the 18th verse of the 6th chapter of 1 Corinthians: "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." So unless he is talking about a harlot, coming as one flesh as He sayeth from the beginning and to flee fornication, all that, people, is talking about sex.

But there is a part that we have to understand with it. I saw even as of last week just from the experience that my wife had that even though some people heard the message, it did not register on them. And sometimes that is why you have to bring something twice, so that people will have a chance to see a little bit clearer into the thing.

God put that thing for the closeness and for the unity of man and woman. He could have left us like the animals with a bone. We would need no emotion whatsoever, because the bone would be there. It would not matter how you felt, because the bone would be there. But you are boneless, men. And as a result, there must be emotion, there must be feeling, there must be a desire. All of that is wrapped up, and when that thing is there with a woman, it greatly enhances your marriage; that's just all there is to it, and I am thankful for Puddin'. And when she laid that paper with the book that she had just ordered, I mean, people, you need to follow the First Lady.

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: There's nothing wrong with that at all. Puddin' said, "I heard what you said. I am getting a book." And I'm telling you, I had to slow Puddin' down. See, that is one thing if you know my wife. Whenever she gets something in her head, she is stuck with it. If she ever gets something in her head, I mean, she can follow that thing through to no end. So that's why I had to tell Puddin', "Now, Puddin', we've got to keep these things in balance," because, see, I

am 11 years older than Puddin'. But I understand I've got obligations. I can't let that go. That's why I have to get out and run, I have to stay in shape. And I have to do that, folks, because, I tell you, I don't have a bone!

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: And when you don't have a bone, you've got to be in shape; that is just the truth!

So these are the things that are real that you need to understand, and even from a Biblical perspective when Jesus says "the twain shall be one flesh" When you understand that "in one flesh", that "in one flesh" in its purest and simplest meaning means that coming together of a man and a woman in sexual intercourse, whether that was a man and his wife or whether that was a man and a harlot.

You see, I am speaking today to married couples, for when you join in that one flesh, that is another whole sermon dealing with fornication and joining with those that you are not married to. There are so many problems that come out of that. There are so many transfers of spirit that come out of that. There is so much heart ache and heartbreak and misery that comes out of that. Ladies I can tell you right now, if you remain a virgin, the heartache and the heartbreak that 99% of women go through would never happen if they remained virgins, if they just would follow what God's law says. That is saying it to the woman; but, in reality, the responsibility is on the man when you know God's Word. God never put it in the Bible for the woman to remain a virgin. He put it in the Bible and the law where He said, "If a man sleeps with a virgin, he is to marry her." The responsibility has always been on the man, when you understand how God's law was set in place.

That is why when you really look at God's law, every bit He set in place made plenty of sense. See, not only did it to protect the woman; but the father of the woman got a dowry from the husband when the woman was a virgin. If she was no virgin, he got no dowry. God had an economic incentive attached to the man keeping his daughter virginal. Some of you think that is real cold and real harsh, and why would you put money on it? Why would your husband have to pay the daddy money? But do you know that when you look at what some of those dowries, it would be the equivalent to an average of about \$50,000 today? Do you know daddy would take a lot more interest in making sure their daughters remained virgins if he was going to get \$50,000 when they got married? Sometimes we will place more value on money than we will on morality. God knew that. That is why He had it in there. But the man did not have to pay the daddy anything if the woman was not a virgin.

So, people, there are some things that when we understand God's law and what God had in place, I am speaking to the married people today to try to get the bed heated up; but to the single people, you need ice on it. For those of you that have not

ventured out into the world of sex, you need to keep closed. I can tell you people, it will make a difference. Out of all the woman that I dated, out of all the woman that I knew, I only married one, and she was the only virgin that I had ever met. I only married one. See, God had that thing set up where it is sealed, signed and delivered. It is sealed, and there is no question about it! There is no doubt whatsoever. I don't have to worry about who Puddin' was with before I married her, because they may have done something but they did not do that!

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: Now, see, that much, I know. I cannot tell you all of what she did do; but I can tell you with absolute surety, there is no question, there is no doubt in my mind, absolutely none! I was literally, absolutely stake my life that Puddin' had not had sex before we got married. You know, sometimes you have a glimmer? There is not even a glimmer, not a shadow, not a dot nor a piddle of doubt at my mind at all!

You see, that thing makes a difference. God put those things in safety, and do you know even by law the priest could marry no one but virgins? God had it in His law for some reason, and for some reason I began to see how God had even unfolded and He had kept my life even within law. There are some things when you begin to understand some things.

I am preaching about heating up the marriage bed, but I don't want single people to go out and try to heat up a single bed. You need some ice on your bed, because if it is not joined in Holy Matrimony, you are going to be joining yourself to a harlot. And, you see, the harlots frankly of this day are not just women; they are men. You have men now that are more promiscuous, and that is one of the major problems of single women. They talk about, "The men just won't be faithful to me." That is a conundrum. You see, it is a problem when a woman tries to say, "I want to get a single man, and I want him to be faithful to me and to just have sex with me." You want to have a religious spiritual man, but you want him to just have sex with you. That is like saying, "I want a good man, but I just want him to smoke just a little crack."

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: See, you step over into an arena that just opens a door, and it opens a door to all kinds of things. So ladies, unfortunately, except a few enlightened men -- now, see, I stand between right now two of my brothers that remained virgins until they were married, and that is a rare thing this day. But, see, they had to keep it. C. Elijah used to talk about it; maybe you can get him to preach a sermon one day. He used to talk to the men about how he was able to remain a virgin. All that time, he had one rule. That one rule, no matter what he

did, he never would unbuckle his pants; that was his rule! He says as long he kept that rule, as long as he kept that gate shut and as long as he kept that in mind, that was his rule, and that kept him.

So sometimes, people, we need to understand both sides of it, because we have a mixture of both married and single people there. There is one thing about it, God knows what He is talking about. With both sides, you need to keep your single bed with ice on it; but I am talking today about heating up the marriage bed.

Even with the sheet of paper that my wife laid across my computer, it was from Dr. Bob. His name is Dr. Bob Schwartz, and he had a book and stuff. He had some key points that I think it is important to bring to you just some of those points; but he was talking about it as a psychologist, not necessarily from a spiritual view, just about relationship. See, people, that is what you must understand. The Bible is about everyday life; it is not about how you live up in Heaven. There is nothing in the Bible that tells you that. The Bible is telling you how to live right here, not all up in Heaven, and it is not telling you how to live in church, because we don't have any problems with fornication in church; the problem we have is fornication when folks leave church. We don't have any problem with adultery in the church, not as a general rule. Now, some folks may even come to church when everybody is gone, because from some folks even the preacher's office I've heard stories about. So sometimes, yes, it is a problem in the physical church itself! But for the most part, our problems are not really in church; they are out of church.

The first thing Dr. Bob said is, "Sex is important. If you are a couple, you need to couple." That's the way Dr. Bob said it: "If you are a couple, you need to couple." In other words, he is saying if you are married, you need to join and you need to become that one flesh.

He says, "Make your marriage and love life as important as anything else." Some of you have television programs that you will get to on a more rigid and more regular schedule than your sex life. There are some programs that you won't miss. Sometime they come on every day, and you won't miss them. There are some football games that a man won't miss! He has things that are more important than his marriage and his sex life! See, sometimes, people, when I preach about this people think I am just talking about men who want to have sex and woman who don't. That is about three-fourths of the case or maybe two-thirds; but the other one-fourth or one-third are women who have men who don't want to do anything.

Why do you think Viagra was such a big boon seller? So it is on both sides, and Dr. Bob says these are just worldly principles. All of that stuff is in the Bible, but he says, "Don't let anything become more important than your marriage and your love life."

He says this: "Don't wait until you are both in the mood or both have energy at the same time." He said, "Remember, the hungriest one cooks."

"Make a date at least once a week to deliberately do romantic and intimate things together." People, when you were single, don't you remember the spark and the fire you had when you were single? So many couples have lost it; most couples have. With that type, you make plans! It did not matter how much you worked, you would take time out of your schedule to go see that man or to go see that woman; you made time! Once you get married, you start taking people for granted and the stuff goes cold. Make a date at least once a week. I know you've got responsibilities; but you had responsibilities when you were single and you made time. The problem is not the increase of responsibilities; it is the diversion of focus.

"Practice effective communication with each other at least once a week. If you look up the word 'intercourse' in the dictionary, it means 'to talk.'" That's the part that men have to understand, intercourse is not just sex; it means to talk! And sometimes you've got to make some time to just sit down. I know that is a problem I have myself, because women as a general rule have more words than men about virtually everything. Men are not as detailed, and they are not as explicit as a woman in terms of talking; but yet, women like to communicate and likes to express things about how they feel. A woman just wants to tell you what her day was like. She does not necessarily want you to figure out the problems and then solve them; she just wants to tell you about it. I have to make a deliberately effort to try at least every day for Puddin' and I to have some meaningful dialogue time, and that is a struggle, folks.

This is another thing about it: all couples have struggles. So at the men's ministry and at the men's meeting, as all the men got together and talked and as we began to open up and just to pour out about relationship and about marriages -- and about 90% of the men in the group are married -- and one of them said, "Wow!" He said, "I thought I was the only one."

Now, in the women's group, they are unique, in that they have no problems with their husbands. In the women's group, all they talk about are just social things and worldly issues; but everything with the women is that ... say "Amen", ladies.

CONGREGATION: Amen.

PASTOR NATHANIEL: I was saying that as a joke, because I know in the women's meeting, you talk about the men, just like the man talk about their situations in the men's meeting. All relationships have problems! It is almost unheard of for you not to have some difficulty.

So the thing is, people, it is not that you are not going to have problems. The key is that you've got to work together to make that thing, to bring it back where it was. Do you understand that to have a good relationship is the most joyous thing that you can have out of life, because money does not mean a thing?

I remember the last album that we did was called "Million Dollars" and the title of a song was "What Good Is A Million Dollars?" I wrote that song, because I had seen lives and I recognized some things that all the money is no good. One of the lines went, "I have my food prepared every day by a gourmet chef, but what good is a gourmet chef if I have to eat all by myself?"

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: "I'd rather have a bowl of cold soup, if I can just eat it with you." That was the whole theme! He had a Rolls Royce, and he drove in the Rolls Royce all by himself.. The last line of the tune was, "It gets mighty cold, holding gold."

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: And, you see, people, even money without a warm relationship is no good. It is better for you to be out in a tent with someone that you really love passionately than for you to be up in the penthouse of the Ritz-Carlton with a big king-sized bed with frills and a canopy and all kind of stuff and you're laying in it cold, mad at each other. It is better for you to be out in a tent. So we need to understand some of the basic things and, see, most of us we get in a tent in our relationship, because we are struggling so hard to get to its real cause in our stuff. We've got all of this stuff: We've got two fine cars; we've got a big, fine house; we've got big, fine clothes. And then when we take off the big, fine clothes in our big, fine house and get in our big, fine bed, both of us turn our back to each other mad, cold.

We've got to understand and realize some priorities, and you need to make them. You need to at least give your relationship just as much priority as you give your job. And, men, I will tell you this: If you just give your relationship as much priority as you give your car, you will be in good shape. Just give your wife as much attention as you do your car. That's all, just that one little thing. Just give your wife as much attention as you do your car. Don't let anything happen, you know, if you hear something going wrong with your car, you hear it running funny and knocking, oh, goodness! Men will stop, go and take it to the mechanic and check everything. But yet, you see your wife pouting, going around, "Hmm. Wonder what is wrong with her."

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: Just give your wife as much attention as you give your car! And most men would be in pretty good shape.

Now, some men would not. My father, he could not have gone by that rule at all, because he did not give a hoot about a car; he had ragged cars that stayed junked up. He never serviced them. So that would not apply to my daddy.

But my father saw about my mother. He would not let anything happen to that woman. He would take care of her. My father was protective. That man loved that woman. See, men, the greatest thing that you will ever be able to give your children beyond toys, beyond money, beyond things, the greatest gift that you will ever be able to give your children is to love those children's mother. And I knew my daddy did that; in the spirit every day, but at least six times in the flesh.

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: Dr. Bob took a survey in 200 cities as he was speaking to various couples, and these are the statistics that he tabulated: 65% of couples complained about the frequency of lovemaking that had gone down. For either one of the parties or both, that is two out of three of the couples complained about the frequency of their sex life going down; 70% of women were not satisfied with the quality of lovemaking in their marriage ... 70%. That is a high percentage. And, see, men, one of the reasons why women may not want to do it, they just may not be satisfied with it. So you need to check with Puddin' on that book that she is ordering, and you may need to order that book because sometimes you just need knowledge on stuff -- seventy percent of women were not satisfied with the quality of lovemaking in their marriage; 85% of couples said that they were no longer in the mood at the same time or had the energy at the same time to make love -- 85% of them said, "Neither one of us is in the mood at the same time." See, that is the difference when you are single. When you are single, both of you will be in the mood. When you get married, they said 85% of the couples said, "Well, if she is in the mood I am not; if I am in the mood she is not." You need to get together so you can get on one flesh, and sometimes that is why you need to make that date -- 50% of men -- now, 70% of the women said they were not satisfied with the quality of the thing; 50% of the men wanted to improve their sexual performance, and 50% were not interested. So half of the men said they wanted to do something about it, and the other half said, "Well, if she is not satisfied, well, that's just too bad."

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: One-third of the couples had all but given up on sex; and 60% of couples reported that lovemaking had become boring and the spark had disappeared.

These were the statistics from Dr. Bob, and they were not particularly taken inside of the church. But I have a real strong intuition that if they were taken inside of the church, the statistics would be the same, because the divorce statistics are not only the same; they are even higher inside of the church. And sometimes even the world is far more cognizant of that one-flesh principle than we are in the church, because it is unthinkable for oftentimes many church people to decide to do something if our sex lives have grown cold.

My topic for today is simply entitled "Return To Sender". That is a topic that God told me to entitle this message, and I still don't even fully understand the meaning of the topic; but it is "Return To Sender". And maybe it is about that man gave woman in the beginning the bone, and it is up to woman and man for the man to physically get to the performance where the other animals are that have the natural bone.

But, see you, the other animals are limited; man is not. And when you understand some of these basic principles, that God said, "Be not deceived. God is not mocked, for whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap". Do you understand that even the sexual process is a sowing and a reaping; it is a planting of a seed and a reaping of a harvest, and it takes both man and woman to produce that fruit?

People, read Solomon some time when he talks about how the woman is the garden of his delight. It is the sowing. If you really start reading Solomon, it really almost reads like porno, to be honest with you. You start reading some of the Songs of Solomon, it reads just like porno; and that is in the Word of God. But it is real, because God meant for us really to be sexual creatures with our marital partners; but we have lost so much of that.

I just say to you as I close from that subject that maybe some of you will get something out of it beyond what I said is just "Return To Sender." We have got together in that area, people. I mean, we need one spirit, we need one mind; but we need one flesh. We have ignored it. We talk about mind, we talk about spirit; but we have ignored that flesh. And I firmly believe that is why 20% of the ministers are hooked on pornography: they have ignored the flesh! And you can't shut those things up when God has meant for them to be expressed and He has given you a partner to express it with.

Now, see, Paul even said he wished that all were like he was, which was celibate and unmarried; but he said most people are made like that, and it is better to marry than to burn. I couldn't have made it like Paul! Most of us are not eunuchs and most of us are not celibate; we are not destined to be that way. If you are married especially, it is not supposed to be that way. Once you get past a certain age, once you get up around your 80s, you can slow it down.

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: But the problem is that most of these surveys and most of these problems are not coming from people who are open in years. They are coming from people in their 20s, their 30s, their 40s and 50s. They are coming from people that should be active and should be joined and enjoying each other to the fullest.

Today was not a sermon that is your average sermon. There is no question about that. Some of this, you have never heard it before and you will probably never hear it again. But hopefully it will start to open some eyes. And hopefully it will send you back into a dating mode. Men, don't just take this sermon and go and tell your wife "Now, you listen to that. Did you listen to what the pastor said? The pastor said we are supposed to be doing this thing every day! We are supposed to be doing this thing two times a day! The pastor said we are supposed to be doing the thing as much as I want." No, it is not all about that, because sometimes that will be a man's view! A man wants to handle the bone, and a woman wants to handle the tone. And men don't understand that sometimes. It has to be a mutual thing. So, you see, when a woman has been wined and when she has been dined and when she has been talked sweet to and when you have helped her, C. Elijah gives the example over and over when he helps his wife around the house, that just turns his wife on to no end!

(Laughter.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: So sometimes he has to go and clean some dishes and pick up some clothes and mop some floors; that's the aphrodisiac for his wife! And he says whenever his wife gets home and he has that place and kitchen clean, he says his wife just comes in and -- I'm not going to go into all that; but that's her aphrodisiac!

(Laughter and applause.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: So sometimes, men, you have got to understand that thing. It is not just about the wife doing her part; it is about both of you doing your part, and you need to get back to the stage where you are lovers, to where you are dating, to where you are concerned and where you are considerate. You know how much you used to talk when you were dating! I mean, when we were dating, Puddin' had a \$300.00 a month cell bill. Puddin' couldn't just stay off the phone with me at work! We talked all day.

But when you get married, your conversation goes down and down and down. You need to get that spark back, not just in the arena of sex; sex is a component, but it is oftentimes a sign and a symbol of what things are in that other area.

You will find that as you start just taking some of Dr. Bob's suggestions, just one date a week, just taking some time out of every day ... how many of you have 15 minutes just to sit down? Do you know what it would do for your marriage if you just took 15 minutes a day, because most married couples don't even need to talk five minutes a day? If you just took 15 minutes a day and talked, it could make a world of difference if you just had intercourse for 15 minutes -- and that's what the word "talk" means. It would change your relationship.

These are practical things, people, in practical areas that we've got some problems with. I hope that you can take this in the right spirit. And you don't need to get like the lady that were here last week that was 90 years old, she could see it. And I hope we can. And I hope we take this knowledge and this information and this revelation and bring this into our homes and let it transform our marriages.

Bow your heads.

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank You for this Word upon this day, for You recognized even from the beginning that Adam needed a woman. And You took something that was precious from him, and You gave it to the woman. But as long as woman and men are on one accord, the men doesn't need the bone. Let us see that principle, dear Father, and understand what You are trying to say through Your examples, the transference and the removal of the bone in the beginning. We don't need it when we are one. And in this area, bring Your anointing back into our homes -- yea, back even into our bedrooms -- that we may be again with the born-again love for each other. In Thy Son Jesus' name, Who said "one flesh", we pray; amen.

At this time, if there is anyone that would like to come for salvation, to dedicate and rededicate their lives to our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ, we now open the altar of God for salvation. And if you would like salvation on this day, we ask you to rise and come forward ... anyone for this day for salvation.

Our next appeal, if you don't have a church home and you feel within your heart and spirit that the Ark of Salvation is the family that you should join, we now have an open invitation for membership in Ark of Salvation. If at this time you would like to join this family and this body, we ask you to arise and come forward.

(Applause.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: Amen, amen and amen. Amen, amen.

It is truly an honor that you have chosen to make this church your church home and to become members. And it is even symbolic that we've got a man and his wife and

offspring, the result of becoming one flesh. We praise God, and we thank God. God will sanctify everything that you do.

I just hear God speaking to me just even about this family. God is saying this is a good family. And they are unusual in even the fact that even as you come here now, you are even coming in a spirit of giving and not necessarily even coming just to see what you can get. God says this is a good family, a blessed family, and the blessings that are in store for you, most have not even been yet unfolded to you, for you have been faithful and you are truly seeking His Word and there is a giving spirit; and God says even the union between the two of you, that though there be some friction, to understand you are blessed among the blessed. And though at times you may not think your relationship is the best, but you just don't know what you've got, and God is trying to tell you He is getting ready even to pour more honey into your lives and into your world even now; and that He has cleansed with your hearts, in the name of Jesus, amen.

If you would, if you'd just have a seat on the front row.

(Applause.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: Amen, amen.

She is coming for rededication.

Dear Heavenly Father, we have a soul who comes right now who has been seeking, who has been wanting. Even for the last three years, you have been going through quite a bit. And God says you have been going around in circles, and there have been points to where you just don't know which way to turn about some things. And He is saying, "Turn to me." All of your answers and all of that which you are seeking are within God. You won't find that in a man. That does not exist. And that which have been removed and that which is empty, that which is hollow, that which is vacant, that which is void, a man cannot fill. He says understand that very clearly: a man cannot fill that; and the world will try to trick you and will try to fool you that it can be, but it cannot; and there are areas within your world only the Love of God can heal. And once the Love of God comes in and makes that which is void full, that which is empty overflowing, that which is not there ever-present, once God comes in, it will draw that unto you that once you get full you will not even be seeking. God says turn to Him. Turn to Him, and all shall be made well. If you would, repeat after me, dear Heavenly Father, I stand before you ... a sinner ... and though I have sinned, as we all have ... dear Father, I want to return to You right now. Right now, dear Father, I make a pledge ... that I shall follow Your Son Jesus the Christ ... and I believe that He died ... and arose for my sins ... and upon this belief ... I am saved. It is going to be all right, my child, in the name of Jesus.

Amen, amen. If you would, have a seat on the first row.

(Applause.)

PASTOR NATHANIEL: Amen, amen and amen. We will not have the laying-on of hands for healing upon this morning. There are some special people that need a special healing, and God is speaking in my spirit come Friday. C. Elijah has really been doing some awesome preaching at the Weekend Word. You need to be there. And there is even a part even dealing with the message of God that just as where two or more are gathered, you even need two words a week, because to be honest with you, people, Sunday is just not enough. Sunday is only enough if you've just got everything together and everything is just going perfect. But when you've got some stuff to deal with, you need a message at the beginning and at the end of the week. So I admonish you, come on Friday at 7:30 for the Weekend Word. We will have the laying-on of hands for healing for those that need a healing within your bodies. Well, stand to your seat and come across the aisle. Don't forget to pick up a copy of this message and of Friday's message out of these double doors, second door on the left in the tape room.