



Message **Transcript**

Handling Conflict with Other Believers

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Hey, before we go hear from the word of the Lord this morning, let's prepare our hearts. You guys ready to hear from God this morning? Yeah, this word. And I'll just say this from the get go. It's a sobering message.

I also say this, there's a lot of stuff, and I should have said this last week, too. I had somebody tell me this, some of the stuff in one corinthians is a little more than PG 13. I'm just telling you that I don't preach this in a shock value kind of way, but if you do have children, we do have age appropriate ministries. They're welcome to be here. I just want to let you know that I'm not going to water down the word of God for your children.

I'm going to present the word of God, and then you can decide what you want to do with your kids. You're the parents. Okay? So let's go before him. Let's hear what he has to say to us.

Let's prepare our hearts so we're not only ready to hear it, but receive it and put it into practice. So, Jesus, we give you all the glory, honor and praise for who you are. And, Lord, as we look into your word this morning, Lord, we pray that just like you did

in the first century, your living and active word would have your way with us. And so, Lord, we're excited to hear your word. Lord, we want to hear what you want to say.

And, Lord, we want to put into practice the very things that you have for us. And more than anything else, Jesus, we want to celebrate you and what you're doing in and through us. So, Lord, speak now. Lord, exhort us where we need exhorting and challenge us where we need challenging, and admonish us where we need to be admonished. And, Lord, just wrap your arms around us and encourage us and give us comfort where we need it.

And, Lord, we're ready to hear you. And so we give you all the glory, all the honor, and all the praise in your mighty and matchless name, Jesus. Amen. And amen. I want to encourage you.

Open up your bibles to first corinthians six. First Corinthians six. And what we're taking a look at today is how to handle conflict with other believers. Okay. How should you handle conflict with other believers?

Now, some people falsely believe that when they become Christians and they join a church that everything's going to be hunky dory and smooth. Because, man, if you could kind of get along with non-Christians. Okay. Imagine how good it's going to be when you get in the church. You'll never get into a conflict with another Christian, will you?

Wrong. If you don't believe me, Christian, marry another Christian. Right? We'll never fight, will we? We'll never have a disagreement, will we?

I mean, those things just kind of how do you handle it when it happens? Like, what are we supposed to do and why are we supposed to do it? And if you're not in conflict with another believer, praise God that you're not. I would just encourage you, take very strong notes, because at some point in time, you, you will be right. And Paul is going to really highlight three things for us to consider when we're in conflict with other believers, so that we can act appropriately for unity in the body and for the sake of God's glory in his church, so that he can rule and reign.

In one corinthians six, we start this chapter. Paul's just come out of this very strong passage about immoral people in the church. What do you do with people that are consistently sinning? Like, what do you do not with people who have sinned and are repentant or try to live right but sin occasionally? But what do you do with that person that has ongoing, blatant, willful, unrepentant sin?

And Paul said, you remove them, you take them out for the sake of the glory of Christ. And that's his end thought, and this is where he's going to begin. He says this. Does any of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare go to the law before the unrighteous and not before the saints? Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world?

If the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts? Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more matters of this life? And in those first three verses, you see the first thing Paul is going to put out for us to consider. When you are in conflict with another believer, consider this.

Consider not going outside the church for resolutions because you will lose every

time. Okay. When you're in a conflict with another believer, with another brother or sister in Christ, consider not going outside church for your resolutions because you will lose every time he says this. Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, it means somebody's wronged you. And I'm right.

I'm right in the fact that you've wronged me. Dare to go to the law before the unrighteous and not before the saints. He says this Christian, when you're in a disagreement with another believer, don't take him to court ever. You lose every time. And Paul is going to point out five reasons why you're going to lose every time.

And those will come up on the board if you want to take notes on those, too. As we talk about this point, don't go to court now. We live in a generation right? Now. When I grew up, it was a little bit different.

We didn't wear helmets when we rode bikes. We didn't wear seatbelts in the car. We had a parent put an arm out in the event of a fast stop, right? I mean, we did all sorts of things that would be considered highly dangerous in today's world. And we lived in a day where if the teacher told you that you were wrong, even if the teacher

was wrong, the teacher was right, and you would probably still get in trouble at home from your parents.

Right? I mean, we lived in a different day. We live in a day and age now where you're a victim no matter what happens. As a matter of fact, if you're watching some football games today, see how many attorney commercials we'll be on, right? And here's what the thrust of the commercial is.

You may have been wronged and you don't even know it yet, but we want to help you understand why you were wrong so you can collect from other people that may have hurt you in a way you didn't even realize that you deserve to be paid. Why? What's the message? In our culture, I'm a victim all the time, and somebody else owes me something. And what was happening in the first century is what happens in our church, too.

And when somebody wrongs us, what do we want? I want restitution. I want things to be made right. I want justice, and I want that thing now. And so if the church ain't gonna help make it now, I'm going somewhere else outside the church.

Paul's like, don't do that. Consider not going outside the church. Consider staying inside the church. Consider working it out with other believers in Christ in the church. That's what Paul says.

That's his thrust of his entire argument. He says, do you dare go before the unrighteous and not before the saints? Now, Paul's going to make a huge distinction here, and you're going to see it later in the text between the unrighteous and the righteous. Like there's a huge difference. We'll see that in just a little bit.

The unrighteous the Bible would talk about their positional standing before the Lord as unrighteous, as wicked, as filthy, as separate from God. He would define the saints as those who have trusted Jesus, who have the Holy Spirit in their life, who have the wisdom and the power of God in them. And there's this huge distinction. Saints have life. The unrighteous are dead.

Why are you going to dead people to get your wisdom about what you need? I mean, saints consider this because if this hasn't happened to you yet, it's going to. You're going to get wronged by another believer. Don't go to non believers to solve and get resolution for what happened between the believers. Go to other believers.

Right. Because if you don't, you're going to lose every single time. And there's five reasons why. Paul points out that christians lose every time that they go outside the church for their resolution. And the first one comes out of this, this passage right here, this first part that we read, because you demonstrate you do not understand your position, your stature and or your ability.

Now, six times in chapter six, Paul's gonna use these words. Or do you not know? Now, as I mentioned earlier, as we're reading this, I mean, Paul says this ten times in the book of one corinthians, I believe. I mean, when you're talking to prideful, arrogant people that think they know it all about God, and you say, do you not know this? Do you not know that it's an offensive way of communicating.

It's great rhetoric that Paul is using. He's like, I know you're so smart, but

perhaps you don't know this. Six times in one corinthians six, he's like, or do you not know? Like, don't take people to court. Don't try to settle with non believers.

Here's why. Because you demonstrate you don't understand your position, stature and ability, or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? Do you guys know? Do you realize if you're a believer in Jesus Christ in some way, we are going to be responsible for judging the world, that we're going to handle world judgment along with Jesus and judgment, just so you know, is not necessarily just giving judgment over somebody, but it's ruling and reigning. That's what the word judge can also mean, not only of the world, but notice what else God says.

He says this. Do you not know that the world will be judged by you? And if the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts or the smallest cases of law. If you're going to be responsible with Jesus to judge the entire world, can you not handle another believer that's got a problem with you, that's wronged you? I mean, do you realize your stature and your position and the authority that you have in Christ, and yet you demonstrate that you don't have it?

That's what he's saying. Notice what he says in verse three. Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more matters in these lives, this life? Now, the Bible is not super clear as to what this judgment looks like in the millennial reign.

What it looks like to judge angels, if that means that we're going to judge the unholy angels or the demons, the ones who have fallen, if we're going to pronounce judgment on them, or if that means that in the millennial kingdom, we're going to reign and rule over the angels. The Bible is not totally clear on it, but get this. I mean, just get this in your head. Human beings, male and female, are the crown of God's creation. You're higher than the angels in God's economy.

Do you not realize that you'll judge the angels? That's what he's saying. And if that's what your stature is and that's who you are and that's what you're going to be doing, then how can it be that you have to run to unrighteous people to solve the most trivial matters in your life just because another believer wrongs you? Right? Every time you go to non believers to get your solutions between christians, you demonstrate you do not understand your.

Your position. I love psalm eight five. It says that God made mankind a little lower than God and crowned him with glory and honor. I mean, sometimes we look, well, there's God, and then there's, like, angels, and then there's like all these other saints, and then. No, there's God, and he's alone and he's set apart, and there's no one like God, but the crown of his creation is us.

You're higher than the animals. You're higher than the trees. You're higher than the mountain. You're special. You're created in the image of God.

How awesome is that? He says so. Hey, believer, when you got a problem with another believer, don't go to non believers to solve your problems because you're forgetting your own identity. You have an identity in Christ that's so much greater than you believe. Second thing you do, second reason you lose is because you declare publicly you're making a public statement when you go to non believers that you're declaring that the church does not have the wisdom of God.

Notice what Paul says in verses four and five. So if you have law courts dealing with matters of this life, do you appoint them as judges who are of no account in the

church? I say this to your shame. Is it so that there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren? He's like, what are you doing?

He's like, why in the world would you go to a non christian judge who would be of absolutely no value in the church? He's saying this. Would you make that person that you're going to an elder in your church? Well, heck no, I wouldn't do that. They wouldn't have the wisdom to lead.

Then what the heck are you going to them for in the first place? How come you're not going to your elders? How come you're not going to spiritually mature people in the church? Paul says, I say this to your shame. He goes, is it so that there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren?

He's like, you think you're so wise. Is there not one person in the church in Corinth who walks with the wisdom of God who can help discern in these matters? And Paul's answer, resounding, is, of course there are. It doesn't mean in the church that elders are the only people with wisdom. Can we just make that clear?

It doesn't mean that pastors are the only people with wisdom. Can we make that clear? If you're a saint of the Lord Jesus Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit and walking with God, God can give you incredible wisdom on different matters, which means a great place to start is in your small group or in your sphere of influence with other people who you know are walking with the Lord. Start with them. Go to them.

What would God have me to do here? What would God want me to do there? How would God want me to act? Don't just run off to unrighteous people every time you do. Here's what you're saying.

You're saying, hey, the reason I'm coming to you is cause our church is good for nothing. Our church can't solve anything. You know how church people are. They can't do anything right. So I'm coming to you.

That's your public declaration. Every time you do that, let me tell you as a pastor, here's what I'll see a lot. I'll see people that are about ready to get married, and they'll come and they'll want to talk to me and or other staff, and they'll want to plan this thing

out for six months to a year, which, by the way, we love it when y'all get married.

We're excited about that. It's fun.

There's a planning time. There's all these things on and on we go.

But it pains my heart every time that I hear, yeah, we filed for divorce three weeks ago. How come you didn't come talk to us? Like, do you have rights? Is God gonna let you do? No.

Cause here's what really I'm saying. I want what I want the way I want it, and I don't want to hear what God has to say. I don't want other believers to speak into that on my behalf. Do you see what Paul's saying? He's like, there's people in your church that can actually help you.

If you want to do what God wants you to do, you can go to other spirit filled people. Cause you lose every time you declare the church does not have the wisdom

of God. And this third one goes along with it. You defame the name of Christ by presenting a poor testimony to the lost. Notice what he says, but brother goes to law with brother.

And that before unbelievers. I mean, you're going in front of unbelievers. And here's what you're declaring. You're declaring, I don't know who I am in Christ. You're declaring the church has no wisdom.

And you are going to them, presenting a poor testimony of Christ to the lost. Now, these are the very people. Then on the flip side, you're going to try to share the gospel with and invite them into your church, and they're going to say to you, why the heck would I want to go there? You're no different. There's no wisdom there.

It doesn't help anybody. And look at how you treat your own brother. Why would I want to be part of you? That's what happens when you go after your brother. Now, why do we do that?

Because here's our testimony when we're doing that. Here's our testimony when we're going to non believers. It's really four things. Number one, I want to be right. I want to be right.

Number two, church people stink. My brother and sister in Christ, they did me wrong. They're wrong. I hate them. Number three, punish them for me.

And number four, give me what I deserve. That's your testimony to the lost. I want what I want. My brother stinks. Give me what I deserve.

That's what I want. Cause I need what I need. How is it you can share the gospel with that same person after that's your public testimony? It's really hard. It's really hard because they're going to look you back in the eyes, be like, I don't want you to treat me that way.

Why would I ever want to be part of your community? You lose every single time

you go to non believers to solve. You lose your identity, you lose wisdom, and here you lose your testimony. And then how about verse seven? You determine your selfish need to be right is more important than trusting God's outcome.

Hey, if I go to non believers, I can get this thing worked out the way I want it. If I go to church, it may not go the way I want. I don't know if I can trust God in this matter. Notice what he says in verse seven, actually, then it is already a defeat for you that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather be wronged?

Why not rather be defrauded? Can I just ask you a question? Was Jesus ever wronged? Was Paul ever wronged? Was Peter ever wronged?

Hey, Saint, let me just tell you something. If you're gonna walk with Jesus for a while, you're gonna be wronged by other believers. Did you hear what I said? No. I go to harvest.

I mean, at harvest, all the people are really loved. You're gonna be wronged by

people here. It's just a fact. Why? Because the sin nature continues to exist.

You're gonna be wronged. And if you make it about you and what you need and making sure the outcome is yours and you're controlling the outcome, you may miss out on what God wants. Because you know what? We falsely assume that when we're wronged, that God wants us to get justice right. Now.

We falsely assume that, hey, I was wrong. And it must be because I'm a Christian that God wants to make everything right for me right now. Can I just tell you? That's a false assumption. Now let me give you a true assumption.

One day, every tear will be wiped from your eye. One day, God will make every wrong right. It may not happen in this life. And Paul is saying, hey, why not be defrauded for the sake of Christ? Why not be wronged for the sake of Christ?

Right? Why not just take that as a badge of honor when you're rolling into

heaven? Like, yeah, I was totally wrong. But I was trusting you, God, to make sure you took care of it. I have a friend that's in the business world.

He wanted to be a pastor when I was going into business and he was going into ministry and studying school, God kind of reversed our paths. And he's been super successful in the business sector. He tells a story about a guy that he hired in his company that he promised a huge bonus after three years if the guy got the company to a certain place. The guy didn't last all three years, but the guy came to him and said, hey, you still owe me this bonus. The guy wasn't even a believer.

And he thought about it for a while and the guy was going to take him to court and sue him. And my friend knew he's like, he can sue me all he wants. He's never going to get a dime out of me. I didn't do anything wrong. I fulfilled everything that God would want me to do.

But as he prayed about it, as he prayed about it, he really sensed the Lord saying, why go through all that? Why not just give him the money anyway? You know how much the money was? Over \$600,000. See what my friend did?

He sat down and wrote a check for over \$600,000 and gave it to the guy. Said, I don't think I owe you this, but I don't want to fight you in court. And I want you to know about my love for Jesus. You know what the result of that was? Within a year, that guy came to Christ.

And my friend will tell you, that was the most expensive convert I have ever paid for. Right? And you know what God has done in return? God's blessed his business. Why?

Because his heart was. I don't care what I lose in this life, as long as I don't lose my testimony for Jesus. See, that's the heart of what Paul's saying. Paul's saying it's an indictment on the church when we leave the church to go get wisdom elsewhere. Because we're saying the church doesn't have wisdom.

We're saying the church doesn't have power. We're saying the church doesn't have an identity. We're saying the church doesn't have a testimony, and the church

does not have trust in what God wants to do. Don't go outside the church for your wisdom. The wisdom and the power of God is here.

I promise you. I promise you. That's what he's saying. And finally, here's what you do. When you take a brother or sister to court, you disgrace your brother or sister for whom Christ died.

You disgrace your brother or sister for whom Christ died. Listen to this, verse eight. On the contrary, you yourselves wrong and defraud. You do this even to your brethren. I mean, Jesus said, they'll know you by your love.

Love for God and love for people is a demonstration of what you say you believe. And if in your heart you have selfishness or hatred or angst or you're seeking justice, and that's the testimony the world sees that christians have for their others and how we treat their own. How the heck do we invite them into a relationship with Christ? The answer is, it's very, very difficult to do. See the reason that the early church was blowing up.

I mean, there's a number of reasons, but one of the reasons is they had the fellowship. I mean, they were so connected to God and so loving to each other that when the world looked in, they said, we see a group of people acting and living differently than anywhere else that we've seen. And as Paul's writing this to the church, he's writing as a corrective. Because for the Jews, you know, for all the years that they were assembled in synagogues and doing all that, they always solved their problems within. If you had a problem with somebody else in the synagogue, you went to the synagogue and you had leaders speak into your life and say, here's what to do.

Do you know why we still don't do that today? Because I don't want the outcome of what the church says. I don't really want what God wants. And who are you to know this? Well, people that have the wisdom of God are going to help you a lot more because they're going to be praying for you and the person that offended you and praying for how God's testimony is going to be glorified in a way that secular, non christian people will never, ever do.

They'll never do that, right? When I went to Dallas Seminary, Doctor Tony Evans, associate pastor, came and we were asking him questions one day when he was in a

group meeting with us, and he was telling us funny story about a time Tony was preaching on this text, and he was so tired of people leaving the church and going to the secular courts and doing all this. He was actually out in California. He's from Texas. He was actually out in California preaching.

And this associate pastor was listening to his pastor preaching on the radio. And Tony Evans said this. He goes, that's why in our church, we have a court that meets once a month with elders and pastors and special people that make judgments on things. So if you've got a problem with another believer or you think you want a divorce, you come to church and we'll rule and settle on that for what God says and then take our word. And that guy said, I was the associate pastor, and I was thinking, we don't have that.

He goes, now I know what I'm going to be doing for the next week, putting this thing together. And now if you go to Oak Cliff Bible fellowship once a month, that's exactly what they have. They have a place you can bring your disputes and bring all your cases right to the church and do all that. Wouldn't that be cool if we had something like that here? I mean, that's what the church is for.

And by the way, we don't even need to have that established for it to happen. I mean, go to some people that, you know, that are wise and say, hey, show me some scripture. Show me what God would say. Help me understand what to do and rule on this thing between us, because I want what God wants. And if you want what God wants and don't care whether you get your way or not, and as long as God's testimony is there, do you know God comes in and floods that and blesses that?

I mean, a testimony of Jesus is how we treat other people. I mean, Jesus even told us, not even with believers, he told us in the sermon on the mount, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. I mean, isn't that the message? Isn't that the testimony? And so Paul is making an indictment on the church that you have the wisdom and the power of God, and yet you refuse to tap into it by going to nonbelievers.

And you're losing every single time because you're declaring to the corinthian community, our God is not alive and our God can't do anything for us. I mean, church is a lot more than just crossing the line of faith and believing in Jesus Christ. Church is a place and a community where the wisdom and the power of God dwells, for God to

accomplish what he wants to do. Amen. So I'm just telling you, I know this is sobering, but when you're in conflict with another believer, consider not going outside the church.

You're going to lose. Consider coming in the church and speaking to people who have the wisdom and the power of God. Say, well, what do we do when people treat us bad? Well, you treat them nice. Back.

One of my favorite passages in the entire Bible for how Jesus handled this is in one Peter 2:21. And following when Jesus, it says, starts in verse 21, it says, for you have been called for this purpose since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example to follow in his steps. Christ suffered for you, to teach you how to suffer. Did you know that we don't like hearing that on Sunday. I didn't come to learn how to suffer.

Today I came and learned how to get out of my stuff. No, Christ suffered for you to give you an example for how to suffer. Well, how do I. Who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in his mouth. And while being reviled, which means being verbally abused, he did not revile in return.

And while suffering, he uttered no threats, but kept entrusting himself to the one who judges righteously. When people were mocking Jesus, spitting on Jesus, yelling at Jesus, being vile towards Jesus, he wasn't vile back, nor did he offer threats, saying, oh, say whatever you want now, man. I'll see you in 30 years. Say whatever you want now. You're gonna get your.

He didn't do that. What did he do? He entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. Who's that? The father.

When you've been wronged, what do you do when people are saying mean things about you? Entrust yourself to the father. He's got this, God, you got this, Lord. You take care of this one. This isn't going to go my way.

I know it's not going to go my way, but I'm trusting you one day to make this wrong. Right. I'm trusting you to do that. That's what Jesus did. And notice what else he did.

And he himself bore our sins in his body on the cross so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. For by his wounds you were healed. What did he do next? Not only did he entrust himself to his dad, then he died for the people that were reviling him. He laid down his life for the people that were reviling him.

How about that? How about those two things? When people are coming against you, entrust that injustice to the father, and then do whatever you can to demonstrate love to them in such a way that even if you're laying down your life and suffering for them, that you still keep your testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. And then he goes on and tells us why we should do this. For you were continually strained like sheep, but you have now returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

It's because Jesus did this that we have life with him. And guess what? We're called to do the same. I mean, even on the cross, it wasn't that Jesus was calling out vile threats or saying, I am the king, and one day you will bow. No, here's what he's saying.

Father, forgive them for they don't know what they're doing. They don't know what they're doing. They knew exactly what they were doing. They mouthed every word they were saying. They threw every punch that they threw.

They spit every spit. They knew exactly what they were doing. What was he saying? They don't realize the nature of what they're doing. They don't get it.

But I'm entrusting myself to you and I'm willing to lay down my life for them. Very difficult things in the gospel, isn't it? But that's what the gospel is. The gospel is receiving Christ so that we can model Christ for those in the world. And guess who's called to do it?

The more mature brother or sister, right? Well, they wronged me, and they've been a christian longer, so they should be the one. No, no, no, they wronged you and you're aware of this, so you act this way and watch God show up. So consider not going outside of the church. Second thing is this, when you're in conflict with another

believer, consider the huge, I mean, Gigantuan, I can't come up with a big enough word.

The huge distinction between you and the unrighteous. I mean, just consider it for a minute, because that's what Paul is going to soberly do in this text. I mean, this is sobering. I'm just warning you before I read it. This is sobering.

Okay? This is what Paul says, or do you not know, perhaps you've forgotten this, that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God. Do not be deceived. The unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God. What does it mean to inherit?

It means to participate in, it means to be fully engaged in. And a lot of people nuance different words like enter and all this kind of stuff and inheritance. Let me just tell you this. If you go back to Luke chapter ten, I'm sorry, Luke chapter 18, in verse 18, there was a rich young ruler that came to Jesus. And in verse 18, here's what he said.

Good teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? I want to be part of all the future blessings that are coming. I want that. And Jesus said to him, well, why do you call me good? No one's good except God alone, you know, the commandments.

And he begins to list them all. And he said, all these things I've kept from my youth. When Jesus heard this, he said to him, one thing ye lack, sell all your possessions and distribute them to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven and come follow me. But when he heard these things, he became sad, for he was extremely rich. So what happens?

This guy comes to Jesus, I want to inherit the kingdom. I want to have all the spiritual blessings that are coming. I want to be part of what's going on in the future. Just tell me what I need to do. And Jesus is like, well, here's the law, here's the list, here's the commandments.

Like, good, I've kept all that. And Jesus, being God, looks in his heart and says, well, there's a thing you lack here. I mean, you're all about yourself. You're completely greedy in every way. So just go sell everything, then come follow me, and you'll have

reward in heaven.

And this man walks away sad, and Jesus doesn't miss a beat. Here's what he said. And Jesus looked at him, and here's what he said. How hard it is for those who are wealthy to what? To enter the kingdom of God.

For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. Well, the rich man just wanted to inherit it. How do you inherit it? You enter, you come through the narrow gate. When you come through the narrow gate, the kingdom is yours, right?

That's what he says. I mean, in first Peter as well. First Peter, chapter one. Here's what he says about our inheritance. One Peter one three says, blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his great mercy, has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.

What's that mean? Anybody who's entered in the kingdom through the narrow gate by trusting Jesus, the inheritance is yours. It's a done deal. But here's what Paul's saying in one corinthians. Don't be deceived because the unrighteous won't inherit it.

People who haven't trusted Jesus don't inherit the kingdom. Don't be deceived. And in our culture, let me just tell you, christians, we're deceived. We totally think that a majority of people in our population are going to go to heaven, and God's just to God, love. Don't be deceived.

That's what he's saying. Here's what he says. Listen to this. It's sobering. Neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor, I'm sorry, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkers, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

They won't inherit it. It's not for them, because they haven't entered. People that live like that, people that practice those things, they're not going to be with you in heaven. That's what Paul is saying. How sobering is this?

Because listen to this list for a second. I mean, just let the weight of this fall on you for a minute. He's talking about those who practice these things. Now let me just give you a little bit of understanding of the gospel. Because we think in our society, the gospel is cognitive, which means it's a fact, which it is.

It's objective by trusting in Jesus. But as long as we believe the objective facts, that's good enough. That's not good enough. It's not. I believe Abraham Lincoln was the 16th president of the United States.

Objective fact. I do not believe. He dwells in me, speaks to me, talks to me. Cause if I told you that he did, I'd be a lunatic, right? If I said, hey, Abe Lincoln talked to me this morning.

He's still alive. We're just chilling. No, but believing in effect doesn't change me, right? Jesus said this, you can know who christians are by their fruit. By their practice,

you can know who they are.

I mean, Jesus said the same thing in Matthew, chapter seven. I mean, before we read this list again, I mean, just think about this. In Matthew chapter seven, and he's talking about beingware of false prophets because they come to you as sheep or wolves in sheep's clothing, but inwardly with their ravenous wolves. In Matthew 7:16, he says, you will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they?

So every tree bears, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown in the fire. Watch this. So then you will know them by their fruits.

You can know who a Christian is by their fruit. That's what Jesus said. Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord will enter the kingdom, but he who does the will of my father, who's in heaven, many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? Did we not cast out demons and perform many miracles? And

then I will say to them, I never knew you depart from me, you workers of iniquity.

Wait, wait, wait. You have people performing miracles in Jesus name. You had people speaking in Jesus name that aren't entering the kingdom? Yes. Why?

Because they weren't bearing fruit. You can know who a Christian is by bearing fruit. Now, let me be clear on this. If one of you gals came up to me today and said, hey, I'm pregnant. I'm pregnant.

How long have you been pregnant? Three weeks. Right. Let me tell you what would happen over the course of the next nine months. There would either be life that would come, there would be evidence that you're pregnant, and a life that would come.

And if for some reason that that baby didn't make it to term, let me tell you what, there would be incredible amount of grief and pain, right? Cause you're pregnant. But if you weren't pregnant, neither of those things would happen. If you weren't pregnant, there would never be a life that would come. And if you weren't pregnant, there would

never be grief if the life didn't come because you weren't pregnant in the first place.

But if you were, let me tell you, there's gonna come a time over time where there's evidence that what you said is actually true, either by showing life and rejoicing or by grieving that the life that you are expecting is not being lived. And that's exactly what the gospel does. If you've truly been converted over time, there will be life in your life. There will be evidence to show that you've actually believed this gospel, or there will be incredible amounts of grief when you're not living out that life. But if you've never trusted in Christ, there won't be any of that.

There won't be any life. There'll just be activity, and there won't be any grief over your sin. And Paul's saying there's a huge difference between righteous and unrighteous people. So just listen to his list for a second and let it be sobering as it comes over you. Before I do, let me just show you one other passage first.

John, chapter three. Because we live in a day where we say stuff like this, like, I don't know if he's a Christian or not? I don't know if he's a Christian or not. I mean, he said he was, but for the last 20 years, he's been a drunk and he's been beating his

wife. And he might have been, but I don't know.

Say what? Like, where do you get that? Where do you get that? If the Holy Spirit has come into your life over time, there will be great fruit or grief over the lack of fruit that you have. One John, chapter three says it this way.

One John three. Seven little children. Make sure no one deceives you. Don't be deceived by this. The one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as he is righteous.

If you're practicing righteousness, if you're practicing the things of God, then you're righteous, just like Jesus was. The one who practices sin, means continually participates in is of the devil. For the devil has sinned. From the beginning, the Son of God appeared for this purpose to destroy the works of the devil. So the Holy Spirit's in you.

The cross destroyed the works of the devil so you could be set free from your sin and live for Christ. Watch this verse. Watch this verse. No one who is born of God practices sin. If you truly have the Holy Spirit in your life, there's no way you're going to continually engage in sin and not feel grief over your sin because his seed abides in him and he cannot sin because he's born of God.

Notice what John says by this. The children of God and the children of the devil are obvious. You can tell whose father is who. You can tell when a person's father is God and when a person's father is a devil. It's so obvious.

Anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God for the one who does not love his brother. If people are not practicing righteousness and do not have a love of God for other people, they can call themselves whatever they want. You can call yourself whatever you want if you don't practice righteousness and hunger and thirst for the righteousness of God. And if you don't have a love for the people of God, call yourself whatever you want, but God is not your father. Now, that's what the Bible says.

It's sobering, isn't it? Jesus even said in the sermon on the mount how hard it is for the rich man to enter the kingdom. Jesus said in the sermon on the mount, that enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the way that leads to destruction, and many find it. But narrow is the road and small is the gate that lead to life and few find it.

It means in our culture there's far more that are serving the devil and his work than serving Jesus. And Paul makes this distinction. He said, now be careful here. Don't be deceived on this. I just want to let you know those who practice iniquity are not believers.

They won't inherit the kingdom. You won't see them. Well, who? He says, here's some fornicators. Don't.

What's a fornicator? People that practice sexual immorality outside of marriage. You won't. I mean, if you can practice fornication, you don't feel any guilt for your sin. It's just you're cohabitating, you're living together.

You're cool with that. You don't feel any guilt or shame knowing that God says it's completely wrong in every single way. How? Pastor Jeff, you're so old fashioned, you're so old school. No, I'm biblical and I'm righteous.

I understand all your hormones. I understand if you're 18 years old as a guy, how your hormones rage. I get it. And I also understand the power of God gives you self control. And if you're living for God, it should grieve you to death if you're not fulfilling his plan.

What about idolaters? How about those in here that put other things ahead of Jesus in such a way where all their time and all their money and all their efforts go to these other things, and church is a leftover and Jesus is a leftover. And does that not grieve you? I mean, if you're a Christian, that should grieve you because unrighteous people doesn't grieve them. That's just what they do.

How about this next one? Adulterers. What's an adulterer? Adulterer is a person that engages in sexual relations outside of marriage. You won't see people like that in heaven.

You'll see people who have grieved that and repented of that who are in heaven. But people that continually practice that, they're like, it's my business. I can do whatever I want. You won't see those people. They won't inherit the kingdom.

Now Paul's going to use two words here. You're going to see the word effeminate, nor feminine, nor homosexuals. Here's why. Paul's being graphic enough to describe both the receiver and the giver in a practicing homosexual relationship. You say, well, why does he spell that out?

Because God made two genders. Did you know that? I mean, God created male and God created female. And here's what God says. If you're a female, for heaven's sake, celebrate your femininity and be as much of a woman as you possibly can, and that brings God great glory.

And if you're a man, celebrate your masculinity and be the best man you can be,

because that brings God great glory. But sexual relationships between men and sexual relationships between women are completely out of bounds. Why? Because God set up in Genesis chapter two that for this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and those two shall become one flesh and the only sexuality that God ordains. And since he's the creator of sexuality, he gets to give his stamp on what he wants it for is between a husband and a wife committed in marriage, till death do they part.

It's the only sex that God says sanctions. That's it. Everything else outside of that, whether it's porn, whether it's masturbation, whether it's sex with same sex partners, whatever, it's wrong, it's sinful. And those who continually practice those things without any sense of guilt and without repentance, they don't have the spirit of God inside of them. That's what Paul says.

Do you not realize that? Don't be deceived. You can't call yourself a christian and practice these things. That's what he's saying. And I'm telling you, in our culture, I mean, gender is like this really big thing now.

It's never been a big thing for God. He invented it from the very beginning that men are men and women are women, and there's two genders, and you can just be whoever God made you because he formed you in your mother's womb and he knit all your inmost parts together. And if you came out a boy, hey, you're a boy. And if you came out a woman, you're a woman. And be the fullness of what that is.

And anything else you're hearing outside of that is a lie from the pit of hell, and it needs to be put down, because God loves all people. Amen. Let's keep talking here. Sobering, isn't it? What about thieves?

Nor the covetous? I mean, Paul's using two different words there. Covetous people are just greedy people. I want what you have. I want what you have.

I want what you have. What are thieves? They just take it. I mean, it's the same thing. I'm either greedy for what you have, or I'm gonna take what you have.

People that live like that practice those things without any sense of guilt or repentance. You won't see them in the kingdom of heaven. You're not gonna enter the kingdom of heaven living like that. Paul says, don't be deceived. Don't let anybody lie to you and say, well, because you prayed a prayer.

No, you practice these things. It's not the spirit of God in you. He continues, what else does he have in here? Drunkards. Let me just say something about drunkards, okay?

Cause for most of you, I mean, the Bible doesn't say anything about not drinking, okay? There's no moratorium on that. You can never have a glass of alcohol. There's nothing in the Bible that would say that. But what's drunk?

Well, I don't get drunk. I just get buzzed. I mean, after six, seven beers, I'm just buzzed. That's buzzed drunk. Okay, can we just be clear on that?

It's saying I'm consumed by something other than the Holy Spirit. That's drunkenness. People that live in drunkenness, or it's just a part of their life, all right? My tolerance is so high now, I can drink, like, a fifth of whiskey. I don't even feel it anymore.

Right. Listen, that's not the spirit of God. I want to inherit the kingdom. What about revilers? It's really interesting that with homosexual offenders, there's revilers.

What's revilers? People that have verbal explosions coming out of their mouth, beat people up with their language. I won't see them there. No guilt for that, no shame for that. No repentance in that.

Or swindlers. What's a swindler? These are people that kind of steal indirectly for gain. Do not be deceived. People that live like this and practice these things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Now, I know what you're gonna say to me, Pastor Jeff. Do you not realize that there's even churches in our city that ordain and, like, have, like, lesbian, homosexual elders in their church? Yeah, I'm totally aware of that. They can totally be lesbian and elders in that church, but they won't enter the kingdom of heaven. It's a lie from the pit of hell.

And listen, I want to be so clear on this. So clear on this. So clear on this. God loves you no matter what sin. There, you've sinned because I love the next part.

See, consider the huge distinction. But then don't forget this third point, when you're ready to have a problem with your brother, consider this. Consider how Jesus Christ treated you when you were offending him. I mean, notice what the next words are in verse eleven. Such were some of you.

What's the church in Corinth made up of all these people? What's the church in Denver made up of all these people? Well, how can that group of people that's not allowed to enter the kingdom of heaven be part of the local church? Here's how. Let me tell you.

He says, but you were washed, but you were sanctified. But you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the spirit of our God. What does that mean? It's the biggest contrastive in the Greek, that word, but is the strongest transition you can possibly have. You were this, but you're not anymore.

You were this, but you're not anymore. You're not anymore. And let me tell you this, Christian. It doesn't mean that if you're a Christian that you may not have practiced some of these things again since becoming a Christian. It means that if you do and you hear this message, it will cause you, through the kindness of the Lord, to repent and say, God, I don't even know how to change, but I don't want to do this anymore because I want to honor you.

I love the gospel. I mean, the gospel tells me no matter what I've done and no matter who I've been and no matter how I've lived, God's willing to take me home. And what does it mean that I've been washed? It means that I'm completely cleansed. It means when I come to Christ, I'm not a former homosexual.

I'm not a former drunkard. I'm not a former. I'm a saint. I am a holy person. I am completely washed.

My past is gone. My new has come. I don't need to give an invitation and tell people, well, I used to be this and I'm horrible. And now I'm better. No, I'm something fundamentally new.

And here's what it means. When you've been sanctified, it means you've been set apart. Not only were you saved, you were set apart to live for Jesus in such a way that he brings his gospel through you and you've been justified. Which means, hey, it's just as if you never sinned. But more importantly, it's more like this.

Just as if you'd always done right. That's who you are in God's sight. So I'm not formerly anything. I'm something new. It's not what I used to be.

It's not what I used to be. I'm new. Do you get that? That's what the church is. And here's the beauty of the message.

Whoever you are, no matter how irreligious you are or anti church you are or how steeped in your sin you are, here's what Jesus did when he came. He said, I came for one reason and one reason only. Because you were lost. And I wanted to let you know that I'm alive. And I've been looking for you.

And I love you. And I love you so much that while you didn't even know it, I died on the cross for all your sins. So you never have to carry around the weight, the burden, and the shame of it. Because I've already carried it for you. I've already laid down my life.

And he died in your place. And then he got up out of the grave and he said, you confess me as your lord and savior. I will wash you, sanctify you, justify you, and you are mine for all eternity. Isn't that awesome?

Which means, if you're hearing this correctly, say, jeff, there's no homosexuals in heaven. Oh, yes, there are. There's repentant homosexuals in heaven. Jeff, there's no verbally abusive people. Oh, yes, there are.

There's repentant, verbally abusive people in heaven. You mean, Jeff, there's no fornicators in heaven. Oh, yes, there are. There's repentant fornicators in heaven. There's no adulterers in heaven.

Oh, yes, there are. There's repentant adulterers in heaven. Anything and any sin, whether it's been mentioned here or not, when you repent of it and say, jesus, I don't want my sin anymore. I want all of you. And you come to the cross, you are washed in a moment.

You are set free in a moment. You are justified in a moment. And isn't that why we gather to hear the message of the cross? Friends, we're called to love one another and be there for one another and care for one another because of what Christ has done in us. Remember what he's done for you.

And then we share that message. I'm not sharing the message that you're a pretty good person. But if you pray this prayer, you can come into Christ. I'm sharing the message. I was lost and dead, and now I'm found and you're still dead.

But there's great hope for you. God wants to make you alive right in this moment. And that's the good news in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Amen. So the way that I wanted to end our service today is by celebrating that.

By celebrating the meal that Christians do all around the world. By taking the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. And I want to let you know something about this meal. It's not to be entered into without first engaging our hearts. It's a chance for us to look into our hearts.

It's a chance for us to see, where am I at with this Jesus guy? Where am I at with the Lord of the universe? What is he asking me to do? And let me tell you something, Christian. It's a chance for you to examine your heart and say, search me

and try me, o God, and see if there's any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.

And if he's showing you those things, here's what you do before you take that meal. You just confess it to him right now, Jesus. That's it. And I want to repent of that. And thank you so much for your body and blood.

And if you're in here today, I don't care what your background, denomination or anything is, hey, perhaps it's your day to come home. Perhaps it's your day to give your life to the Lord Jesus Christ. And as you're holding those elements in your hand, here's what I want you to consider. Those represent the body and blood of Jesus. His body that was broken and his blood that was shed so that you could stand here today or sit here today and hear the message of the Lord.

And here's his message. He loves you. And he loves you. He loves you. He loves you.

He loves you up in the back. He loves you here. He loves you here. He loves you here. Right there.

He loves you so much. Oh, my goodness. He loves you. He's so in love with you. He's so in love with you.

He's in love with you. He's in love with you. In love with you. He's in love with every single one of you. That's who he is.

And he's saying what you're holding in your hand is the evidence that I love you. If you've never given your life to Christ while you're holding elements in your hand, here's how you can pray. Say, lord, I admit I'm a sinner today, but I believe you died for me. And right now I'm just going to confess you as my lord and savior. Before we take this meal together, let's use this as time as you hear this song sung over you for the spirit of God to do a work in you.

I'm going to pray and have the ushers pass out. Ushers pass out the elements, both on this campus and on our Broomfield campus. And then I want you to hold those elements in your hand until we come back up. I'll come up here in Inglewood. Michael Wood will come up in Broomfield, and we will take the Lord's supper together.

Let me pray. Lord, we just pray over these elements, and we pray as they're passed out, Lord, as they represent your body and blood, that you would do a work through your spirit. You'd remind us of what you've done in our hearts, and we give you all the praise. In Jesus name, amen.