



Message Transcript

The Compromised and the Tolerant

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- Lord thank you that you are building your church and that the gates of hell will not prevail against it. Lord, we pray today as we hear you're living an active word among us that you would speak directly to us and Lord while you have a message for brave church you also have a message for every single individual that's tuning in. And we believe Lord, every time your word is faithfully proclaimed that you speak. So speak Lord for we are ready to hear you. And now for all God's people who are gathered who desire to hear His living and active word who will believe what He says and will by faith put into practice what he shows you. Would you agree with me this morning by very loudly saying the word Amen. Amen.

None of us really liked to be examined. I still wake up sometimes, I have one of those nightmares where I'm late to class and I'm walking into the final, and I don't know what I was supposed to be studying for. And here it is and the exams there. I still wake up with that nightmare in my head sometimes because there's something inside of us that we don't like to be examined. When we're not ready for something, we certainly don't like to be examined.

But how about when we're ready for something? When we know that we know the answers we still don't like to be tested because we just want you to believe that everything's okay. We don't like to go to the doctor and let him examine us because we think we're either okay, or we're not okay. And either way we don't want you telling us what you found out about us. There's something about our own privacy where we would just prefer to let ourselves self-evaluate, and yet through thorough examination sometimes we learn things that we otherwise would not have learned.

The great thing about our living Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ is He doesn't let us stay where we're at, and He's always willing to give us a thorough examination for where we are. And one of the places that we're at in scriptures, we're studying the church and how Jesus stands among all the churches.

And we're taking a look at seven specific churches that He's standing among in the history of the church that represent all churches comprehensively everywhere. And as we're looking into these churches we're realizing that there's application for each and every one of us as we're studying the church because Jesus Christ is still making evaluation of the church.

Last week, we looked at the church of Ephesus and Smyrna. And when we looked at Ephesus, we said do not ever forsake your first love, that your primary ministry in life no matter how long you journey with Jesus is to passionately pursue the Lord Jesus Christ. And then we took a look at the church in Smyrna that didn't have any weaknesses, but they were suffering and they were a poor church. And from the outside didn't look like they had much and Jesus encouraged them, "Do not fear tribulation or even death." And if we had application for that, and what it looks like to walk with Christ.

Well, today we're gonna take a look at two churches Pergamum and Thyatira. And I will tell you, as we use studied these two churches and I know some of you have been doing that this week. They're very convicting because out of all the churches I see these two as overlapping and saying a lot to the churches that we have in our

culture today. And so, again, as we listen to the message today the goal is not that you walk away with head knowledge about two different churches that existed 2000 years ago, it's that you walk away with a transformed heart because of what the Holy Spirit of God says to you in relation to these churches.

And so to take a look at that today I'm gonna invite you to open up your Bible to Revelation chapter two. And in Revelation chapter two, we're gonna begin in verse 12 and we'll walk through the chapter. But I think it's so good just to have the word of God read over you, just to be refreshed. And for those of you that are not familiar with this passage, this will help. But let me read these two letters to you and then we will unpack them together.

"And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write, The one who has the sharp two-edged sword says this. I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is and you hold fast to my name and did not deny my faith, even in the days of Antipas, my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you where Satan dwells. But I have a few things against you because there are some of you who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and commit acts of immorality. So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of Nicolaitans. Therefore repent or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth. He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone and a new name written on the stone, which no one knows, but he who receives

it."

"And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The son of God who has eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like burnished bronze, says this, I know your deeds and your love and your faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first. But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads my bond servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent and she does not want to repent of her immorality. Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts, and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. But I say this to you, the rest of your entire Thyatira who did not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them, I place no other burden on you. Nevertheless, what you have hold fast until I come. He who overcomes and he who keeps my deeds until the end to him I will give authority over the nations. He shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken into pieces, As I have received authority from my Father and I will give him the morning star. He who has an ear let him hear what the spirit says to the churches."

And here, as we unpack these two churches, we're gonna see several different things. And some of the things as I was studying this week. I have more notes for these two churches than I've had for any others. And I was trying to package it a

certain way, and then I was saying, well, that's kind of true of this church and this church and this church and this church. And I had all these different points, so I just boiled it, we only have one point for the whole day. Aren't you excited? There's just one point for this, both churches. I mean, here's the point.

Do not compromise the word of God or neglect His demands for holiness. Do not compromise the word of God nor neglect His demands for holiness.

Do not ever under any circumstance compromise the word of God. That means don't make concessions for the word of God. And don't neglect His demands for holiness in any way. That means do not permit other people to hijack holiness.

And here's what we're gonna see. As you remember from last week, we talked about six items that we're gonna see in every single letter that help us unpack the letter. We took a look at the location. Secondly, the attribute of Jesus, a strength, weaknesses, a challenge, and then a promise for the listener, because it's not just to the church. While God is always addressing the church, He's really talking to the individuals in the church that are willing to listen to what He has to say.

And so first we're gonna look at Pergamum, which was the compromised church. It was a church that was compromised or gave concession by some false teaching in it. And then Thyatira, that I would call the tolerant church that gave way to appetites for the flesh, and as they were tolerant, they became an immoral church.

So let's start with Pergamum. He says this, "Unto the angel of the church in Pergamum right, the one who has the sharp two-edged sword says this." Let's talk

about Pergamum for a second. Just a little bit to know about Pergamum. It was about a hundred miles North of Ephesus which was the first church we studied. Smyrna split the difference between the two. Now we're all the way on the North side.

Now, this city Pergamum was the capital city, super important city for the culture. And in this culture they had a huge library with 200,000 handwritten volumes and they worshiped several different gods in this city. If I can pronounce these right there was Athena, Asklepios, Dionysus and Zeus.

But picture this, the number one act of worship in the city of Pergamum was emperor worship. In other words it was a city where they worshiped the emperor. I don't know if you can picture this in your mind's eye, but it was a city where they were worshiping the political leader of the day. That's what was going on. That's who demanded their allegiance, that's who demanded their worship. And so in this capital city that was known as the city of Asia at the time, there was emperor worship going on, all these false gods being worshiped. It was a place of learning. It was a place of culture. It was a place of dedication to whatever gods they had.

Now notice what it says, the one who has the sharp two-edged sword says this "The attribute of Jesus in this passage is He's the one with the sharp two-edged sword." Now, to give you a little clue when you're reading through scripture contextually you're gonna clues as in context why God says what He says. And to each church it's interesting what He gives each church. To the church in Ephesus Jesus is introduced as the one who holds the seven stars in His right hand and the one who walks among the seven golden lampstands says this. In other words, He was introduced to the

church that had lost its first love as the one who holds all the leadership in the church in His hand and walks among all the seven churches, walks among the seven lampstands.

You get a picture of Jesus as if is He the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, as if He's in a title fight in the middle of a ring walking around His church, saying I'm in control, I'm the authority, so return to your first love.

The church in Smyrna that was gonna face tribulation and death. How was Jesus introduced to that church? He was introduced as the first and the last who was dead and has come to life. In other words, He was saying, "Some of you are gonna go to prison, some of you may even die, but don't worry, I'm the one that died and rose from the dead. And when you die, if you trust in me you will never die cause you live with me."

What's He gonna say to the church in Pergamum? The one who has the sharp two-edged sword says this, "What's the sharp two edged sword?" It is the word of God. Hebrews 4:12 says "The word of God is living and active sharper than any two-edged sword. It pierces to divide both soul and spirit joints and marrow and judges the attitudes and intentions of the heart."

What is the word of God do that no other instrument does? The word of God when faithfully read study to proclaim touches your heart in such a way that you get touched in ways that you can never be the same. God has a way of shining His light on your heart through His word in your life. Isaiah 40 verse eight says, "The grass withers and the flowers fade but the word of our Lord stands forever."

Friends, this book from Genesis chapter one and verse one all the way through the end of Revelation chapter 22 is the word of God. There is no air in this book. Jesus said, "Thy word is truth." Jesus even said, "That this book is a great reflection of who He is."

In John chapter five He told the Pharisees, "You diligently study the scriptures because you think that in them, you have eternal life. Yet, these are the very scriptures that testify about me. Yet, you refuse to come to me to have life." Jesus was saying everything in this book is a testimony of who He is. We do not have the right to ever say, "Yeah, I just don't believe that part. I'm just not sure on that, right?" Here's what you're really saying, "I really don't believe Jesus. I don't believe who He is."

This whole book is His, this whole book is a reflection of Him. Now, in our finite earthly state, there may be things in this book on this side of heaven, we don't fully understand, I get that. It's still true. And what I can say is, God, I don't know that I totally understand it, but I know it's true. And when you explain it to me someday, I've got it. This book is true. There's nothing about this book that's not true. It reveals the logos, the living word, the Jesus Christ who is completely true. Jesus says in His word, "That His word is so important that He doesn't just want us to believe Him, He wants us to believe His word."

Cause some people say I love Jesus, something is not so sure about all the word stuff. I don't know that Genesis is totally true. I don't know that Jonah was really swallowed by a fish. I don't know that Daniel spent the night in the lions. No, it's all true

or it's not. It's that simple. Amen! And here's what Jesus says in Mark chapter eight verse 38, "For whoever is ashamed of me and my words." Like Jesus say, "I love you." I still don't know if I believe that. "Whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the son of man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of His Father with the Holy angels."

What is He saying? When Jesus is coming with the sharp two-edged sword. His sharp two-edged sword, When He swings it has the ability to cut just where He wants it to cut. It's an important instrument that He uses. If you go to a nice steakhouse they may give you a steak knife, but when you have a steak knife you can put your finger on the top of that and slide it cause it's only sharp on one side.

The word of God is sharp no matter where you touch it that's why the word of God has an edge to it. That's why if you're under the teaching and the authority of the word of God there will be times whether you're reading it, studying it, hearing it proclaimed somewhere that it will hit an area of your life you didn't even know needed alignment. That's what the word of God does.

So Jesus coming to this church as the one who has the sharp two-edged sword coming out of his mouth... And notice what it says in the text after each way that Jesus Christ is revealed. Two words says this, says this, says this. Now why does it say that? Because He says this. Why is it there? Because our God, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is still alive and He's still speaking, and He's still active among his church. Amen.

- [Congregation] Amen.

- This living document, the word of God is Jesus Christ speaking reality into our life right now because the one that we're worshiping is alive and participating in our worship. He's still speaking. He's still active. He's alive friends. He rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven and He's coming back soon. Amen.

- [Congregation] Amen.

- That's our God. And so as we read this, and as we read on we realize the word of God is that important. Now keep that in mind as we continue to go through this. He's gonna talk about their strengths. He says, "I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast my name and deny my faith, even in the days of Antipas, my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you where Satan dwells."

Now isn't this interesting He says, "I know where you dwell." I know where you dwell. Isn't it awesome to know that God knows where we dwell? Like God knows everything about you. He knows what transportation you're gonna get to get to your location after this. And He knows where you live, and He knows where you sleep, and He knows what room in your house you sleep. He knows your sheets. He knows everything. He knows where you dwell.

Isn't that comforting to know that our God, that rules the universe knows every intimate detail about you?

And what does He say to this church in Pergamum? "I know where you dwell where Satan's throne is."

Right? I've talked to some guys sometimes like I thought it was at my mother-in-law's house. No, it wasn't there. It was in Pergamum, right? And I love my mother-in-law and she's watching. So anyways, why would Satan throne be there? We don't know.

Satan can only be at one place at one time, but we know this about Satan, he's a total counterfeiter is he? Satan is a counterfeiter.

And who is God? God is the Trinity God that we know through the Lord Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity who put on flesh and became a man, who was fully man and fully God. That's the legitimate Jesus Christ. And there's no way through to the father, except through Him.

What's the counterfeit? What's Satan looking for? He's looking for a man that people worship to. And if he's in a city where a man is being worshiped, and a man is being given allegiance that's where he's going to place his throne. And likely he has outposts in all other places in the world where that's taking place.

Is Satan's throne in Washington D.C. now? I don't know. I guarantee he's got an outpost there. He's got one in Las Vegas. He's got one in Hollywood. Before we get ahead of ourselves and think that we're all that. He's got one in Denver, Colorado too. He's always looking for a place where people will celebrate a man rather than the Lord Jesus Christ. He's always looking for that. That's where Satan's throne is. That's where he dwells.

And He says, look at this, "I know that you hold fast my name." He gives these

guys such commendation, such good things. They hold fast the reputation of Jesus, they don't deny Him. Even Antipas who was the first martyr in all of Asia, even though somebody was dying in their church because of their faith, they were still holding fast to the faith. We don't know how Antipas died. There's a rumor as to how he died, that he was boiled in a kettle. We don't know, we weren't there. Likely he was put to death because he didn't give a legions to the emperor of Rome.

And in Pergamum unlike the other places that only had to worship the emperor once a year it was on a regular daily basis that they had to do this. So here they are in a political environment where Jesus Christ is Lord. And yet everywhere they go on, every sign on every billboard on every place, Caesar is Lord and they're faithful to the Lord. He gives them great commendation. He says, "You know what? You've been faithful all the way to the end, but I do have a few things against you."

And this is where He gets into their weaknesses in verse 14. But I have a few things against you because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam. Notice not everybody in the church is gonna hold to this teaching, but there are some in the body that are holding to the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality."

Now if you're not familiar with the story of Balaam and Balak. Balak was the King of Moab, he got with the King of Midian, because as Israel was exiting Egypt, and there's 2 million of them to the promised land, and they're destroying everyone in their way. These two Kings are getting nervous. So the King of Moab hires out a false

prophet to curse the nation of Israel. His name was Balaam. Balaam was just a pagan guy, that was some sort of spiritualess that was gonna curse the nation of Israel. Every time he tried the curse the nation of Israel he ended up blessing them. It's an incredible story. I don't have time to get there today. Numbers 22 through 25, you can read the whole story. When his attempt did not work to curse Israel, he got them to sin by marrying Moabite women, because he knew that if they saw the Moabite women and had a party with them, and they got married to them, the allegiance of those men that were totally on the Lord would now be towards the Moabite gods and goddesses. And they would not have allegiance to the true King. And so he got them to do that, got them to live amoral, got them to live adulterous lives, right? That's what was going on.

Well, what's the lesson? I mean, we read about it in Jude, the half brother of Jesus, he talks about the story of Balaam. In second Peter two, Peter refers to the story of Balaam. What do you have here? Here's what you have. You having church, pagans who are conspiring together to speak against God. Means you got non-believers in the church that are conspiring together to speak against God. In other words, Balaam was willing to be paid in order to entice God's people to sin. It means sometimes within the church, there are people who are willing to teach falsely what God actually wants to turn God's people to be enticed into a way of sin.

Friends, this is so dangerous and so I can't help myself today, right? There are some churches where pastors don't preach the word and don't teach the word and because of how they live and what they're promoting they're teaching people to live more worldly than they were before they even got the church.

Friends the church should look totally different than the world. If the word of God is being heralded, Jesus Christ is going to be central. What's this talking about? He's talking about false teachers that get into the church. He's talking about compromise on the word of God.

Now how do you know if you've heard a false teacher? And how do you know if you've not heard a false teacher? Because I'm telling you in our culture, it's pervasive. There are false teachers everywhere. I know you'd like me to stand up here and mentioned them all by name. I'm not gonna do that, what I'm gonna do is teach you how to know whether you're listening to somebody who's truly preaching on behalf of the Lord or somebody that's preaching on behalf of themselves that wasn't called.

Here's what you're listening for. What is central to the message of the man that is preaching? That's a fair question, right? And here's what you wanna be listening for. What you wanna be listening for is what's central to the message in the word of God. If I wanna know what that man is saying, I can look down in my Bible, and I can see he got it right there, there it is, I'm not confused, that makes sense to me, right?

What you're also hearing is focus and intensity on the Lordship of Jesus Christ. That because Christ is alive, He is the one who is to be celebrated. What you're going to hear is about the Trinity God and how God the father loved the world so much, He sent His son to be the savior of the world. And what you're gonna hear is that Jesus Christ is the God man. And what you're gonna hear is that He fulfilled the law. And what you're gonna hear is that He died for your sins. And what you're gonna hear is

that He rose from the dead in victory. And what you're gonna hear as He ascended and sent His Holy Spirit and heal and dwell every single believer that believes in Him and Him alone. And what you're gonna hear is that He's the way the truth and the life. And what you're gonna hear is that in Him there's life and without Him, there is none.

And that's what you're gonna hear over and over again. And you're gonna hear that He's coming back soon. And you're gonna hear we're not called to live for this world, but to live for the world that is coming. That's what you're gonna hear over and over again. And it's all gonna come right out of God's word.

Now, when you hear a false prophet, Jesus is not central to their message. He's an addendum. He's an add on. He's an extra thought. What central in the message of a false prophet is you. What is it that you wanna hear? How would you like to have your ears tickled today? How would you like to live your better life now? How would you like to be encouraged? Even if you're living in sin, don't worry about it, it's not that big of a deal God loves you no matter what, come on. And then we throw some Bible verses and stick them and paste them on.

See, when a Christian preacher's talking about marriage it's not how you can live a happy marriage. When a Christian preachers talking about marriage he's saying, "God established an ordained marriage, and if you're married, God's given you His standards for how marriage is a reflection of His glory. And here's how you're supposed to live as a husband. And here's how you're supposed to live as a wife for the purpose of bringing God glory and advancing His kingdom." Not just Sweet sugary talks about how to love another person better. That's part of it, but it's so secondary.

And friends, I'm here to tell you there are so many false prophets in our culture today that are filling pulpits in churches of big sizes that have nothing to do with what Jesus has called us to be or do, and it breaks my heart.

You see that picture of Jesus in Revelation chapter one, I just wanna tell you something. It scares me to death. I'm terrified of Him. I know He loves me and I love Him. And I know I'm saved no matter what I do, but I do know that I will give an answer for every word that I speak that terrifies me. So if I get something wrong, I wanna get it wrong because I'm trying my best to elevate the word of God. Which is why I tell you all the time, if you hear something from this pulpit that you can't find in the word of God believe the word of God and don't believe me because I'm not an authority on the word of God, God's an authority on the word of God. Amen.

And what they here in this church, is they're listening to somebody who's been hired out for money to get people to sin. The apostle Paul says in second Corinthians 2:17, "For we did not peddle the word of God." We're not peddling it for monetary gain. You're not called to preach so that you make money, you're called to preach to honor the Lord, and call His sheep to live the way He wants. That's what God wants.

And here's what you have. You have people committing acts of immorality, you have them engaged in idolatry. And what's idolatry? Idolatry is really just simply this. It's giving your ultimate allegiance to that which is an ultimate. It's giving your ultimate allegiance to that which is an ultimate. There's a lot of things in this world that you can be involved in that are not sinful. For instance, if you wanna be involved in the political

process I'd encourage you to be involved in the political process. We need more Christians involved in the political process, that's a good thing. I enjoy sports. I'd encourage you I watch sports, it's great, do that. I'd encourage you to get involved in the education of your kids, do that. But don't make it an idol.

I mean, an idol is when you can't live without that. That you wake up in the morning you got to check Twitter accounts to find out what happened politically while you were sleeping, and you can't make it through the day without understanding every different sporting event. First and foremost, before you talk to Jesus. I mean, is Jesus central in your life? Is Jesus who you're going after? Is Jesus your first thought? Is He your last thought? Is He your passion? Is He your pursuit?

See, this is what was happening to this church. This church had some really good things going on, but they were compromising the word to accommodate a culture that says we don't want the word. We just want to hear what we wanna hear. We wanna hear what we want to hear.

And here's what the truth is. We wanna be a church that is aligned with the word and the spirit, right? I mean, some of you grew up in churches where you just got the word, you just got the word, don't do this, don't do that, don't do this, don't do that, don't do this, don't do that. I mean, if you walk out at church saying, "I know that's true, but man I feel more burden than I did before I got here." And then there's churches that's all spirit, it's all emotion, it's all fired up. Jesus is awesome and just rah, rah, rah. Pep rally every week. But there's a combination of that that's beautiful. Jesus does tell us to be Holy and be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly father is perfect. And we

know on our own I can't be that, but it's awesome that they want me to be that. And then God says, "But I gave you my spirit." And what's impossible for you is possible through Him.

And so God wants to do a work in our lives. And here's the problem with false teachers. False teachers that don't preach the word don't help you grow with Christ. And I believe that God raises up true teachers and false teachers as His gift to those who want certain things in their life. I believe God raises up teachers of righteousness for those who want to produce in their life. For those who say, I want Jesus, I want the fullness of Jesus. I wanna experience God in all of it. God raises up preachers of righteousness to teach the word of God so that you can.

And I believe He raises up false teachers as a gift to the wicked for those who continually want to pursue the world. So that they can have their ears tickled and say, "I like that guy, that guy tells me everything that I wanna know, so I can keep living my same sinful lifestyle and feel good about myself." And God raises up people like that too.

And notice what else He says in verse 15, He says, "So you also have some who in the same way hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans." Now we saw this in Ephesus, we talked about the deeds of the Nicolaitans. God doesn't hate people, He doesn't hate groups of people, He hates the deeds that go against Him. And whoever the Nicolaitans were, some people say it was Nicholas, one of the seven deacons that was picked in Acts chapter six, who had wandered off the path and begin to live a gospel of

works rather than a gospel of grace. And was taking liberties to sin and say, "Well, God just forgives me anyway."

We don't know, but what we do know is God wants us to be with Him. That's why He gives this challenge. Notice what He says, verse 16, "Therefore repent or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with what? The sword of my mouth." And when you get this picture of Jesus and the one you see in Revelation chapter one. And He says, "Listen, either repent or I'm coming to your church in a hurry." It's not this picture of, oh, come Lord Jesus. It's you better get ready because if you're not ready when He comes, that's going to be a bad day, right?

For those of you who have never trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, I wanna tell you on the authority of God's word, I love you enough to tell you this, that if you don't repent of your sins and trust Christ it is gonna be a very bad day for you when you meet Him. And what's gonna make it even more tragic? Is that your entire life He's wanting to extend His arms and show you how much He loves you, and had no intention of ever separating you from Himself or sending you to hell, but because of your rebellion and disobedience that's gonna be His only option.

And for those of you who are Christians, you've kind of played the game. "Yeah, I know I'm saved, but it really doesn't matter how I live." I'm gonna tell you right now, it absolutely 100% matters how you live. You will be judged according to your deeds. Now let me be clear on this. Your salvation will not be judged according to your deeds. If you're saved, you're saved to the full. All your past, present and future sins have been washed away when you trust Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. But

how are you gonna be judged on judgment day? You're gonna be judged according to your deeds.

Christians, you gonna be judged according to how well did you steward all that God gave you for His glory in what He called you to do. What does that look like for you? That's what we're getting judged at, as it will be examined on at the judgment seat of Christ.

Yes, we're saved. Yes, we're welcomed. Yes, we get salvation to the full, but guess what? There are different levels of rewards in heaven based upon how well you lived.

And notice what He says, He says "Repent, or I'm coming quickly." He doesn't say change yourself. He doesn't say make things right.

See, the problem that we have a lot of times in Bible churches is when you hear the word of the Lord and you start thinking about, "Yeah, that's wrong, I got to change that, I got to change that. We falsely think that the way we're gonna change it is by committing to it and working on it ourself. Friends, here's why you sin, you sin because of your broken flesh that's entice to sin. So to say to your broken flesh, "Hey, you're broken, so we're gonna try to work with your brokenness to make you unbroken." It won't work.

You cannot change yourself. You cannot make yourself holy, you cannot make yourself righteous, you can't make yourself good. What you have to come to the realization of is that only God can make that change in your life.

So here's what repentance truly is. Repentance is the gift of God that simultaneously convicts a person of their sin and deadness that deserves and demands God's immediate justice, while at the same time, convinces them that God's love and mercy can be presently experienced by turning to Him. Repentance is God's gift in your life that shows you you're sinful, it's wrong, it deserves judgment because I'm a Holy and you're not. And at the same time shows you, but through me, I'm giving you mercy and grace and extending to you and by faith come to me and you can add that. It's beautiful. It's a gift.

That's why God calls us to repent. God, doesn't ask us to change ourselves. If we could change ourselves, Jesus never needed to die on the cross and rise from the dead. He would never need to do that. We would just tell people, be good, be better, make your marriage better work at it, right? Rather than you can't change you, but God can if you'll humble yourself before Him and allow Him to search you and try you.

Psalms chapter 139 verses 23 and 24 paints a picture of what a heart looks like that's ready for repentance. David writes, "Search me O Lord and know my heart. Try me and know my anxious thoughts, and see if there'll be any hurtful way in me and lead me in the way everlasting."

What's he saying? It's a very dangerous prayer to pray, but when you see God as the light of the world and perfectly Holy and pure, and you're willing in your heart to say, "God, you know what? I don't know if I'm all right. I don't know if there's anything wrong, but would you shine your light on me? And if there's anything in me, that's not

living according to the standards that you would have, would you show me what that is? And then be gracious enough to lead me out of where I'm at so that I can experience the goodness that you have for me.

Friends, we're called to do that on an ongoing basis. We're called to do that on a regular basis. A brave church, there should always be pockets of different people at different times that are repenting of different things because God is growing us.

And repentance is the opposite of commitment. Commitment tells you, I promise I'm never doing this again. Never had one of those prayers? God, if you just get me through this, I promise I will never blan blan, blan. Never prayed like that? It doesn't work.

See a better prayer is Lord I got myself this situation because of my sin and I know it's my sin, and if you don't change me I'm probably gonna end up being in the same place again. Help me God, I need your help. And God loves to go to work on humble people that are willing to admit that they can't get right.

Now, here's what you'll notice with repentance. I notice three things every time I see genuine repentance. I've done counseling for years, I've seen married couples that have been genuinely repentant, I've seen married couples that haven't been genuinely repentant. And here's what you'll notice in somebody who genuinely dependent three things.

One is this. They'll say this, they'll act this way, they'll own it. I'm wrong. It's me, I'm wrong. I'm wrong. Number two is I don't care who else knows, I don't care who

else sees. I'm a wrong, it was just wrong. And number three, they will ask this question. What do I need to do to make it right? I'll do whatever it takes for as long as it takes. In adulterous situations, I'll see one person say, It's me, it's totally on me, I'll do whatever it takes, I don't care who knows in the church, it doesn't matter. What do I need to do to make it right? I'll move out. I'll bear fruits in keeping with repentance. You tell me how long I have to do that. It's me, I just wanna change, I want God. Right? You'll see that all over the place.

When somebody is not repentant, here's three things you'll see every single time. When somebody's not repentant and sin gets pointed out in their life by God or another believer. Number one is this excuse making. Yeah, you don't understand my situation. Yeah, I was probably wrong, but excuse, excuse, excuse. Number two, image management or face saving. They start calling their friends and trying to smooth things over, so nobody sees them as bad as what God does, right? And number three of that doesn't go well, here's what's always part of it. Blame, blame. Yeah, those Christians are always just pointing out stuff, they're not perfect either. You didn't know you weren't married to my husband, you weren't married to my wife, you don't know what I mean. Blame, blame, blame, blame, blame.

See, repentance is when we say I'm at fault. God calls us to repent individually. Like this is not a sermon where you call your friend and be like, "You should have been in church today, you really needed to hear this one." I've been trying to get through to you, right? This is personal. This is me before the Lord humbling myself, saying, "Lord, I want to, I don't even know if I know how to, but I know that you can in my life." And

this is where God begins to go to work.

You see, when we teach the word and there's truth to the word, God always uses His word. That's why there's sometimes that you leave our church, and even after you leave our church, you may not have liked the message, but the message doesn't go away, it continues to ring into your heart and your head for a period of time. You ever had that happen to you? Where you don't want to deal with something, but God does. And so He keeps talking to you about it. I was at starting point last week and this guy came in and he said to me, "Wait until everybody left." And he said, "Hey, I've been wanting to talk to you. He goes, I left this church a year ago, cause you offended me." And I'm like, Oh great, what did I do this time? I said, what did I do? He goes, "You told me that if I live the way I'm currently living, I will not inherit the kingdom of God." And then I took a sigh of relief cause I knew I didn't say anything, that was the word of God working on him. And then he went through and told me his story. And he told me how for the last year he couldn't get those words out of his head and how God had done a work in his life, and it freed him up and changed his heart, he's a new person he's back and he thanked me for preaching the word. And I said, you know what? I didn't tell you anything, that was the spirit of God. I said, let me ask you this. Could you ever get that voice out of your head? He goes, "No, I tried so many times, every time all I heard you say is I'm not gonna inherit the kingdom." That was the Lord. That's the work of Lord.

His word never returns void. Right after he got done telling me a story another woman said to me, she's like, "Oh, I'm next, I'm next, I'm next." Like, what is this? She

said, "When I first started coming here, I thought you were yelling all the time. I thought you were really angry, like yelling." And she told me who she studied under and some were good and some not so good, but she wasn't saved. Now she's saved. She's like, "Ever since I got saved I never hear you yelling anymore. I wish you just raise your volume a little bit." Right? That's the word of God, right? God calls us to repent.

So when we're in church, we should always be open to the fact of God might be wanting to speak something to us that we're not aware of. Because wouldn't you admit that if God's perfect and Holy and true, there may be a time in our life, even when we're seeking Him that there's some things out of alignment. Let alone, when we know we haven't been walking with Him. And wouldn't it be beautiful to know that God loves you no matter what you've done, but He also loves you enough not to keep you there. There should never be a time that you walk out of here and say, "I didn't feel any conviction today, I got that." But there should also never be a time that you leave our church and feel burdened by the weight of your sin, because on the cross at Calvary Jesus Christ took it all away. It's done. It's forgiven. It's over. And He's willing to fill you a fresh with the spirit so that you can meet the demands that you couldn't meet by yourself. Isn't that good news?

- [Congregation] Yes.

- And that's what He's trying to tell this church. He wasn't telling them, "Fix yourself or I'm coming." He's like, "Repent or I'm coming." Like you can repent and I'll come and fix you or you can hold onto your stubbornness, and when I come, I'm

coming to judge don't do that, right? That was His heart.

Then He makes a promise to those who are listening to Him. He says, "He who has an ear let him hear what He says, what the spirit says to the churches." It means listen up. "To him who overcomes to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone and a new name written on the stone which no one knows, but he who receives it."

Remember what manna is in the Old Testament? It was like, honey kind of flake. It was like the first frosted flakes that God provided for them in the wilderness. And every day they would get it, and then they had to gather it. And if they gathered too much, it would rot, they can only take enough for the day.

Here's what Jesus says in John chapter six and verse 48, and following, He says, "I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate manna in the wilderness and they died. This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down out of heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever, and the bread also, which I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

What's the hidden manna? The hidden manna is Jesus Christ, very life. And here's what he says. He says, "If you overcome and believe in me I'm gonna give you my very life, not only now, but for all eternity."

And friends I got news for you, if you think that the only purpose of the gospel is to get you saved so you can go to heaven, you've missed the whole purpose of the gospel. That's a by-product of the gospel.

The purpose of the gospel is that you can have life and have life in the name of Christ. And you can enjoy them to the full now and yearn and look forward to the day that you can expend eternity with Him then. That's the gospel. And He says, "Hey, if you have that, you overcome, you have the hidden manna. You have a special place with me and we can grow."

And then He also talks about this white stone. There's a lot of ink that's been spilled on this, as to what is the white stone? There's talk that it could have been used in a trial as an acquittal, instead of getting a Blackstone showing you're guilty, you've got a white stone. It was for certain used in the Roman games for those that had been awarded, that they would receive a white stone with their name on it that will give them access to the banquet and the post athletic activities.

I mean, the way I look at this white stone is God basically gonna give us a white stone someday that says you're perfectly forgiven and you have all access pass to all fun in heaven, come enjoy it with me. And on that stone is gonna be a name that's given that only you will know.

Why I pictured it as this? I mean, Jesus knows our first middle and last name. He can even spell mine, that's cool. But isn't it true that some of the people that you're close to may have nicknames or things that you call them? God has a name for each one of us. And on that stone, when you see it you're gonna see what God calls you, it's gonna be a special name, It's gonna be your all access pass into heaven showing that you have every right to be there and that you're completely forgiven and come on in

and enjoy. How awesome is that?

As we continue this and look at the second church, which we'll go through a little quicker. Here's what He's saying, "Do not compromise the word of God. Do not neglect the demands of His holiness." Because we see this church in Thyatira. We see this church in Thyatira, there's not a whole lot to be said about Thyatira. You may remember a woman in Acts chapter 16 named Lydia, she was from Thyatira, she made purple dyes. Thyatira was about 40 miles Southeast of Pergamum as we're coming down that circle and looking at it. Not a whole lot of important people live there. Trade guilds were huge. People were garment makers, potters, bakers, bronze smith, worked with dyes. Here's what you need to know, every guild in that town had a god that they served. So to do your work, there was a god that was overseeing that work that you were expected to worship.

And here's how Jesus introduces Himself to that church. He says to the angel of the church in Thyatira, "The son of God who has eyes like a flame of fire and His feet are like burnished bronze says this." He says, "I'm speaking to you, and I see everything that you're doing. And His feet like burnished bronze, we talked about, was Him coming in judgment.

Here's the picture for the church in Thyatira. "I'm coming, I see everything you do, and I'm coming in judgment. So you better be ready for that." Right? It's kind of a scary picture of Jesus. Then He says this, "I know your deeds. He gives them their strengths and your Love and your faith, and your service and perseverance. And that your deeds of late are greater than that at first."

I mean, I get this picture of Jesus where He's like, "Hey, I'm aware of all you're doing, and you're actually getting better." I mean, there's things in this church in Thyatira that are growing, but here comes the weaknesses. "But I have this against you. That you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads my bond servants astray. So they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols."

So what do you see? You see the two eyes again, immorality and adultery. They go hand in glove. When people are enticing God's people to sin, they're usually enticing them in a way of immorality to indulge to the flesh or they're enticing them in a way to give their allegiance to something other than the Lord Jesus Christ. And what's the problem with this?

We don't know for sure this woman was named Jezebel, or if Jezebel reminds us of King Ahab's wife, one of the most evil Kings, and she was one of the most evil people in the old Testament who, if you'll remember in first Kings chapter 16 and following, I mean, she was after the profits of the Lord, she was after putting down men, she was a vial, she was immoral, she was horrible. So you'll hear sometimes people in church talk about the Jezebel spirit, she's got a Jezebel spirit. There's nothing in the Bible, just you know, that calls something a Jezebel spirit. There's not some spirit out there named Jezebel that enters people. I mean, according to the Bible, there's just not. But people are trying to talk about the kind of person that she is.

And here's what we find out about her just from this text alone, she calls herself a

prophetess. God doesn't call her a prophetess, she's calling herself a prophetess.

Which means this, she is a self-proclaimed spokesman from God that God hasn't called. That's a problem. A non-called person is a problem.

Now I believe in first Corinthians chapter 14, that women can prophesy because my Bible teaches me that they can. But what I don't believe is that women should teach or have authority over a man, because first Timothy chapter two tells me that.

That God has gifted women in the body of Christ to teach and they're called the teach other women. And Titus two tells you what to teach other women, how to love your husbands and develop your families and to be busy at home, and all the things that a godly woman is called to do. But there's nowhere in the Bible that says put a woman up front, that's a self-proclaimed leader in the church and let her teach doctrine to the point that we don't need the Bible anymore, we'll just listen to whatever she says.

And one of the dangers in the church, whether it's a woman or a man, is when you have somebody teaching without a Bible and you think to yourself, "I don't need the Bible anymore cause they're so in tune with God, they tell us everything we need to know." Friends, have you ever seen things on TV where people are prophesying or, "Oh, I see this spirit, I see your dad, I see your mom." You know what that's called? Channeling demons. That's all it is, right? I mean, let's just be clear on that. That's all it is.

So here you got this woman, Jezebel, and what Jezebel known for in the Old

Testament? Her immorality, her idolatry. One of the first things she did as queen was tear down all the worship of the true God. You have false teaching, you have unrepentant sin. And then she had a heart to dominate and destroy godly men. Dominate and destroy godly men, right? There are some women that the enemy likes to use to destroy godly men. Okay?

Friends you don't have to look very far, even in our churches today to see some pastors who were once faithfully proclaiming the word of God that are no longer in ministry now, because of a woman like a Jezebel who got close to them. And they're no longer in ministry because they succumb to immorality. I can stand up here and listen, name after name, after name. And I'm not doing that because... But for the grace of God go on. I'm not putting other people down. That's why for me, this is your pastor, you should know. In case you ever wondered, why does pastor Jeff bring his wife up on the platform after every service? Well, I'm glad you asked. Because my wife is my best friend and she's my soulmate, and she is one for me that when I go through my highest of highs, that's who I share my emotions with. And when I go through my lowest of lows, that's who I'm sharing with. And when I'm down, she's the one that's there to listen. Everything I go through, she's going through with me all the time. Which means this, when I bring her up on the platform, here's what I'm saying, without her I'm not doing what I'm doing right now. If you've ever been blessed by my teaching, it's because of that woman is a godly woman in my life and-- And I don't need any other women. So I'm bringing her up to let you ladies know-- That I love you as a brother in Christ, that I want you to flourish in your ministry, but we're never gonna

be besties, and we're never gonna text and be friends and have coffee and meals and get to know each other, because I've all ready taken care of that. I all ready have my wife, okay?

And I'm just telling you this, sexual morality is so pervasive in our churches. I mean, I have a standard, I don't meet with other women alone. Sometimes I'm forced to, so the doors are wide open in my office, you can come in and listen. I mean, Kim's aware of every conversation I have, she's aware of all the emails I have. It's important that I do it that way. Is that because I'm so scared that I'm gonna trip up? No, but I think I'd be foolish to say that I'm above that. I would rather be hit by a bus on I25 on my way home today than to fall into sexual sin and hurt our church. That is a fact. So I wanna put things into place that are right.

Now what about you? What things are you putting in place that are right for you? Because if you're married, Christian marriage is God's way of showing you how to bring glory to Him. Husbands, you're called to be the spiritual head of your wife. It's why a brave church we target men on purpose because we believe that if we can get men to godly the whole family benefits.

- [Congregation] Amen.

- That I've never met a woman who says, "I don't want my husband to be more godly, he's already there." Just I've never met that. I mean, women want their husbands to be godly, and they understand that if men are godly, they're elevated, right? We wanna elevate women by targeting men, right? That's what we do. And it's

super important.

And so when we're talking to men, I mean, you talk about what your role is as a husband, to love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her. And when I asked guys what's that mean? He's "Oh, you'd be willing to die for your wife." I'm like, well, whoa, it's way more than that. I mean, when Jesus said "It is finished." That would have been the easiest part of the day. You know what's hard? To be nailed to the cross, to suffer, to be beaten, to be dying while people are yelling things in your face that are not true. When the unlovable church was unlovable to Him, He was loving back. Here's what it means, man. And this is only possible with God, even when your wife is unlovable, which I'm sure rarely ever happens. But if that ever happens to you, you love her like Christ loved her and you keep on loving her.

And wives what are you called to do? You're called to respect your husband and obey him in everything just as you would with Christ. How hard is that? Well, that's not my call, but it's yours, right? It's God's demand, but it's only possible by the spirit of God because why a woman would say, "Well, I can submit to Jesus, He's perfect, But have you met my husband?" It's only possible with Jesus, right? And what about single people? I mean, immorality doesn't escape you either, does it? I mean, we have a lot of people that come to brave, you love Jesus, you come here, you like the word, it's a cool group of people.

Our young adult ministry is flourishing, we got to get a lot of young people, but some of you you're sleeping around Being immorally and making excuses for it and God doesn't like that. Women let me tell you this, until that man puts a ring on your

finger and calls all of his friends in his honoring to you before he gets in front of the pastor or priest or whomever, and has all his friends they're saying her and her alone and nobody else, I just got news for you he does not love you. I know you think he does, but he doesn't. Right?

And guys quit looking around for a girl. "I got find somebody." No, you don't. You need to pursue the Lord with everything you have and God will bring the person that you need as you're pursuing Him with everything you have. So you can keep going full speed towards Jesus, right? I mean, immorality is so pervasive. Last week we talked about materialism, what's that like? We don't know because we swim in it. What's immorality like? We don't know because we swim in it. All you have to do is turn on the TV. You can't even watch like a Disney show, cause the commercial will come on and be like, are you kidding me? And you have to ask yourself the question, if that were actually alive, would you allow it 10 feet in front of you to happen in front of your face? No. And again, some of you can hear this and say, you know what? I'll work on this, I'll get better, I probably shouldn't be looking at porn, I probably shouldn't be doing this, I probably shouldn't be flirting with that girl at work, I probably should, I'll working on.

God doesn't want you to work on it anymore. God wants you to get honest and repent about it. And God wants to come help you with it. And God wants to change you from the inside out. And for some of you it's immorality, and for others it's adultery where church is just an afterthought where you like to celebrate Jesus with a bunch of people that are celebrating Him, and there's so many here that love Him. And so it's fun to kind of sneak in and celebrate once a week and then go out and do your own thing

and live idolatrous all week, while you live for yourself in this world.

And God's word would tell us from James 4:4, "Do you not realize that friendship with the world is hatred towards God." God doesn't want you to live for this world, God want you to live for Him.

And what we see in this text, is that there was a tolerance of immorality, there was a tolerance for this woman who wasn't even called by God to get up there and espouse all her ideas about what the church needed to be. And there were several in the church that started going that direction. It means that sometimes as elders one of the more difficult things that we have to do is remove people from leadership to say, "No, that's not gonna go because we care about the body, we care about the church more than we care about any individual." Right? And in this Church, for whatever reason there were no elders telling this Jezebel, get out, you need to repent, you need to either repent or leave our church, cause you have this habitual sin, that's causing everybody in our church to sin.

And notice what verse 21 says, "I gave her time to repent and she does not want to repent of her immorality." I realize even when we want to repent the behaviors don't always catch up the next day. You ever had that experience? God, I wanna do what you want, I really do, but it just doesn't change overnight. That's okay. It just takes time sometimes. Some things happen immediately where the Holy Spirit will deliver you from something, other times it's a work in progress over a period of days, months, weeks, and years. That's okay. What was the problem here? She didn't want to repent. It's

blatant, I don't wanna change. "It's I like my habitual sin, I'm gonna do what I want. And who do you think you are to tell me that I need to change?" That what was going on and God said, "I've given her time and now because she's not repenting, let me tell you what I'm gonna do.

He says in verse 22, "Behold I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds." In other words, her sin was impacting others. Do you know your sin always impacts other people? And God says, "Not only am I gonna punish her this bed." The word of sickness there is added for understanding. It's really talking about a bed of death. He's gonna throw her... I mean, you're gonna die.

I mean, if you live in immorality, you will die. I've seen people that have tried to hide immorality in their own life, get physically sick before. You can't hide immorality, it will find you out. And those who are committing the immorality with her whether that's spiritual, that they're leaving the Lord and being idolatrous towards other gods, or physically committing adultery with her. God says, "I'm gonna send plagues your way."

And notice what else He says when He talks about the great tribulation, He's not talking about the great integrate tribulation. We're talking about the great tribulation, yet we'll get there. He's just talking about there's gonna be great tribulation in your life.

Do you know if you don't do things God's way there's great tribulation in your life? If you do not do things God's way there will be consequences to that. I just feel like coming to tell you this because I do enough counseling. Listen to me, young

people, listen to me close, you can say I'm a fool but I'm right. On the authority of God's word I know I'm right. See God says in His word, "Do not be associated and joined with non-believers." If you are dating a non-believer breakup today, like now, like yesterday, like get out of that... "But you don't understand"; I don't need to. I can march all sorts of people up here that chose to get married to someone that's not a believer or they became a believer and their spouse didn't, who would tell you that their life is a living hell to pursue Jesus and not have somebody with you that wants to. Get out, get out, get out. If that person repents and trust Jesus, let God bring you guys back together.

I'm just telling you on the authority of God's word, do not be joined with a non-believer, okay?

So here's what He says. Notices they be great tribulation unless they repent of their deeds. Verse 23, "And I will kill her children with pestilence and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts, and I will give each one according to your deeds." Now notice what He says. We don't know if He's talking about their physical children as they have offspring more likely, I think it's spiritual children. When you live in immorality, all of those who continue to live in immorality those that you're discipling, that live in immorality. Hey, you know what the future is for living in immorality apart from Christ? It's death and separation from God forever.

And how is God gonna judge us? Did you see that again in the Bible? According to your deeds. You're not saved according to your deeds, you're judged according to your deeds. You are not saved according to your deeds, your judged according... You

can't work enough to get saved, that is all by God's grace that He brings you into a relationship with Him. And if He has brought you into relationship with Him then you can't use the false guise of grace to say, "Well, then I can just do whatever I want, I'm saved no matter what." Because the Bible talks about the same grace that saved you is the same grace that grows you.

In Titus chapter two verse 11 says, "For the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all men." It's all by grace. What else does grace do? Instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly righteously and godly in the present age. What does grace do? It teaches us how to live God's way. I may not know how to live God's way, but God knows how to teach me how to live God's way. So that's what I wanna do.

So do not ever compromise the word of God or neglect His demands for holiness. I mean, for this group of people within that body there were no signs to even want to repent. They were able to come to a church, where they were able to say, "It was great that I went today, but I don't feel any conviction, and even if I did, I wouldn't change anyway."

But notice verse 24, this is not the whole church. Much like our church, there could be several of you living in immorality, adultery but there are some that are sitting here today saying, "I don't even know what you're talking about, that's not me, I love Jesus." He says this, "But to the rest of you, I say, who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan as they call them, I

place no other burden on you."

If you're walking the way of the Lord and you're not walking the way of the enemy, I'm not putting burdens on you. "Nevertheless, what you have hold fast until I come. He who overcomes, and he who keeps my deeds until the end to him I will give authority over the nations and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of potter are broken to pieces. As I have received authority from my Father, and I will give him the morning star. He who has an ear let him hear what the spirit says to the churches."

What's He saying? He's saying, if you're listening to what I'm saying... Here's what He's saying. He says, "If you're listening to what I'm saying live my way, hold fast to the things of God until I come. And you'll rule with me." In the millennial reign we get to rule with Jesus. I believe that we're rewarded in special ways based upon how well we live.

And here's the great news about the way that the Lord rewards, the Lord gives you an amount of talent and ability and all those things, it's how well did you steward that? You may not have got much, but if you steward that a hundred percent of the way you're gonna have great reward in heaven. That's the way that the Lord works. It's not based upon the talent you have, it's how well you use the talent that has been given to you. And He says, "If you do this and you overcome I will give him the morning star." The morning star is the Lord Jesus Christ, you see it in revelation 22:16. It's the same picture that you will have Jesus to walk with Jesus and be with Jesus all of your life.

So the question becomes this, how faithful have you been with the things of God? And I wanna tell you as your pastor, I realize this is a hard message, that's why it's quiet in here right now, I totally get it because I know how the Holy Spirit works in your life. And for some of you, there've been some ongoing things that the Holy Spirit's been telling you, "You need to repent of that, you need to give that to me, you need to quit faking, like it's gonna change." And for some of you, it's anger. And for some of you it's pride. And for some of you it's money. And for some of you it's sexuality. And for so many of you, it's all sorts of different things. And God's saying, "Hey, in this moment instead of hanging on to those things, I'm asking you to repent of those things and give them to me." Right? So to leave church is to be repentant. To at the same time feel the conviction, and at the same time know that through Christ and His death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead you can have life and have life in His name. Friends, the gospel is not just being freed from the penalty of sin, it's being freed from the power of sin. And whatever God demands He provides through His Holy Spirit, and today He wants you to walk out of here free.