



Message **Transcript**

Walk Strong

Jeff Schwarzentraub

Thank you so much for choosing to worship with us today. Would you do me a favor? Would you welcome our Broomfield campus, who's also worshipping along with us today? So great to have you.

And a couple quick announcements. One is we had so many people respond to the gospel last week, which was awesome. That's worthy of praise. Amen.

That what we've decided to do on both campuses is two weeks from today, we're going to offer a foundations course, a brave foundations course, and it's for, for anybody who just gave their lives to Christ. Or perhaps you rededicated your life to Christ, or perhaps you're young in your faith and you just want to get your firm foundation established that's going to be available two weeks from today. So that's going to be available to you. And then for those of you that know me, I don't normally preach in a t shirt, but I'm preaching in a t shirt today. And here's why.

Because we're going to give away free t shirts after church today. There's two different options. I'm wearing one of the options. I knew I never get GQ to call and I get to be a model. This is my one opportunity.

So I'm modeling this shirt for us today. And make sure you pick one of these up on your way out. But can we pray? And let's go before the Lord and let's have our hearts prepared. We've worshiped and let's be ready to hear what he has for us.

So, Lord, we give you praise, glory and honor for who you are. God, we just thank you so much for your living and active word among us. And Lord, we pray today that as we look into your word, that your word would come alive to us, that you'd illuminate our hearts, that you would show us the way to go, that you'd encourage us, that you'd motivate us. And, Lord, that you would lead us in the path of righteousness for your name's sake. And Lord, for what you're going to do in advance, we give you all the praise and all the glory and all the honor in Jesus name and all God's people that are ready to receive his word very loudly agreed with me by saying, amen.

Amen. I encourage you to open your bibles up to one corinthians chapter ten. Open your bibles to one corinthians chapter ten. If you don't have a copy of the scripture, there's one under every other seat in front of you. Please take it.

Get your eyes on a copy. And just so you know, I said two months ago when I was here teaching on our brave vision, that, hey, don't you worry. Next week I'll be back preaching on one corinthians ten and thundering it out. I've learned these two words. This is free of charge, Lord willing.

Lord willing. I've been waiting to say, open your bibles to one corinthians ten for two months. And I'm thrilled to be back and able to do that. And just so you know, I got cleared on Monday. This was supposed to be done by video.

They were going to allow me to preach on Saturday night, only for a couple weeks. On Monday, they cleared me to try to preach all three services this weekend. So I'm excited about that. So as you open your bibles there, what I want to talk to you today about is walking strong. How do you have a strong walk with Jesus Christ?

What does that look like? Now for many people, when it comes to a walk with Jesus Christ, they'll say things like this, oh, that person, he's a good christian. Or she's like one of those really good kind of christians. She kind of walks that thing out. I want

to let you know something just from the get go of our message today.

Every single one of you can have a strong walk with Jesus Christ. As a matter of fact, I made sure I talked to all the ushers on both campuses today, and I said only let the people in today that have the potential of having a strong walk with Christ. And as I look around, I see they did a really good job. Because here's why. For many of us, we think that there's a certain gene that some people get as christians, and if they get that gene, then it works for them.

And if they didn't get that gene, it doesn't work for them. But I have good news for you. If you have a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, you can also have a strong walk with him. It's just sometimes we don't celebrate or continue to celebrate the things that God does. Like, it's really important.

Like if you go to a wedding, those are worthy of celebrations. God loves marriage. And when you go to a wedding, there's a huge celebration as well. There should be. But what the Bible points out is not only should we celebrate the wedding, we should also celebrate the continual marriage.

Correct. It's exciting. When women in our church give birth, we get excited about new birth. I mean, it's so awesome. But we should also get excited about parents that bring that child home and raise them in the knowledge of the Lord for the next 18 years before they send them out.

And the same thing is true when we see people come to Christ. It is noteworthy of our praise. We should cheer them, we should give God glory. But it's also praiseworthy when those same people begin to walk out the faith that Jesus Christ has for them. And I don't know about you, but I wish I would have heard the message.

I'm about ready to preach to you when I first became a believer, because when I first became a believer, I knew Christ and I loved Christ, but I didn't know how to walk out with Christ. And nobody really taught me how to do it. And after a period of time, I thought I was just one of those failures in Christ that kind of did it good sometimes and kind of did it really bad at other times. And that was just my lot in life. And it wasn't until I heard some of the truth that I'm going to share with you today that I really began to walk out my faith in Christ and had a strong walk.

And so if you're looking to have a strong walk in Christ, this message is for you. It doesn't matter how long you've been a Christian, it doesn't matter your age, and it doesn't matter your gender. It matters if your heart says, I want to have a strong walk with Jesus. I'm going to highlight three things from God's word in one corinthians ten about what that looks like now, just to bring you back up to speed, if you'll remember, in one corinthians, starting in chapter eight, Paul began to talk about our liberty that we have in Christ. Because God's overwhelming love that he has for us, we have liberty to choose things to serve him.

And what happens with our liberty is sometimes we end up choosing liberty to say, hey, I can do this and get away with it, and God will love me anyway. Some people have the opposite view of legalism, which is God's mad at you all the time, no matter what you do. So you better just try really, really hard. And both are in error. And so what Paul has been trying to highlight for the corinthians is not to use the liberty that they have as a license to sin, but rather use their liberty to serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

Which is why he ended the last chapter in chapter nine saying how he beat his body. He made his body his slave. He disciplined himself in such a way that he could serve Christ the best that he could, and this is where it picks up. And if you want to have a strong walk with Christ, let me give you the first point today. If you want to have a strong walk with Christ, remember this.

Remember that experiencing God's love and pleasing God are not the same. They're not the same thing. Experiencing God's love and pleasing God are not the same thing. Notice what Paul says in one corinthians chapter ten. He says, for I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud, in the sea, and all ate the same soup food, and all drank the same spiritual drink for which they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them, and the rock was Christ.

He says, I don't want you to be unaware of this. All 2 million people that were let go of the bondage that they were in Egypt and came out of Egypt were all. All experienced the power of God, all experienced God's love. When it says that all were baptized into Moses, baptism simply means this. Immersed into or identified with, every single person there experienced the pillar of fire, the pillar of cloud.

They experienced the Red Sea parting. They all walked through the sea. They were all under Moses leadership. They all saw God do tremendous, amazing things where their jaw was dropping, saying, wow, God is incredible. They all experienced the love and the power of God, every single one of them.

It's kind of like when you come to church. If you come to church and you worship with people that love Christ and are walking with Christ and are serving Christ, and you experience the power of God, when the word is faithfully proclaimed, God is among you, you can experience God's love. We've all, to an extent, experienced God's love, and that God loved us so much, he sent his only begotten son to die for us. And even while we were sinners, Christ died for us. And even if you're not aware of God's love for you, he has an incredible love for you.

And this is what Paul was saying. I don't want you to be unaware that God's love goes out to the world, that God loved all of Israel. But notice verse five, nevertheless, it's kind of like, but, or however, nevertheless, with most of them, God was not well pleased, for they were laid low in the wilderness. In other words, out of the 2 million

people, with most of them, most of the 2 million, God wasn't pleased with them. He loved them, but he wasn't pleased with them.

There's a difference between loving somebody and being pleased with the person that you love. How many of you are parents? How many of you know you can love your children and not be pleased with them at the exact same time? Has that ever happened to anybody in here?

Has that ever happened to anybody in here? Thank you for participating. Right. That's what he's saying. He's saying, just because God loves you doesn't always mean that he's pleased with you.

Right? And this is what was happening. And the reason we know is since they were laid low in the wilderness, that means they were strewn all over the place, which means this, out of the entire 2 million people that left Egypt, that God showed his incredible love to. How many of those people entered the promised land? Two.

Two of the adults, some of the children. Right. Why? Because they were all unfaithful to God, even though God had shown his love to them. And so there's a big difference between saying, oh, God loves me.

Yes, he does. I can tell you on the authority of God's word, he loves you. The question is, are you pleasing to him? And what does that look like? Because all of us have a human nature, don't we?

All of us tend to think that we're entitled. It's just part of human nature. And, you know, as parents, we see this all the time in our kids. I mean, at the beginning of ski season last winter, I wanted to be good to my two older children, and I wanted to take them skiing. And so we went.

And because we were late getting gear. This year, they have this deal where if you buy used gear, it's a certain price, but if they don't have used gear, then you have to buy new gear, which is true, twice as expensive. Well, wouldn't you know, because we went late, I had to buy all new gear. So we go to the ski store the night before. I buy all new gear for one child.

I buy all new gear for another child. Then I make sure that they have lift passes, but I also make sure that they have a lesson. By the way, this starts adding up, just so you know. I mean, this is pretty expensive in my pocketbook. So the next day, I wake them up early.

I paid for gas. I provided transportation. I drove them all the way to the ski lift. I carried their equipment to make sure that they got to their ski lesson on time. I made sure that they were happy all day long.

They were in their class, they did all their stuff, and on the way up, they were hungry. So guess what? Dad did. I stopped for breakfast. And guess who paid for that?

I did. And after the ski day, after, they were completely worn out, saying, you know, oh, dad, we're so exhausted. We're so hungry. Guess what? They wanted to stop again and get something to eat.

So guess what I did? I stopped and got something else to eat. And as I'm driving them down the mountain, I'm thinking, dad, you are a good dad. Look at how good you love them. And it was about that time that one of my children piped up in the back and said these words.

Dad, how come you never take us to great Wolf Lodge and go swimming?

All of our other friends have been there. We never get to do anything fun.

And as he was saying that, I was thinking about my wife's sin nature that got passed down.

I'm teasing. But isn't that how we're like? And as I was sitting there thinking, I'm like, do I give him a spreadsheet on how much I just spent on him for the last day? Do I

show him how he's not worthy of any of that, but out of the goodness of my heart, I provided that. No, I didn't do that.

I understood exactly what he was saying. He was saying, dad, I'm human and I'm living for me, and I want to be pleased. And I wish I could say that when you get out of childhood, that just goes away. But it doesn't. I mean, we all tend to be like that, right?

And so, when it comes to God's word and what it means to please God, sometimes we end up asking the wrong question. And when you ask the wrong question, you end up making a wrong statement. And when you make a wrong statement, you live by wrong principles. Let me give you an example of what this looks like. Put a question on the board.

Will God still love me if I. And then we just fill in the blank. Now, if you're a legalist, no matter what I put in that blank, you're going to say, no. Will God still love me if I don't read my Bible this morning? Here's what a legalist would say.

No, he's mad at you. Will God still love me if I don't pray? Legalists. No, he's mad at you. Will God still love me if I don't go to church this weekend?

No, he's mad at you. Legalists will always answer the question no. So the way that legalists respond is. So I'm just doing a lot of good, because the more good I do the more God will be pleased with me, which is a lie. God's not pleased with you because you do good.

God is only pleased with you because of the life in his son that he gives to you. That's it. Right? But for most of us that have been dialed into God's word and dialed into the truth, let me just ask you this question. Will God still love me if I.

Can I fill in the blank with anything. Let me just ask you a question. Will God still love me even if I get drunk? Okay, we're in church. Four of you think that God would still love me?

Would God still love me if I get drunk? Thanks. He would. Would God still love me if I smoked weed? Yes, he would.

Would God still love me if I was immoral? Yes, he would. God will love me no matter what. God would still love me if I murdered somebody? God loves me no matter what.

The answer is yes. It's a resounding yes. That's what the cross is. So scandalous for what Jesus did when he stretched out his arms and died, he said, no matter what you've done and no matter what you will ever do, I will love you with an unconditional love that's unmerited. That's the gospel.

It's true. The challenge is we make statements with that. We say things like this so God will love me even if I. God will love me even if I'm immoral. God will love me even if I do drugs.

God will love me even if I do this, which is true. But then we make a principle out of it. And here's our principle. Our principle is, therefore I will, or therefore I will continue to blank because God loves me anyway. Now, if I said as your pastor, hey, therefore, I'm going to be immoral this week and commit adultery against my wife because God loves me anyway.

Hey, therefore I'm going to get drunk every night this week. Hey, therefore I'm going to beat my kids this week because God loves me anyway. What would you say to that? You'd say, that's wrong. You'd say, that's way out of bounds.

It's because we're asking the wrong question. Let me give you an unreserved answer. God loves you no matter what. That's just who he is. He demonstrated on the cross that's been settled at the foot of the cross.

And when Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, his love for you was settled. It's done. See, here's a better question to ask with our liberty here's the better question to ask. Will blank bring God the most glory? Will blank be pleasing to him?

Will me getting drunk bring God the most glory? Answer, no. Will me being immoral on my wife bring God the most glory? No. And if I ask that question, there may be things that aren't even sinful that God says, yeah, this doesn't bring me the most glory.

So this is how I want you to live. If it doesn't bring God the most glory, then I don't want to do it, which is why I make this statement. Even though God will love me, or since God loves me no matter what, I refuse to blank because I want to honor him. Hey, even though God will love me if I get drunk, I'm not going to get drunk because I want to honor God. Hey, even though God will love me if I'm lazy, I don't want to be lazy because I want to please God.

Hey, even though God will love me if I don't study his word or pray or seek his face, I want to do those things because I want to please God. Right? Then the principle becomes this way. Therefore, I will always choose to honor God over blank. Do you get it?

See, the question that we need to be asking is, God, what brings you the greatest pleasure? God, what brings you the most glory if you're single? See, here's what most people do in church. Most people say, well, God loves you anyway, and everybody sins, so don't worry about it. I'm not asking you to worry about it.

I'm just saying, if it doesn't bring God the most pleasure or most glory, then just stop doing it. Like, if you're dating and you're like, well, God will forgive me anyway, even if we move in together. And it's no big deal because everybody does it. If it doesn't bring God the most glory, then move out. I mean, you got to ask yourself the question, if you're single, is God having as much fun on your date as you are?

You got to ask yourself, if you're married, is God having as much fun in your marriage as you are? You got to ask yourself, if you're at work, is God having as much fun in your work as you are? Not. Can I get away with this? Not will God still love me?

But am I being my best for the Lord Jesus Christ? That becomes the question. Does that make sense? And that's what Paul is saying. The problem that Israel had was not that they didn't experience God's love and not that they didn't experience

God's power.

But comparatively few people that were experiencing God's love and power were actually seeking to please God. Who are they seeking to please? They were seeking to please themselves. That's what they were doing. And if you want to have a strong walk with Christ, here's a great question.

God, am I being pleasing to you? If you'll ask that question when you read the Bible, it'll amaze you how the Holy Spirit will work in your life. Now, I didn't realize this as a young believer. As a matter of fact, there were times in my early life as a believer where I got mad at reading the word. Cause I always felt terrible all the time.

Like every time I opened the Bible, I felt like I was doing everything wrong. I didn't realize at the time that was God's holy spirit showing me that he had a better way for me. He wasn't mad at me. He wasn't upset with me. He was trying to show me what was most pleasing to him.

Now I know when I read God's word that when he's showing me stuff, he's not saying, jeff, I hate you. Jeff, you're no good. Jeff, you're lousy. Jeff, you'll never get this. He's saying, hey, Jeff, there's a better way.

And Jeff, I'm showing you this conviction. Cause I want you to live in a way that's pleasing to me because, oh, Jeff, by the way, when my joy is in you, your joy will be complete. Like the most satisfying life is to please God. When you please God, you'll be the most satisfied. That's what the Bible teaches.

So this is not about doing right. So that, okay, I'm just keeping God at bay. I want him pleased with me. When you're pleasing God, your joy meter goes through the roof, regardless of your circumstance. And that's what Paul is saying.

You want to have a strong walk in Christ, work to please Christ. Don't just live off. I know God loves me. Yes, he does. How is it that I can actively pursue God?

There's a difference between passively receiving God's love and pursuing pleasure in God. You know, seek to please the Lord. Amen. Second thing I encourage you to do is this. If you want to have a strong walk with Christ, learn from the example of others.

Learn from the example of others. Notice what he says in verse six. He's going to say the same thing in verse twelve or verse eleven. Notice this. Now, these things happened as examples for us so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved.

Why is Paul going to talk about Israel? He's going to say, hey, Israel is an example to us. And here's what they did. Do not become idolaters as some of them were. As it was written, the people sat down to eat and drink and stood up to play.

Nor let us act immorally as some of them did, and 23,000 fell in one day. Nor let us try the lord as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble as some of them did and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now here you see the same thing in verse eleven you saw in verse six. Now, these things happened to them

as an example.

There's that word example. And they were written for our instruction upon whom the end of the ages have come. They're an example. How many of you were the oldest child in your family? You were the example.

How many of you had an older sibling in your family? After church today, call them and thank them for taking all the beatings for you, right? Because you've older child, you were the oldest child. Your parents didn't know what they were doing sometimes, or they did, and they were setting up a standard that some of you younger children could watch and say, I don't want to do that. I'm not going to do that, man.

I'll let them get in trouble for that, right? That's what they did. I mean, one time I was my younger brother, 17 years younger than me, and I moved back to our hometown when I was like 32 and he was 15, and we went out and did a motorcycle class over the weekend. And I didn't really know my brother very well at the time because I'd moved out of the house when he was one and I already had my motorcycle license. But we started doing this class together.

We had so much fun. I mean, I laughed the whole weekend long. I mean, we were laughing at the same things. We almost got kicked out of the class because we were trying to push each other over and all this stuff. And after spending the weekend with him, I was driving him back home and I said these words to him and I said, Justin, I said, now I know why we're 17 years apart.

Because if you would have been two years younger than me like Jen was, I would have been devious enough to come up with all the stupid things I did, and you would have been dumb enough to do them and mom would be dead. I'm like, it's a good thing God gave her 17 years. So my brother went home. And the way he interpreted it, he walked in and goes, hey, mom. He goes, it's a good thing I wasn't the first child.

If Jeff and I would have been raised together, you'd be dead. Which is not quite what I said. But my mom, my mom, not skipping a beat, said these words came right out of her mouth. She said, Justin, if you would have been firstborn, you would have been an only child.

So she saw what I saw. But the point is, these things are given to us as examples. I mean, the greatest experience you have, if you can learn from others mistakes, you don't have to repeat it. If you can learn from what others did well, you can follow it. Israel is given to us as an example so that we can learn from it what they did well and what they didn't do well.

And Paul is going to highlight four things. He said, they're going to be an example to you so that you don't crave evil. And here's what he says. He said, do not become idolaters as some of them were. And as it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink and stood up to play.

So one thing is idolatry. Now, when we think about the word idolatry, most of us think about statues. Like, if you've been to India, like I have many times, and you ride in a taxi, you'll see different statues all over the car, or you'll see statues in people's homes, or you'll see little buddhas here and there. And we think about that as being idolatry. And so most of us think, well, that ain't me.

I mean, I don't have little statues and things that I pray to, so I'm not idolatrous. I mean, I'm not an idolater. I mean, think about ancient Israel. I mean, he's referring back to Exodus 32, when Moses was delayed in bringing the Ten Commandments down. And because they were delayed in hearing from God, here's what they decided to do.

They decided to pool all their jewelry together and form a cow or a golden calf out of the jewelry and then worship it, get drunk and have an orgy. They're like, we'll serve that God. That's what we'll do. We'll serve someone other than the living God. We want to please ourselves.

Let me give you a definition of what I think idolatry is. It's this. I would say it's giving your ultimate worship to that which is not ultimate. Giving your ultimate worship to that which is not ultimate. And when I talk about worship, I'm talking about your focus, your time, your effort, your attention.

I mean, where does your heart go? Now, I want to be careful when I teach this because if I teach this too strong, you're going to say, well, Jeff, you're just saying everybody needs to be a pastor and go to church every day. That's not what I'm saying. Some of you have not been called to be a pastor, but can you do what you do by still knowing that you're doing what you're doing by keeping your relationship with Jesus first place in your life? And there's a lot of people that can do a lot of different jobs that can do that.

When I left the insurance industry, I couldn't do that. I knew God was calling me to preach in such a way that I said, woe to me if I don't preach the gospel. But I had two other friends my age that to this day love the Lord Jesus Christ, serve him doing awesome in that industry, and told me at the time, hey, we love what we do and we feel like we're doing it for Jesus and we love what we're doing for Jesus. And they're doing it great for Jesus. The question is not what you're doing, it's can you do what you're doing with a focus on the Lord Jesus Christ first and foremost?

And for many of us, we take our eyes off Jesus and we put it on other things. For instance, let me give you an example. There's nothing wrong with having a house. There's nothing wrong with buying a house. There's nothing wrong with having a nice

house.

There's nothing wrong with having a car or buying a car or having a nice car. Here's what the challenge is, is when you wake up every day and you're looking at Zillow or you're online looking at a car, and all you can think about all day is a car and how much it is. Car, car, car, car, house, house, house. I don't have time for Jesus. I don't have time for his word.

I don't have time. All I have time for is getting, getting, getting. That's when your focus is off. Do you see the difference? And we can become idolaters in a lot of things.

We can put family over Jesus, we can put friends, we can put our job over Jesus, we can put pleasure over Jesus, we can put anything over Jesus. And yet we can do a lot of those things. And Jesus still stays first place in our life. And let me tell you this. Where the enemy tries to go after you more than anywhere else, the number one temptation is not any specific sin.

It's just to take Jesus off the throne of your life. That's it. As long as he's not first place, he's got you. I mean, that's the number one sin we commit, is idolatry. It's taking our focus, our mind, our attention off the Lord Jesus Christ.

That's what idolatry is. Which leads to the second one. It's immorality. Verse eight says, nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and 23,000 fell in one day. This immorality comes from numbers, chapter 25, and verse one, God told Israel, make sure that when you marry, you marry within the covenant community.

It'll be similar. Today, believers only marry other believers. But back in Israel's day, much like today, they believed in the whole flirt and convert method or missionary dating. Like, oh, you know, like, some of you gals, you bring a guy to church and, like, does he love Jesus? Well, he comes to church, like, sometimes with me.

And, you know, I think maybe he likes Jesus. If he didn't come to church before you brought him, he doesn't like Jesus. And, guys, you do the same thing. Dude, she's so hot. And if she could just hear Jesus, then she'll be hot, and she'll love Jesus.

No, you'll marry her, and she'll be the biggest pain in your side you've ever had. Okay, so what happened was the moabite women must have been good looking women, because the israelite men, like the moabite women, they started going after the moabite women marrying moabite women. And guess what they did? They started serving the Moabite gods. And because of that, immorality broke out.

Now, let me tell you something about immorality. Sexual immorality always breaks out where there's idolatry. It's the number one sin in every cult that I've ever studied. Where there's not Jesus Christ being central in worship, there's always sexual immorality in the cult. Why?

Because where there's no worship of the Lord Jesus Christ, immorality is rampant. But it's more than just sexual immorality. It's living for self. Now, if you've been around me long enough, you know, I'm not very pc. I mean, that's just not how God made me, and I'm okay with that.

So I thought of a pc word this week right here's. What immorality is. Immorality is pc, okay? There's two words that come out when you think about immorality, and it's this. It's pleasure and convenience.

If Jesus Christ is not the Lord of your life, if you're not living for Jesus, you will live for pleasure and you'll live for convenience. The idea of sacrifice for Jesus, the idea of serving others for Jesus, the idea of taking time away from your schedule, the idea of giving and being generous for somebody else, that won't even come on your radar. What your radar will consist of is what pleases me. If Jesus is not on the throne of your life, you will transcend into a place where you're like, hey, I got to do what feels good to me. I got to do what feels right to me.

Pleasure and convenience. When you live out of pleasure and convenience, immorality is rampant. Says, hey, learn from Israel. That's how they lived. They lived idolatrous, where Jesus wasn't the Lord of their life, even though he was the one that was providing all their food and doing everything for them.

And guess what? They lived immorally. And then they did this third one. I call it

testing God. You'll see it in the word as trying the Lord, nor let us try the Lord, verse nine, as some of them did and were destroyed by the serpents.

Any of you have a mom that said something like this? Boy, don't you try me. I mean, that's what it is, trying the Lord. And this story comes out of numbers 21 five. I just got to read it to you because it's so human.

In numbers, chapter 21 and verse five, you can read this whole story, but in verse five, it says, the people spoke against God and Moses. Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this miserable food. What are they saying? We don't like your plan, God.

I mean, the way I would define testing God is verbalizing frustration and disdain with God's plan. What it means is this, I don't always have to enjoy God's plan. I mean, the last eight weeks for my life have not been the most enjoyable eight weeks for my life. But during that time, I was still doing my best to praise God, and I still saw God's hand in it, and I still see God's hand in it, even though I'm not fully recovered yet. God is good, no matter what my circumstances are.

Verbalizing disdain and frustration is that when I not only talk to myself, but I'm telling other people, God's no good. God's no good. If God were good, I wouldn't be going through this. If God were good, he wouldn't have this happen to me. If God, God's bad.

That's what I'm saying. And the people began to talk about God and Moses and say, why do I have to go through this? God, your plan stinks. It's really when we have this entitlement mentality of this God, you owe me. You owe me.

Here's what I thought my life was going to be, and you're not taking me there. And I got a problem with you, God. That's what it is. I mean, I find it funny in this verse, for there is no food and no water. So what are they complaining about?

No food, no water, and we loathe this miserable food. Well, what food? You said there was no food. What are they saying? We don't like the food you're providing.

We don't like the water you're providing. Now, I remember when I was in, I think I was in 8th grade. Yeah, I was in 8th grade. I remember one time I came home from dinner and my mom is a very good cook. My wife knows my mom's a good cook.

But it was just kind of one of those times where I was talking about my mom's meal. She made, like, meatloaf or something. I didn't want meatloaf. And I'm like, mom, this is the worst thing I've ever had. Now, my mom, you're learning a lot about my mom today.

My mom said, don't worry about it. She goes, next week. You make dinner the whole week for everybody. And I said, no problem. We'll have hot dogs.

She's like, no, you don't understand. She's like, you have to come up with a grocery list. You have to go shopping with me for all the groceries. All four food groups have to be present. And, oh, by the way, here's when dinner has to be served.

So if you have to miss practice next week, you have to miss practice because you're making dinner for our family. And by the way, your sister can say whatever she wants to say about the meals. It was the worst week of my life. I mean, we still joke about this Betty Crocker cookbook she bought me with this, like, hamburger thing that had a smiley face on it that I tried to make one night. And my sister, to this day, every time we get together, she's like, remember that meal you tried to make with the smiley.

I'm like, yeah, I remember. And every night we'd sit down to dinner, my sister would just say, this is the worst meal we've ever had as a family. Right? So that's what it means to try God. That's what it means to test God.

It's when we complain about everything God's doing and God's actually doing good. And God was providing water, and God was providing food, and he was doing it in the wilderness where there was no hope to have any of those things, and the people were still complaining. And when you get to a place where you're verbally complaining about what God's doing, that's because God's been knocked off the throne of your life.

And then this final one. How about this one?

It's called grumbling. Now, most of the time when we think about sin in the church, we think about immorality, but grumbling is right up there with immorality. Notice this. Nor grumble, verse ten, as some of them did and were destroyed by the destroyer. Grumbling.

Grumbling is when we come and attack God's given authority. It's when we specifically attack or complain about God's given authority. Some of you will remember this story. It's in numbers, chapter 16. It's referred to in the New Testament as Korah's rebellion.

Korah was the name of a guy who rebelled against Moses and had two other people with him. And I'll just read you one verse, so kind of give you the idea how this all got started. In number 16, verse three, it says, they assembled together against Moses and Aaron. And here's what they said to them. They're coming against God's leadership.

And here's what they're saying. You have gone far enough for all the congregation are holy, every one of them. And the Lord is in their midst. So why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord? Here's what Korah said.

All of us are holy. Moses, who put you in charge? Why are you and Aaron the only ones that think you're holy? We're just as holy as y'all are. Quit bossing us around, okay?

Now, it's when you specifically start attacking or complaining. God given authority. That's a no no to God. Now, I know this is hard to understand in our generation, but back in their generation, people were attacking the spiritual leadership that God had appointed. I mean, it would be like today.

And I know you probably never heard of this, but it would be like today if you ever heard somebody talk bad about a pastor and started speaking bad, like, how come they talk this way? And who gave them that authority? And why are they doing. I mean, it would be the same kind of thing, let me tell you. God doesn't take that very

kindly.

And here's what happened in Korah's rebellion. Korah and the two other men. Moses said, hey, listen, God gave us this. We didn't choose this. Hey, let's line up in the morning and see what God says.

And Korah and the two other men and their families all stood by their tents. And Moses said, if I were y'all, I'd get away from them. And God opened up the earth and swallowed them all alive. And it's one of pastor's favorite passages in the Bible. Don't complain against the Lord's anointed.

And then do you know what happened then all the people in the assembly got mad at Moses. And Aaron said, you killed all our people. So we didn't kill anybody. We're just telling you, don't mess. We didn't choose this job.

This is God. And you might say, well, what about. You're just saying that

because you're a pastor. I'm talking about complaining about any God given authority because romans 13 says that God's given all authority. How about this one?

How about this one? Listen, you ever complained about any political leader who put them in charge? God did. I mean, how many of you know that Barack Obama and Donald Trump may have, I'm just saying, may, I'm not a political expert, may have different understandings of how to govern.

I can tell you this as a pastor. I pray for both. I paid for Barack and Michelle Obama, and I pray for Donald Trump and his wife, because that's what I'm called to do. I'm called to pray for all those in authority. How about this?

How about that policeman that has the radar gun? When you're driving down the road, do you complain about his authority or her authority? How about this one? Children, your parents are your authority. Parents say, amen, obey them.

I mean, if you can't obey your parents, you can't obey anybody. It goes against

God to be disrespectful to God given authority. And when Jesus is not the Lord of your life and you're an idolater and you're immoral and you're grumbling and you're complaining, here's what God says, hey, I'm no part of this. You're not being pleasing to me. I've put authority in place.

Submit to it. And when you submit to God given authority, God shows up in power. It pleases the Lord to see humble people before him doing that. Amen. This is why the scripture goes on.

And this next section is really powerful, because notice what he says in the very next verse of one corinthians, chapter ten. He's really giving us a warning. He's saying, be careful. Verse twelve says, therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. He's saying to everybody who's a Christian, hey, be careful.

Because a lot of times as Christians, here's what we think. The longer we've been a Christian, the more we think, that'll never happen to me. That'll never happen to me. I remember I used to struggle with that. That'll never happen to me, or I've never struggled with that.

That'll never happen to me. Here's what the warning is. Be careful. Be careful, because if Jesus is not on the throne of your life, anything's possible. Possible.

If Jesus is not the center of your worship, any immorality is possible. Testing God is possible. Trying the Lord is possible. Grumbling is possible. So just be careful.

Even if you're walking and pleasing the Lord right now. Just stay humble, which is my third point. If you want to have a strong walk with Christ, here's what I would say. In humility. In humility.

Continue to pursue God's glory and his plan of escape. Continue to pursue God's glory and his plan of escape. God will always provide a way for you. Now, this next voice verse, if you've been in church for a while, is going to be very familiar to you, but we're going to think about it in context. Notice what he says in verse 13.

No temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man and God is faithful. Okay, temptation is common. God is faithful. Temptation happens. God is faithful.

If you're tempted or if you're tempted strongly, it doesn't mean there's something wrong with you. The longer you walk with Christ, the stronger the temptations will become. Heck, Jesus Christ was even tempted not only in the wilderness, but in the garden of Gethsemane to stay off the cross. If Satan was tempting Jesus, how much more is he going to tempt you? Temptation is not sin.

Don't think there's something wrong with you when you get tempted. But know this, God's faithful. Just because you're tempted doesn't mean you have to succumb to that sin, which means this. You can't say these words. The devil made me do it.

Now, the devil tempted you, and you willingly chose to do it, okay? Every single time, right? So in humility, we're going to pursue God's glory. Because notice what he goes on to say. God, he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able.

Which means in order for Satan to tempt you, he has to get permission from the Lord because he can't tempt you beyond what you're able to be tempted from. Notice that. But with the temptation, God will provide the way of escape so that you will be able to endure it. There's always a way out. There's always a way out.

Now think about this. Most of us think when we're tempted, we're thinking about that specific sin. Guys. You're thinking about, how do I get away from pornography or girls. You're thinking about, how do I get away from my identity issues and looking in the mirror and being bulimic or anorexic or some of you are thinking about how do I get away from wanting to steal or be greedy, or how do I get away from wanting to purchase more stuff?

Or how do I get away from just cruel words coming out of my mouth. When you think about the specific sin, here's what God's leading you towards. Not getting out of the specific sin. He's leading you to a path where in the middle of whatever you're tempted that you can worship the Lord Jesus Christ and give him praise and seek his face when you're sinning. I can tell you what you're not doing.

You're not worshiping the Lord Jesus Christ in all of his glory. Okay? If you're having an affair right now, here's why you're having an affair. It's not because you're just tempted sexually. Here's what you're not doing.

You're not worshiping the Lord Jesus Christ and putting him first place in your life. If you swear every time something comes out, you know, bad happens and it comes just out of your mouth, it's not because you have a problem with swearing. It's because Jesus Christ is not centered on the lordship of your life. You're not worshiping him. Right?

God will always provide a way out for you to worship him. I mean, didn't he do that? I mean, Jesus, when he was tempted in the wilderness, God always provided a way out for him. Jesus, when he was getting ready to go to the cross, God always provided a way out for him. He always provides a way out if you're looking for the way of escape.

Now most of us when we think about the way of escape we think like Peter in jail, like we're looking and look at the gates opened and man, I walked out and I was scot free. But I also noticed this verse too at the very end as a way of escape so that you will be able to endure it. Endure what? I thought I could just get out. If I'm not in bondage I can get out, right?

Can you remember the story of Joseph in the Old Testament? I mean if you want to study a man who chose to be moral rather than immoral study the person of Joseph. There's not a lot of good examples in the Bible other than Jesus. Joseph was a good example. Joseph had this vision when he was a young boy that he was going to rule and all of his eleven brothers would come down and worship him.

Which wasn't bad that God gave him that vision. It was just bad that he told his brothers about it because they didn't like it, right? So what do his brothers do? They throw him in a pit. They sell them.

He gets shipped to another country, goes to Egypt. And while he's there there's a day that he's with Potiphar who's ruling there. And his wife tries to tempt him sexually

to have a relationship with him. And what does he do? He says how can I dishonor the Lord and do such a thing?

And so what's he do? He does exactly what the Bible says to do. He flees sexual immorality. He runs out so fast he drops his cloak. So he escaped.

Didn't he escape? Totally escaped. Except for the fact he dropped his cloak which misses Potiphar went to Mister Potiphar and said look. Look what happened. She lied.

She said Joseph tried to seduce me and have relationship with me. And I screamed and look, here's his cloak. He ran away scared. So what happens? Because of his morality he ends up in prison for how long?

Years. Because what? Because he did what was right. So what could he have done in prison? I'm not worshiping that God anymore.

He didn't take care of me. He doesn't love me. I'm grumbling about my situation.
Is that what he did? No.

He continued to worship the Lord even while he was in prison knowing that what God put on his heart was still going to come to pass. And God used the time even when he was in prison to endure under it. So that when the time came where Egypt needed somebody who was second in command, who was there to interpret the dream, it was Joseph who became second in command. It was Joseph who's the one that kept the nation of Israel alive. It was Joseph whose brothers were the ones that came and bowed before him and said, we need food.

It was Joseph. Why? Because he lived morally and God gave him the way of escape. Even though it wasn't fun, it wasn't comfortable and it wasn't immediate. See, sometimes we think, well, if I do it right, then it's going to be a lot of fun and it's going to be comfortable.

It's going to be great. Listen, listen, listen, listen. Let me just talk to you about immorality for a second. Guys. It is totally possible.

You people who are not married men, listen to me. Look at me. I don't care if you're ten years old and you're just getting ready to go through puberty or you're 30 years old and you've never been married. It is possible to remain pure until you're married. And it's not easy, but it's possible.

Women, it's possible. Not easy, but possible. If you go God's way, it doesn't mean that it's going to be fun, but it means it's going to be the most enjoyable if you go God's way. And we could talk about any sin, we could talk about stealing, cursing, whatever you want to talk about. If you do it God's way, there's always a way out.

And here's what I would say in humility. In humility means this. I know it could happen to me. So I want to set boundaries, not because I have to, but because I want to do what I can to serve the Lord. Now I talk about this a lot from the pulpit because I think it's really important.

I mean, even this week a pastor that's known nationally, across the country has been allegedly accused of sexual misconduct. Okay? Now whether it's true or not, I don't know. It grieves me either way. It grieves me if people are bringing false charges against, against him, it grieves me.

It grieves me if he's guilty of the charges. It grieves me. Somebody has really served the Lord well. And I think as a pastor man, we live in a day and age. If somebody brought charges against me, they don't have to be true.

They could just happen. So what do I do? And I would tell you, that's why I don't meet alone with women, ever. We don't hug and kiss and I don't whisper sweet nothings in your ear. And the only time I'm with you is if somebody else is there or there's a crowd.

Why? Because I know if somebody accused me of something, sexual misconduct. Good luck putting us alone. It's never happened. Never will happen.

Read my emails. My wife reads my emails. Why? Because I'm scared? No, because I want to honor the Lord.

Cause I'm hoping that as long as God gives me breath, I get to pastor in this church and preach God's word until he takes me home and I can be faithful. Amen. Here's the point. I'm not scared, but I realize anything could happen to me. I want to be humble.

And here's the idea of humble. As we grow in holiness, we also want to grow in our humility. Did you know that? As we grow in our holiness, we want to grow in our humility? Have you ever noticed that as God brings you out of a place of sin and you begin to set your feet on a rock and you begin to overcome it and conquer it, how?

You can look down at people that haven't come as far as you. I mean, if you've overcome an addiction and used to be a drunk and now you're not a drunk, and then you see drunks and you're like, how do you act like that? Or you used to swear and

now you don't swear and people have foul language. Like, how do you act like that? Or you used to be grossly obese and now you're in shape and like, how come you don't work out?

Do you see what I'm saying? As you grow in holiness, you also need to grow in humility, because you realize the only reason you're where you're at is because of God's grace in your life. And apart from his grace, you wouldn't be there anyway. It's God who's done the growth in you. It's because you pursued him and you've let him build you.

He's the one who does all the work. And here's what I see when I read this scripture, that if no temptation has seized you except what's common, as I've said many times to you, there's no specific strategy. I mean, while Satan may have a specific strategy for you, it's not unique. It's not that you're so special that Satan's in hell saying, I got to come up with a new strategy. For him, because nothing will get to him.

No. Whatever you're struggling with, hundreds of other people struggle with.

You're not alone. That's why I love our church, because we want to be a church that encourages people in their struggle. You can do this.

And I think about these verses. You can write these down. Number one, you can overcome it. Romans 8:37 says, now we are overwhelmingly conquerors through the love in which he has for us. Because of God's love for it, you can overcome your sin.

You can't do it by yourself, but with God's grace, you can. The verse I just read says, not only can you overcome it, you can escape it. And the verse I just read said, and not only can you escape it, you can endure under it. If you're doing the right thing for the Lord and it's uncomfortable, guess what he's doing? He's just building character in your life for some greater fruitful service down the road.

I want to tell you all here something today. You don't have to go out of here and pull yourself up by the bootstraps and gird it out and say, I'm going to try harder. I'm going to try harder. I'm never not going to read my Bible. You can't do it.

I mean, put yourself to the test. If you swear, I dare you go out here, I'll never swear again. I'll never swear again. You won't be able to do it. You'll swear.

But when you worship the Lord, you say, Lord, I just want you. And I know I was wrong. And by your grace, I know you can build me. And, Lord, just help me keep my focus on you. And I want to serve you and honor you.

And that's what I want to do. That God will do a work in your heart and God will purify you and he will take you in a strong walk. And the cool thing about walking with the Lord is, you know, he's the one that's doing the work. And it's really nothing to do with you other than you've relinquished your rights to be selfish. And you say, God, I just want to honor and serve you.

Amen. And every single one of you can do that. And the good news is, no matter where you are, no matter what sin you're struggling with here, even if you feel the weight of guilt all over when you confess your sins, as Oswald Chambers would say, God will go and tax the remotest star to help you walk with him because of his great

love for you. Receive his love. Know that he loves you.

It's unconditional. But because he does, we work to please. Our aim is to please, please him, to serve him because of the great love he has for us. Amen. Would you stand with me today?

Lord Jesus, we just thank you for your grace. We thank you that it's not about our trying harder. We thank you. It's not about us just living for ourselves. We thank you that you give us the power through your son Jesus Christ, to accomplish anything you want to do.

And we give you all the praise and all the glory in Jesus name. Amen.