

# John 1

Sunday 11/22/2020

If you have your Bibles this morning, we are going to be back to John 1, as I am sure you are well aware. Last week, we talked about what I call one of the great battleground verses of the Bible. There are some verses in the Bible that have been fought over for hundreds of years and have led, when they are taught wrong or when they are laid out wrong, to some of the most damnable heresy that certainly if a person believes could never be saved and find God's eternal life.

That was in John 1:18, where it said, "No man has seen God at any time, the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." We talked about how God declared His Son and the difference between, as the King James Bible says, Him being a begotten Son versus the heretical teaching coming out of Alexandria, Egypt so many hundreds of years ago, that Jesus Christ was not equal with God, but a lesser God. So you find in all the new Bibles that He was a begotten God. We know now that when He was manifested as the begotten Son, that was when He came into this world.

Our understanding of how the attack on the Word of God down through history has played itself out and even goes on today. If you are any kind of a Bible student, you know that it was already going on in Paul's day. He said in 2 Corinthians 2:17:

*2 Corinthians 2:17*

*For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.*

So we see that in Paul's day, it was already happening, already unfolding. I showed you how that when you go back to church history and go back through history and look at the parallels, you will find that two lines clearly develop that you can find coming through the Bible and really get defined for you in the Book of Acts and how they continue up through history and even until this day. I showed you how that out of the Book of Acts, Alexandria, Egypt, and a little bit later, Rome, formed the hotbed of heresy. These were men whose whole passion about the Bible was to destroy it and corrupt it.

A guy by the name of Origen back there, along with Clement of Alexandria, along with Pantanus, along with a guy by the name of Philo, they worked overtime in destroying the Word of God and came up with a Greek New Testament that had over 75,000 changes in it from the one that you would find in the true line out of Antioch.

Of course, the other great city that you need to know about, as we talked last week, is Antioch of Syria. That is the hotbed of Bible Christianity in the early New Testament, where Alexandria, Egypt is the hotbed of heresy. A little later on in Rome, Antioch of Syria is where the first Bible teachers are sent out. It is where the first missionaries are sent out. That is where they are first called Christians at Antioch. They had the forerunner of what you are holding in your lap through the Greek New Testament that they had because the world was a Greek-speaking world. But that is the same manuscript that has been translated into your English King James Bible.

These three churches now form for us two clear lines of churches, two clear lines of Christianity, and two clear lines of Bibles. They form for us a model pattern, a pattern that is very, very, very easy to see and trace through history if you just use the Bible and do not get into all the other junk that everybody is putting out there.

Last week, I told you the real key to true biblical Christianity, the real key to a true Bible-believing church, the real key to a Bible-believing Christian will be a man or a woman or a pastor or a church who has that unbroken chain of Bible doctrine that has been, as Paul said in 2 Timothy 2:1, passed down from faithful men to faithful men. It has not changed in 2,000 years of history. Nothing is deleted from it. Nothing is added to it. We stand on the exact same truth that the Waldensians stood on, the Paulicians stood on, the Nestorians stood on, all those Bible-believing groups. The list is really endless.

## I. The Record of John and the Two Records in the Bible

Today, we are going to come back to John 1. We are going to get through verses 19 through 28. I know that is a shock. What is happening here? Ten verses. But there is a thought here that I want to develop. We have had fun with the battleground verses or the key verses. Now, this is just as important today, but it just kind of spreads itself out through these ten verses. So we will deal with it today. We are going to begin to move on in our intro of the Book of John. Up to this point, verse 18, it has been an introduction to finding things. Now, in verse 19, we start to move and look at the actual ministry of John the Baptist, and then just in the end of this chapter and the beginning of the next chapter, the ministry of Jesus Christ as He begins His public ministry.

Let us pray this morning. John 1:19, here we go:

*John 1:19-28*

*19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?*

*20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.*

*21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.*

*22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?*

*23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.*

*24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.*

*25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?*

*26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;*

*27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.*

*28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.*

I like to look for things in the Bible. That is actually, and I have taught you this before, one of the keys in learning your Bible: actively always wanting to find something or look for something and then ask yourself why. I do not even know if you ever saw this or not, but there are two times in your Bible where it says, "And this is the record." Imagine that, two times in your Bible. Out of all the verses in the Bible, 31,176 verses, there are two times you find in all of the stories, in all of the things that happen, two times it directly says, "And this is the record."

When I saw that a number of years ago, I thought to myself, "Well, that must be pretty important." As I began to look at it, I found that in John 1:19, we have a record here of the Lord Jesus Christ coming to the nation of Israel. Now it is on the record. Over in 1 John 5:11-13, it says, "on the record" and it is for you and me, for the church. Most of God's people have no idea what these two records even deal with.

But John tells us here in his ministry, he is giving the Jews a record, going on the record. That is a term politicians like to use: "Well, I am going on the record," or they will say to you, "I will say this to you, but it is off the record." That means there is no official verification of it. When you go on the record to say something, you are being documented that what you are saying is being used as truth and you are going to stand on it. So John here is standing on the record or giving the record of the truth of Christ coming to the nation of Israel. When he goes on the record, it is for the Jews.

Now, when he writes 1 John, he is dealing with Christians and he is dealing with fellowship. So when he says in 1 John 5:11-13:

*1 John 5:11-13*

*11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*

*12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*

*13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*

You know what the record for you is? That you can know you are saved. People say, "Well, you know, I think I can lose." We have had people come to the church here, bless their hearts, they are good people, and they struggle with losing their salvation. They think that we are up one day and down the next. I have dealt with them for years and years. They just can never get the victory. You know what your problem is? You do not have a record, or you do not believe the record God gave you.

Do you realize how hard it is to do anything in life without a record? You try to go get a job or try to go to school or try to do something, and they are going to want to see your birth certificate. You know what your birth certificate is? It is a record that you were born. I am telling you, you standing in front of them is not enough proof. They want a record of that. You go to Walmart, you go to Starbucks, you go to Panera. Wherever you go, when you pay your bill, you get a receipt. You know what that receipt is? It is your record. You have a dog, a cat. If you are complying with the rules, you are supposed to get a dog license. You know what that dog license is? It is a record.

There is not anything in this world. You go buy a car, you get a title, or the bank gets it for a while and then you get it when you pay it off. It is a record. You buy a house, you have a deed. It is a record. You cannot do anything in life without a record. I am going to tell you, this has nothing to do with the message, but I am on a roll here, so I am going to stay with it. Just like you cannot do anything in life without a record, you will never do anything with God if you do not have the record.

Now, I know this is not popular, what I am about to say today, but there may be times in your Christian life where you have to lay it on the line. I know that is not popular with all you Christians hiding under the bed this morning at home, but I am telling you, there may be a time in your Christian life where you have to put all that you are and all that you have on the line for Him. Nobody is going to do that if you are not sure if you get killed in the process or you die in the process or something happens in the process that you are not saved.

So you have two records. There are two times in the Bible, "this is the record." One for Israel, the record of Christ coming as the Messiah. One for you and me in 1 John 5 that says that you have a record of your salvation. You will never do anything meaningful for God until you absolutely know for sure you are saved and you can quote out the record. It is just that simple. That is the official statement on your salvation.

## II. Historical and Doctrinal Application

Now, in this record, there will be some great lessons for all of us, the one in John 1:19. I am done preaching about ours for a little bit. When it comes to my Bible and me, and I am not speaking for you, I always really enjoyed the historical application. I have always had a love for history. I do not even when I was a kid in school, we would have what we call reading lab. I do not even know if they have reading labs anymore, but you would go in there and I would always be getting something on history. I mean, I just, I like to read books on history. I like to read. I like to know what happened in history, and I have just had a passion for it.

I love the history of God and what He does and how you cannot separate that from the nations down through history and how you cannot separate the nations from the Bible. When you put all that together, you have understanding that puts you in a better position to see where you are at or where you are going because you can see where God has been. In the Bible, as far as what God is doing and where He is going, it is key to understanding where He is at today and then where I need to be.

Time has three parts to it. Of course, you know this. It has a past, that is history. It has a present, that is where you are at today. And then it has a future. You cannot separate any one of those three because you take any one of those three out of the equation and you are done. You are lost. You do not know where you have been. You do not know where you are at. If you do not know where you have been and where you are at, I guarantee you, you do not know where you are going. That is the problem. History to me was vital. I just enjoyed it. History can be boring in some cases. Some of the books that I read, I mean, I would fall asleep. It took me years to get through it because I kept falling asleep at night. But some of it can be exact. But when you put the Bible into it, then it comes alive.

I also really enjoy the doctrinal application. When I was a young guy just getting into the Bible and I was going to Bible studies and hearing some great preachers back in the day, I would hear them talking about the doctrinal application. I heard Dr. Ruckman preach one time, and I had just gotten right with God. I was sitting on the platform of the church because I was in a little brass ensemble to play with the hymn. That night, Dr. Ruckman preached and drew the message, "The Gospel According to Exodus." That was my first introduction to going into an Old Testament book like Exodus, Exodus 12, and seeing a story in the Old Testament laid out with the New Testament laid out so clearly through it.

I just sat there and I thought, I can see him now. He sat up there, you know, and he had this big board up there, and he was drawing this, you know, and he says, "Now, look down there at verse one. You see what that says? It says, these guys needed a lamb." Then he comes down there and he said, "Now look at the next verse." And he says, "It says, the lamb." Then down here in verse three or four or five, it says, "your lamb." Then he stopped and he looked around and he said, "Now, isn't that a coincidence? Whoever wrote that saw Christ dying on the cross because the gospel, according to Exodus, is a picture of the lamb being slain at the Passover, putting the blood on the door and on the side post of the door. And when I see the blood, I will pass." He laid that thing out.

You know what he said? He said, "Now what kind of Bible do you think starts out talking about saying you need the lamb, or you need a lamb, the lamb, and your lamb?" In the book in the Bible that talks about the gospel, according to Exodus, because see, the first thing you all need, this is him now, you all need is a lamb. But he said, "But you know, not any lamb will do. You need the lamb." And he says, "But you know, folks, you can know all about the lamb until you make it your lamb." I thought to myself, I would have read that a thousand times. I would not have seen that. He went on down and showed how that the blood on the door and the lintel is a picture of three crosses, one thief here, one thief here, and the lintel at the top, Christ exalted above the other. Oh, it was incredible. I was sitting there thinking, "How do you do that?" I wanted that so badly. I wanted to be able to get into that Bible and read it and see it and see that doctrinal stuff just pop all over the place.

It comes in time. It comes in time that you ought to get to the place in your life where you can read any book in the Bible, any chapter of the Bible, and that stuff just pops out all over the place. Obviously, the key to it, and I have written several books on it, is the words. The key to it is understanding what the book in an overall thing puts. There are just some basic keys. When

you learn those keys and you use those keys, then here it is. I will never forget that. That was my first introduction. Boy, that old boy waxed eloquently that night, and he laid that thing out, and he went down through there, and it was one of the most amazing things. I still have the cassette tape that I bought that night. I probably listened to it a thousand times. I would not dare put it in the machine now, it would break, but I have it. Right on there, Dr. Ruckman, "The Gospel According to Exodus."

Doctrine. How God uses the cycle of history. How history, and God will use the repetitive of history, how history repeats itself to show us so clearly through the doctrinal application what is in the future. Because doctrinal application will be the specific teaching. He will use the very events in the Bible. He will use examples. He will use types. He will use models. He will use patterns. The Bible talks about in Job 12:7, he says, "Ask the animals. Ask the beast. They will teach you." He uses animals in the Bible.

The doctrinal application will be the spark plug of the Bible. If the Bible is like an engine in your car and you fill it up with gas, it will not start and run and really go anywhere until you put spark plugs in it. You can have the Bible and you can have all the stuff that you want, but until you get the doctrinal aspect of that Bible, that Bible will not come alive.

- 21 types of Christ.
- 18 types of the Antichrist.
- 7 churches in Revelation and how they lay out.
- People in the Bible.
- Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and all the people there who are diseased and have problems and have issues and what they really represent.

When I talk about over the last couple of weeks getting the fullness of God and the depth of God, I am talking about doctrine. I enjoy doctrine. I do. I like looking at those things. That is one of the reasons I like Thursday Night Bible study so much and where you ask questions off the cuff because it keeps me fresh. I feel a little dull with questions coming in that I have them to look at. I like to just be hit right off the bat and not know what is coming because it keeps you on your toes. It forces you whenever you ask me a question to look for those key things. And out it comes. Doctrine. I loved it. History and doctrine.

### III. The Inspirational Application and Honesty

Then you will have what we call the inspirational application. The Bible has three applications to it. You will have a historical application. You will have a doctrinal application. That is a specific teaching. Many times, the prophecy in the future. But then you will have an inspirational application. Sometimes it is called a practical application. How each story or each person or event and each chapter in the Bible or book or verse will have an application that teaches us about something in our everyday life. Maybe about ourselves or how to deal with things.

You see where history deals with the past and where most doctrine deals with the future. Inspiration will meet us right where we are at in this life and help us today and tomorrow with what we have got to deal with. In this passage today, it has always been a lot to me. It has been something I discovered years and years and years ago. I laid it out. It just meant so much to me. I want to kind of lay it out to you today. For those of you who are neo-evangelicals and kind of wishy-washy, I want to share with you today something out of this book. So you get it.

I guess fundamentally, I know what my number one problem is with God. I know that if it is my number one problem, it certainly has to be your number one problem too. The number one problem we all have will be in two areas. The first one will be us being honest with God. The second will be us being honest with ourselves. I guess those two things are the number one and two problems that every Christian has to deal with and we all have to face. I mean, we all have issues we deal with, and we all have things that we struggle with. But the real bottom line question is not what that particular thing is. The real question is, will you get honest with God with it? And then when you get honest with God, you have to get honest with yourself. Because this whole story that I am reading to you today will be built around just that one question that they came to ask John.

I do not know if you have ever even seen that question or not. When I started to study my Bible as I grew in the Lord and got into my Bible, I realized that there was so much to it. I mean, I know some of you have told me in the past when you get into the thing, you kind of get overwhelmed with it. Well, I was there, and I realized just like everything else, whether it be the coronavirus, or some issue, I realized that you had to chart a course through that to get the way you wanted to get it as fast as you could. Everything in your Christian life, I do not care if it is something you are facing or the Bible itself. If you want to get through something, it is overwhelming. You have got to find a path through it, not around it.

That is what I did. I realized that every aspect of the Bible was to be looked at, evaluated, understood, and then absolutely applied. I saw it as God's mind, and I kind of looked at it as me searching every corner of God's mind. It became my obsession to learn everything I could. Yet I can tell you right now, after almost 50 years in it and coming through it and learning it, I could feel that what I do not know about the Bible would fill 10,000 universes. I have just scratched the surface, and I have learned that in Christianity, there are no Bible scholars. A guy pokes himself as a Bible scholar, or somebody else says, talked about Bible scholarship. I want to tell you right now, you stay away from somebody like that. There are no Bible scholars. We are all just Bible students on different levels. When you give, "I am a Bible scholar," you give the impression you have arrived. You have not arrived anywhere except at the city dump. There are no great scholarly minds of the Bible. They are just men and women just like you, no better than you, no better than me, no worse than you or me, who are students. You may be on different levels of being a student, but you are just a student because you are ever, ever, ever trying to learn.

#### IV. The Significance of Questions in the Bible

One day it hit me. One day it hit me, I got looking at that thing, and I started, I do not even remember where it was, but I saw that God asked a question in the Bible. It just hit me. If all the

statements in the Bible mean something, and I can take those statements and apply it some way, certainly the questions must mean something. So in my little way of doing things, I put me a little side thing over here, and coming through the Bible, I started cataloging all the questions that I found.

One day I ran across Job 38:1-3, and it says:

*Job 38:1-3*

*1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,*

*2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?*

*3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.*

It was a question. Now, gird up now thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee an answer. Then I started coming through that. You know what I found? In the rest of that chapter, He asks 38 questions. He says down there, somebody is going to have to answer because I am going to demand an answer from you. My point is that in the Bible, when God makes a statement, He is going to hold you accountable to it, what you do with it. But I will tell you right now in the Bible, when God asks a question, somebody is going to have to answer Him. He said, "I demand to you." He says, "Gird up thy loins like a man." That is a, you ever see that big tough guy going to get up. He is sitting at a bar someplace and somebody says something and he is going to go over there and hold him accountable or he is sitting up there. What do you do? He gets up. The first thing he does is girding up his loins. See, that is what men do.

38 questions. I wonder who is going to have to answer those. Then as I went on through there, I found in Job 26:1-4, and I have given this to you before. I even have a sermon I preached on it. I found the six questions that most likely we are going to be asked at the judgment seat of Christ. Because when you look at these six questions in Job 26:1-4, actually the only one who can answer them is a New Testament born-again Christian.

*Job 26:1-4*

*1 But Job answered and said,*

*2 How hast thou helped him that is without power? how savest thou the arm that hath no strength?*

*3 How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom? and how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?*

*4 To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?*

I would think, this is just me, I would think that once a person saw those questions and realized he was going to have, it is like taking the biggest test of your life. Yet somebody gives you the cheat sheet that gives you all the answers on it. You know now what you are going to be asked. And God's people are just oblivious and keep on doing their own thing. It is crazy. Questions in the Bible.

You ever see the question God asked the devil with the crucifixion? What a shame. The question that God asked the devil when he is being, oh, I know you think that there is just a little, oh, yeah, yeah, it goes way deeper than that. The question that God asked the devil at the crucifixion. There it is. Last week I talked about how the devil wants to corrupt your mind from the simplicity that is in Christ. 2 Corinthians 11:3. And how he corrupted the Word of God by changing it in over 75,000 places back there in Alexandria.

Do you know where the first question is in the Bible? Do you know who asked the first question in the Bible? Why, it is found in Genesis 3:1. Lo and behold, I found this. The first question asked in the Bible was not asked by God. The first question in the Bible was asked by the devil. In Genesis 3:1, he says:

*Genesis 3:1*

*Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*

It was a question. First question in the Bible. I remember when I found that I was doing all this stuff and I thought, "I wonder what the first question is in the Bible?" I thought it was going to be a hard search. Man, I did not go three chapters in the Bible before I found it. It was asked by the devil. You know what he asked Eve? The first question in the Bible is showing doubt on the Word of God, saying to one of God's people, "Do you really believe God knows what He is talking about? Do you really believe that that Bible means what it says? Yea, hath God said, really? Did He really say that? Did He really mean that?" After he cast doubt on what God said and put it in the form of a question, you know what the devil did? The devil did what he always does. In the next couple of verses, he then changed what God said. First Bible revision right there in the garden. Found out by the first question in the Bible.

Let me be clear here. The first question in the Bible is found in Genesis 3, 6,000 years ago, and it is a question that the devil asked Eve, doubting that God knew what He was talking about and that the devil could correct His Word. You know what? The devil has been asking that question down through history to men's lives for the next 6,000 years. You go to Bible college, you find the question. You go to most churches today, Baptist churches, that is the question you are faced with. You go to the neo-evangelical churches, I guarantee you that is what we have today you deal with. First question in the Bible. Question, boy, I learned some things.

## V. Two Fundamental Questions for Every Christian

Now today, we are in John 1:19 and coming down through here. What I want to draw your attention to here is the first two questions that in this life, God is going to ask every Christian. Everybody in this building, all you people on YouTube, God is going to, you are going to have to answer these two questions too. You know what? It is not about where you are at in your relationship with God. It is not about what Bible you have. These two basic fundamental questions. One of them is in John here, the other one we are going to go to in a minute. Two questions that you are going to have to answer. You are faced with them.

When you come down through this, when we read this passage, did you catch the question that the leaders of Israel asked John in verse 19? They said, "Who are you?" You know that is a great question. They said, "What sayest thou of thyself?" You know that is a great question. My question to you and to me and to everybody out there is, "Who are you really?" Now, if you are saved this morning, we all know what we should be. But you know and I know that that is not always the case, is it? I mean, who are you this morning?

*2 Corinthians 5:17*

*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

How is that working for you? God's people, and I said this a couple of weeks ago, God's people are the greatest pretenders in the world. They are the greatest self-deceivers in the world. I have never seen people live in a state of denial like God's people today. What you see in most cases, almost with a certainty, is not what you get. I mean, I know who we are supposed to be, but who are we really? "Who art thou? What sayest thou of thyself?"

Listen, I am going to give you a great truth. In all my years in Christianity, I have learned that the greatest revealer of truth, and I told you this Thursday night, will be time itself. When you see a circumstance or a situation or something a person does, and you scratch your head and it does not look like it is up there, "Oh, this is of God, and I am doing this, and God told me to do that." You know what? You cannot buy any of that. You know what the real proof is, if God was in it or not? Time. Time. Because if God was really in it, then everything is going to work out.

I have never seen a day and age when God changes His mind so much. Guys, on fire. "God wants me to start a church." The church flops. God changes His mind? Or was not God into it to begin with? I have never seen it so much today where God's people are so inept when it comes to the power of God in their lives that they want to be who they want to be, but who they really are does not add up. When nobody else tells, time will tell.

I have had people leave the church over bad, stupid stuff that did not really mean anything that everybody should have left over, and they will say, "Well, I am leaving the church, and we are going here because this is your favorite. God is moving me out. God is leading me out." I do not ever question it. You know what I say to them? "See you in five years." In five years, we will see where that decision has taken you. We will see if your family is still all together. We will see if your health is still there.

I have seen God's people, God bring them through some sickness or some illness, and they just throw God under the bus and do their own thing. You know what I have seen? I have seen two years later, three years later, God come back with a vengeance on something else you have got. You do not mess with God. Who are you this morning? The last things I will say, "See you in five years." Sometimes I will say, "You know what? Let us meet together in five years and see how that decision worked out for you." Because I already know it is going to be a disaster. Because you may not know who you really are. I have got you down, pal. I have got you down. You say, "How can you do that?" Because there are certain things you have got to have in your

life. When nobody else tells, time will tell. It may take five, ten, fifteen. I have known situations which took 25 years to find out who was really right and who was really wrong.

You will have family, couples, singles come to any church. I know they give the impression that they are really on board, and they really love the Bible and love this. But in time, they will reveal who they really were. Because I have learned this. In life, your Christian life, we can fake a lot of things. You can come down those stairs this morning and smile and hug everybody and smile. You know what? I am not saying that it is, but I am saying it can be. It is as fake as a three-dollar bill. We can fake everything. We fake wearing the right clothes. We fake having the right Bible. We fake everything. We fake. I mean, we become so good at it. I have learned that you can fake a lot of things in your Christian life. You can fake it to your wife. You can fake it to your kids. You can fake it to your pastor. You can fake it to your friends. But I want to tell you something right now, and you better write this down if you do not have it. You can fake a lot of things, you cannot fake true Bible Christianity. You cannot. You cannot. Because it is not based on what you say.

This is where you trip and break your neck. You have a problem and you leave and you do not fix the problem, but you say you are right. You are out of your mind. Because the number one rule of Christianity is reconciliation. Leaving a church without fixing the problem tells me that you have got the problem. But people will fake that. "Oh, I am right. God is leading me. I am right. I am right." No, you are not right. You have deceived yourself. You have got a big mouth that you like to talk about things, but when push comes to shove and you have to follow the biblical principles, who are you this morning? "What sayest thou of thyself?"

A guy one time got mad and left our church and he says, he texts, nobody calls, you know, nobody will call because when you call, you have got to talk to somebody. As far as I am concerned, texting is out of the pit of hell. That is why I do not answer texts. I do, as long as I can say yes or no. But nobody, you know why everybody texts today? Because you do not want to have to talk with somebody on the phone, and God help you. You will not go in and sit down and talk to somebody.

A guy one time texts and he says, "Well, I heard that you said something about me and I am, we are leaving the church now because, you know, nobody had this information but you and you left the church." I text him back and I said, "Let us have a meeting with who said that to you. Us three, because I have not talked to anybody and we can fix this because you are awfully upset about something that you have no business to be upset about because I have not said anything." Now, if it is 99% of you here today, if not 100%, you would be all over that. He was not. He would not answer the text. So I made sure he would not come back to church. So I called him like 10, 20 times, and he would not answer his phone. Because I knew now I did not want him to come back, and I knew now he would not come back because he would see me waiting for him up at the door. The first thing I would have done was I would have said, "Okay, let us go find that person."

Do you know why I am speaking to you this morning because you are probably watching? Do you know why you did not text me back? Do you know why you did not answer me? Do you

know why you do not want to face me? Let us all tell him. There was nobody. Who are you? There was nobody. If 90% of you, if there was somebody that told you I said something and you called me and I said let us get it together. You know what we would do? We would have a meeting. We would clear the record. People are the biggest phony fakers on the planet today. They pretend. Oh, the great pretender. You can fake a lot of things, folks. But you cannot fake true Christianity. You know why? Because when there is a problem, you want to fix it. When you do not want to fix it and you want to leave without fixing it, you have got another agenda going, pal. Because there has to be some evidence of who you say you are.

Oh, and this guy went on and on. "Oh, God has done this, God has done that, I am this, I am that." No, you are an absolute phony. You know why? Because when push came to shove, you did not ante up. Do not kid me, pal. Kids, your wife, kids, your kids, kids, whoever you are hanging out with. Do not try to kid me. Who are you? True Bible Christianity has some evidences. It is never what you say that defines who you are. It is how you conduct yourself, what you do with the biblical principle to do what is right in any given situation.

Because when you are in a church that believes the book, preaches the book, eats and sleeps and drinks the book, that book will crawl all over your inner recesses of your heart. It will get into your mind. It will get into your soul. Hebrews 4 says that book will discern the thoughts and intents of your heart. It will in all of us. What it does is it shows all of us who we really are. It exposes the issues in my life and in your life that we are all just kidding ourselves about. We do not want to change. Out the door you go. To another church or in time no church.

I have seen families I have dealt with them over the years. They have gone from church to church, four churches, five churches, six churches, different churches, and they leave every one of them in time. Oh, yeah, in every case, it will be somebody else's fault. You know the real reason? You have got a glimpse of who you really are, pal. Ma'am, you have got a glimpse of who you really are and you did not want to really change. You changed the action. You changed the vocabulary. You changed the action. But you never changed the attitude. You are still the same old pretender.

You want a great telling verse on who we are? It is James 1:22-25. I call this the looking glass verse of the Word of God. Remember the old story, the old witch? "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of them all?" Not you, baby. You see, you can get up in the morning, fix yourself up, look in the mirror and think you are pretty good. This is why when you look at yourself in the mirror when you first get up, it is just a quick glance. You have got to work on yourself. Not just the women. Guys. I mean, you know, we want to blame the atmosphere and the ozone layer and all this stuff, you know, on green gas and blaming it. It is not that. It is women's hairspray. That is why most women do not... Mel used to tell Jean, "If you prayed as much as you sprayed, we would have a revival."

None of us look good in the morning. You ought to see me first thing in the morning. It takes me hours to get my hair right. But we look at that mirror after we got all prettied up and we think, "Oh, too bad. In fact, I look rather hot." And you deceive yourself. That is mirror mirror on the

wall. "How do I look today?" But when you get into the mirror, the Word of God, it strips off all the veneer and you see who you really are, pal. You cannot take it. You cannot take it.

*James 1:22-25*

*22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*

*23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:*

*24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.*

*25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*

That is what happens. You come to any church, not this one, any church that teaches the Bible, any church that eats, sleeps and drinks the Bible. And you get along for a while, for a year, two years, three years, you suck out of it everything you can, and then suddenly it is a cult now, suddenly you have got a problem now? In a church that met your needs and for two, three years it was wonderful? What happened? Who are you? I know who you are.

Like some people come, you know, they are in for two months and then you do not see them for six. Then they come back, same old story, you know, "Well, been a little busy, really this, really that." You know, they are in for another month and a half and then they are gone for eight. I mean, they are as inconsistent as they could be. You know, all you have got to do is look at their family, look at their life. It is a disaster. Their kids are a disaster. The grandkids will be a disaster. I mean, it is an absolute, it is a mess.

The real battle, hey, you do not need a psychologist. You do not need somebody sitting down and laying on a couch and telling them what your problems are. Your basic problem, your battle, is who God wants them to be versus who you really want to be. You know what? Those five or six, seven, eight months they are away from God's house and God's church, they make some of the biggest, dumbest mistakes and add to the weight already on them and they can never get out from under it. It swallows them up. The looking glass of the Word of God will show you who you really are. Do not give me this gas about your changed life. It is not about what you say. It is about when you have an issue, when there is a fundamental problem that is weighty enough for you to leave a church, and you just walk out and will not deal with it, will not tell who that person is, will not have that meeting. We have got your number, buddy.

I will tell you, the real key for all of us to have a real working relationship with Christ is one word: honesty. Honesty. Honesty with God, honesty with ourselves, then honesty with each other. It answers that question that John was asked in verse 19. "Who art thou?" Quit deceiving yourself.

## VI. "Where Art Thou?" - The Second Question

Now, our second question that we are all faced with, the first one is at John, we have got to move a little out of this one, but the second question that we all have to face and answer will be in Genesis 3:9. This just happens to be our second question in the Bible. See, once I found the first one, I just could not stop. I had to find the second one. What I found was that the first one was asked by the devil, but the second one was asked by God. God asked Adam in Genesis 3:9:

*Genesis 3:9*

*And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*

That is the second question we all have got to face and answer. I do not care who you are. Not only do you have to face and answer the question of who you are, then you have to face this one and answer where you are at today with God. Now, I know, and that will be my own personal view on this. I mean, I allow you whatever you want to believe. I mean, you know, but this is me. This is me. You know, this is my take on it. I give you, right out of the chute, I am weird when it comes to things because, and I hate to say this, but, you know, I am weird because I just believe the Bible. I cannot help it that you do not.

But I think without a doubt, one of the greatest lessons out of this pandemic that we are all going through is that every one of us has had to ask ourselves that question. Now, I get it. You are old, you are sick, you have got some disabilities. You need to barely do what you have got to do. I am not saying that, but come on. Can we talk here? Where are we really at with God? As far as I am concerned, my opinion, you do not have to buy it. I do not care. It does not matter to me. As far as I am concerned, this whole time we are going through has been, it has been and probably will continue to be the greatest purging of the church today and of God's people because nothing will reveal who we really are and where we are really at more than times like these facing a crisis that, you know, I have got to be honest with you. I am clearly would be disappointed in people that I thought were my friends, that I thought were part of this ministry, that I thought were, you know, had told me, you know, for years and years and years, we preached all this stuff that was coming, boy, oh, you are there, you are there with all this.

This is what I have learned. This is what I have learned. Now, listen very carefully because this is really important. This is important of who you are and where you are at. You know what I have learned? So many of God's people are willing to go through something with somebody else. You get cancer, I am there for you. You get AIDS, I am kind of there for you. Be careful what you do say today. You know, you get tuberculosis, I am there for you. You get in a car wreck and get your legs broke, I am there for you. I found this to be true. God's people are really strong when they have got to go through things for somebody else. Where they fail, when they are weak, is when you have got to go through it yourself.

Hey, I am going to tell you something. You are not going to like this. Going through something with somebody does not really prove who you are with God. It just proves you are a nice person. What really proves where you are at with God and who you are, is when you have to go through it yourself. What do you do when you get cancer? What do you do when you get some disease or you get in a car wreck? What do you do when you have to face Coronavirus-19? As far as I am concerned, this whole pandemic has been the greatest revealer. I would be honest with you, I

would be lying to you if I did not tell you that. It bothered me with some people. It really did. Because all my life with these people, 10, 15, 20, 30, 40 years, I was under the assumption that whatever hit us, you were there. I look at it as a great and necessary purging. I mean, I do. Because nothing will reveal who we really are and where we are really at more than the times like these.

The greatest illustration I ever heard in my life, and I have told it to you many times, but I am going to tell it again, because we have got new people, and you need to hear it again. Years ago, I had heard a guy preach, and some of you remember, his name was Manly Beasley. He is dead now. Manly Beasley preached up to the day he died. He had seven terminal diseases. He had cancer. He had leukemia. He had five other diseases that the doctor said, I mean, I am not kidding you. When you saw him, Terry, you remember, do not you, Terry? He looked like he had been dead for three weeks and they did not put him in a casket. He was thin. He was emaciated. That means thin, but I want you to know how educated I am. He was thin. He was emaciated. He was pale white, ash white, remember? A frail little guy. When he got up to preach, he was not on fire. He could not tear it up, and when he was done just talking, they had to take him out and let him rest on a cot. I mean, but you know what? He had seven, listen to me, seven terminal diseases, and he never stopped preaching till the day he died. Where are you at with that? Who are you, really?

I remember one time he was preaching, and he was great in the philosophical things that he would say that would just hit you, like a ton of bricks. He walked around the pulpit just like this, and a place was packed, 3,000 people. He was preaching on, you know, going through trials because he was going through it, and a lot of people got a lot of strength in what he was thinking. He says, "What do you get when you squeeze a lemon?" He asked a lady in the front, and she kind of laughed, and she said, "Well, lemon juice." He said, "You would think that, wouldn't you?" He says, he was from Atlanta. He said, "Back home in Atlanta, there was a man going into the grocery store and had cyanide or some kind of poisoning, and he was in a fruit section, and he was injecting it into lemons. And like eight or nine people had died because they bought the lemons, went home, squeezed the lemons, made lemonade out of it, and died." He told that story. He said, "So I asked the question, what do you get when you squeeze a lemon?" And obviously, the number one answer would be lemon juice, but the real answer is whatever is on the inside comes out. And then he said this, "What do you get when you squeeze a Christian?" What do you get when you squeeze a Christian? We would think Christian juice, something like that. But his point was, you know what you get when we all get squeezed? You know what happens when you get squeezed? You know what happens when we get squeezed? What is really on the inside comes out.

"Who are you? What sayest thou of thyself? And where are you today?" I am telling you. I am telling you. Nothing will reveal who we really are and where we are at more than the times like these and facing what we are facing. It is a great reality check for all of us for those two questions, who we are and where you are at. I mean, do we really believe in the preheating hand of God? Do we really believe that, sure, you have got to be careful. Sure, you have got to take all

kinds of precautions, really. But so what? So what? You just give up everything in your life and hide under the bed or a rock?

I show you. You know, I have friends that are big in predestination, good friends. They believe in predestination. Predestination is more than just you are predestined to be saved. It means that everything in your life is already predestined. They are scared to death to come out to get the coronavirus. You know why? If you are predestined to get it, what are you worried about? You see how tough times reveal how phony we really are? No, I get it. In most cases, the pandemic and you staying home and hiding did not stop. You know, and it is always wild. I talk to people, you know, tell them that. "Well, I cannot come to church because, you know, I am afraid." But you go to showers. You go to birthday parties. You go to all the things out there that you want to go to.

I will be honest, in most cases, it does not really matter. The older folks who are sick and, you know, they need to stay away, I miss them terribly. But I will be honest with you, for the most part, you know, the coronavirus never really stopped your ministry. Do you know why? You never had one to begin with. You did not come to church. There was no investment here. You came to suck out of me all that you could get. You came because you wanted the Bible truth. You came because you wanted this or you wanted that. You got into Bible Institute and you wanted to, you know, get all of the great truth. But you never did anything with it. It did not mean anything to you. There was no investment here. There was no reason for you. "I have got to be here today." It was a convenience for you to come to church.

Somebody told me, "Well, we are not coming right now because, you know, we have got a little girl here and she, you know, and she is four or five or six or seven and, you know, she does not sit very well. So we are just going to stay home and watch." I thought to myself, that is so typical. What a great opportunity to teach that little girl to sit in church. I taught my kids to sit when they were two. Well, I did not. Barb did. Saw them when they were two. Did not work. Nice jacket. You know what? If they are seven years old, six years old, and you are not now starting to think about teaching them, you missed it by about four years. Who are you? You do not need a church. You need that place with a big tent. You know, it is not a revival. It is Ringling Brothers. It is a circus.

Let us break it down, shall we?

- Where you are at in your own walk with the Lord today.
- Where you are at in your church. Ephesians tells us that Christ loved the church and died for it. And then the new version will say, "except when there was a coronavirus."
- Where you are at in your stewardship of the grace of God.
- Where you are at in your Bible.
- Where you are at in whatever trial you are going through.

- Where you are at in your ministry.
- Where you are at with the people or your family.
- Where you are at with the health issues you are going through.
- Where you are at with your family issues going through.
- Where you are at with your work issues.
- Daily life issues.

Now, I am going to say this, and please, I have all the respect for you two. You guys had a little spiff this morning, I guess, right? You know what I love about you? Both of you. You know what I love about both of you? I think it would have been nine out of ten other people. They never would have come to church this morning. I love it when people bring their fights to church. But see, that is the kind of people you are. You know why? Because you love this church. Do not you? It means, do not you see that? You do not have to hold hands. You were smacking them with that hand just a little bit ago. People saw you do that. It is a thing where, but that is you, see? That is my point. Now, take solace. Solace is comfort. I am educated. Take comfort in the fact that the reason why you had to fight this morning is because God needed me to have it for an illustration of my sermon. But see, that is what I mean. This church means something to you. Most people would have drove off someplace, got mad, and just went home, but no. No, and that is what I am talking about. You know, this place, does it mean something to you?

I mean, honestly, if I miss one service, I feel like I have got my legs cut off. I honestly do not know how some people can just go and go and go, and you know what? Even if you are home, I get this all the time. "Well, we do not watch it and get up with you in the morning and watch it. We will sleep in and watch it later on in the afternoon." If that is what you have got to do, that is what you have got to do. But I want to tell you, the Bible says, and even though you are home, there is a value of us still being here and all together. But you do not see that. Who are you? And where are you at in the world? Or maybe a better way to ask it, where in the world are you?

Nothing will define us. Nothing will keep us honest today, better than the two questions that you must answer, and God demands an answer. "Who are you and where are you?" Standing on the rock or hiding under it? Two of the greatest questions in all the Bible.

Now, you do not want to miss this. When God finally came down in the cool of the garden in Genesis 3, He is walking down there and He is saying, "Adam, where art thou?" Now, I want you to understand this. Let me just deviate from the story. "Adam, where art thou?" God knew exactly where he was at. If God wanted, he is hiding behind a fig tree that he just plucked the leaves off. He made himself a little covering. I always thought that was amazing. If I was God, I would have a little. I would get me a Mossberg 12 gauge, you know, and give me a couple angels that are hunting dogs and, "Flush them out, boys!" You know, there goes Adam. No, God says, "Adam, where art thou?" When He already knew where he was. You know why God did that?

When God knew where Adam was, God wanted to see if Adam was honest enough to know where he was at.

Sometimes God through a message like this. Here it comes, pal. Sometimes, sometimes, through a message like this, God through the preaching will ask where you are at and you are sitting there and He already knows where you are at. He just wants to see if you will be honest with yourself, with Him, and get honest with where you are really at. That is a great principle. Great principle. Where was he? He was hiding behind some fig trees. God knew where he was at and just wanted to see if he knew where he was at.

Let me ask you. He says, "Adam, where art thou?" Adam was hiding behind a fig tree. He knew where he was. Let me ask you. What are you hiding behind this morning? What are you hiding behind this morning? I mean, I do not know who is watching. I cannot see upstairs. I know kind of who is here and I can see here. But I am going to tell you right now, the Holy Spirit of God is knocking on your door this morning. I have got two questions that you are going to have to answer. The third question is, what are you hiding behind?

Are you hiding behind your own self-righteousness? Are you hiding behind some sin? Are you hiding behind some bitterness? Are you hiding behind some anger? Are you hiding behind some fear? Or maybe it is COVID-19 itself. Listen, do not kid me. Do not kid me. Across this country, there are people who they will never be back to church. I am going to tell you right now, folks, write it down. Write it down for the crazy old 70-year-old man. The longer you stay away, the harder it is going to be for you to get back. The devil will see to it. You will start finding other people that are disgruntled, that have not done what is right. You will find a little allegiance there, a little bond there. You can all trade your garbage. You will all have two things in common. None of you are right with God, and two, none of you will do what you need to do to make things right. God's great purging. I am telling you, make no mistake. God knows exactly where we are at this morning, and what we are hiding behind. The question is, do you know the truth about yourself and where you are really at? "What sayeth thou of thyself?"

## VII. Passing the Test and the Church as Gold

Now, at the end of the day, do not get excited. It is not the end of the message. It is at the end of the day. At the end of the day, you will never know and understand where you are at until you first understand and deal with who you really are and then begin to change it. The longer I live, the more I deal with people, and the more God deals with me and myself, I see the number one word in all of our life as Christians is the word change. Both the world and God want to change you. The world wants to automatically destroy you, Daniel 1, through totally transforming you from a child of God to the world system. God wants to constantly try to change you to be like His ultimate glory. A transformation, Romans 12:1-2, into being like Him.

Now, for just a moment here, we are getting close to the end, so you can breathe easier. Go back to John 1:19-28. I want you to notice that when John is asked who he is, he passes the test. Verse 20 says that he confesses and he denied not. That is a good thing for all of us to learn today.

Confess who we really are and do not deny it anymore. Most of God's people, 90% of them probably, no question about it, they live a life of denial.

Verse 23, who is he? He was the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Verse 26, he describes his work. "I am just doing the work he sent me to do." Verse 27, he confesses who he is and who Christ is. "He is preferred before me and I am not worthy to unlatch his shoes." "Who am I? Who art thou?" He passed the test. "I am the guy who got saved and I am going to spend the rest of my life telling everybody I meet, no matter what my circumstances are, no matter what the Roman government threatens me, no matter what bondage they put me under, I am going to spend the rest of my life doing what he called me to do." Who are you today?

Before we all get row, row, row, here we go, I am going to tell you something. I want you to notice, Matthew 14:8, that attitude got him killed. Herod takes him, has a wild belly dancer do a dance for him and he says, "I will give you anything in my kingdom underneath my throne." His wife did not like John the Baptist and she got into her daughter's ear and said, "Get John's head cut off," and they killed him. Let me ask you a question. Let me ask you. Are you willing to get killed for what you believe? Well, that is a tough question. I mean, we look at John the Baptist, he did not hold up for a moment and it got him killed. Who are you this morning? Really, who are you? Are you and I willing to lay it on the line? How much are you willing to lay it on the line for Him? Nothing like a little pandemic that flushes all out and see who we are and where we are at.

Now look at Adam, Genesis 3:9. He is wrong, complete opposite from John the Baptist. He is wrong, made a total mess out of everything that God wanted to do with him, just like you, pal, just like so many of God's people. But when God calls him, "Adam, where art thou?", he comes up from under the fig leaves and he gets honest with God of where he is really at. He confesses in Genesis 3:10:

*Genesis 3:10*

*And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*

What did God do? What He always does, He says, "Adam, get that apron of fig leaves off." He went out and killed a lamb, shed some innocent animal's blood, made a skin of goats, and said, "Now cover your nakedness with this." You know what else I found? Just me. After that thing in chapter 3, when God deals with him, there is not one issue recorded that Adam ever had with God again. It seems like he learned his lesson of where he was really at. My question is, will you learn it? Will you learn the lesson of today of who you are and where you are at and realize if you have an issue, the Bible says we solve it? Make no mistake, in Christianity, these two questions will define who you really are and where you are really at.

For me? Again, I am sorry, this is me. This is why in this time we had to part company. Not you, many of us. We had to part company. We are not on the same page. I thought we were. You gave every indication that we were as long as everything went well. But when push comes to shove, it is very obvious that I am still here in your home and not coming back. You are there, I am here.

We are not on the same page. I am sorry, I had hoped we would be and I thought we would. But for me, I am just telling you, I am not willing to go to heaven and have to stand in the presence of the Waldensians, the Paulicians, the Cathars, the Huguenots, the Anabaptists, the Hussites, and all the millions and millions of God's people who faced a hundred thousand times greater issues than this stupid COVID-19. I just, I will not, I will not permit myself to stand in their presence and look into their eyes with my tail between my legs. Maybe you are okay with that. God's people today, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. I get it, you are home, you are sick, you are frail, you have got some other problem, you have got to keep, hey, I am with you, stay safe.

Then the last thing, and I promise you I am done, verse 22. When the priests came to John, back to John 1 now, when the priests came to John and said, "Who art thou?" They said, "Who art thou that we may give an answer to them that sent us? What sayest thou of thyself?" Now here is what I want to leave you with. In the middle of this pandemic, in the middle of this fear that has gripped you, so many of God's people, and I am not saying you do not follow the rules, I am not saying you do not do what is right. Stay with Romans 13, but I am saying, in the middle of all this there will still always be people who are looking to you for the answers that they do not have. Unfortunately, in most cases, they are mistaken to think that you do.

*Romans 14:7*

*For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.*

Somebody is always watching your life. They came to him and they said, "Tell us who you are that we may give an answer to them that has sent us."

*1 Peter 3:15*

*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:*

Who are you this morning? We are going through this thing now, you know, and the real witness that you have is how you deal with it. There are people who are absolutely scared who are lost. There should not be any of God's people who are scared. I am sorry. Careful, deliberate, wise, yes, scared, no. When I see all this, I am not into the illusion, but all this shakes down our church, the state of the vineyard will be in great shape because the ones that have hung with it, and we have all had to make adjustments, we have all had to do things. I get that. I am saying at the end of the day, we band of brothers who stayed with it, who came through the purging, who answered the questions, "Who are we and where are we?" We will get more done with 180, 90 people left than 300 people with the rest of them gone.

You are gold. If Jesus Christ is inside you, this church is filled with gold nuggets. Every one of you at the judgment seat of Christ, the first thing that you should have built on your foundation and almost everybody here I would vouch for has is gold. This church is filled with gold nuggets this morning. Every one of you is a piece of gold that God dug out of the earth, the world. You know as well as I do the way God purged. I do not understand. All down through history, God has judged His people with other nations and diseases. Daniel had to go into captivity. He was right with God. Ezekiel was a prophet, but they had to go in. They had to go through their

purging just like you do, but you and I both know every one of you is a piece of gold this morning. I am telling you right now through this purging, the way you make gold purer is to try it by fire. This church is going through its trial by fire and what happens with the gold when the fire hits it, the dross, the impurities get taken off. What is left after the fire is the purest gold God could have. That will be this church.

Who are you this morning? Where are you? It does not matter what you say. It does not matter how you put out these big words of what you are doing and what God has done. The real question of who you are is when push comes to shove and the issue is there. What do you do with it? Who are you and where are you? That question, those two questions in my life have been something that I saw years and years ago and just never really laid it out to you that way, but there was the opportunity today.

I love you. Let us have a word of prayer. We will be dismissed. No Bible study. Have a nice Thanksgiving with your people. Remember, no gatherings more than two people for Thanksgiving. No institute. We will have it on the fifth, following week. I love you very much. I want to say from the bottom of my heart, you are the best people on the planet. Nothing has stopped us. We have found our way through everything. I would basically say the people that we lost, we needed to lose. Because as he tells you in the Gospels, when you prune the tree back, you get more fruit. It is not an easy thing to say and not an easy thing to accept, but it is the Bible. So we are better off now than we have ever been. We will get through this. It is not just my job to lead you through this. You hear that our leaders, it is our job to lead each other through this. That is where we are at. Let us have a word of prayer and we will be dismissed.

Father, we do thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. We love you. Thank you for all you do for us. Thank you for today and for the folks that have come out. Bring our guys home safe today from hunting. Lord, let us, these families, have a good time of Thanksgiving with their families today, this next week. We love you. We thank you for those who have stayed by the stuff. We thank you for the gold that is in this church. Lord, we just thank you that no matter what happens, this church will get through it. We will come out stronger than we ever went in it because of the people who have an investment here. Lord, we thank you and praise you for all of that. In Jesus' name for us, take away asking. Amen. God bless you. You are dismissed.