

# Confrontation With the Living God

by Art Katz

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*Art Katz's sermon emphasizes the urgent need for a genuine relationship with the living God amidst a morally confused generation.*

**Duration:** 43:54

**Scripture:** Matthew 10:32, 2 Timothy 2:19, James 1:22

**Topics:** "Truth"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by addressing the idea that Arlo isn't going to change the world, but rather the world will come around. He then quotes from the book of Ecclesiastes, urging young people to rejoice in their youth but also reminding them that God will bring them into judgment for their actions. The preacher challenges the audience's arrogance and warns them of the consequences of their self-centeredness and love for pleasure. He emphasizes the need for repentance and a genuine desire to transact eternal business with God.

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## Transcript

This is tape number K005, Art Katz with the message, Confrontation with the Living God. I feel a little absurd right now because I've come armed with two Bibles and newspaper articles and I don't know exactly what I'm going to say. I trembled over this yesterday and I just came to the realization that I don't have the wit or the experience or the depth in God or knowledge of Scripture or knowledge of your lives that I might adequately speak to you.

Just believe God that He's the one who's going to be speaking this morning. I had a wonderful confirmation. I met with this brother who had also travailed for this chapel this morning and I said to him on the phone yesterday, I said, will you just choose the Scripture, let God lead you in the choice of Scripture and we'll see tomorrow morning whether there will be any confirmation or correspondence between the Scripture He's given you and the message He's given me.

When he turned immediately to Jeremiah, I had that confirmation that you're going to be hearing from God this morning. And I think it's rather proper that you're hearing from a Jewish believer. I'm feeling rather prophetic, not in the sense that I'm going to foretell the future, though there may be something of that, but the prime function of prophets is to bring warning and caution, is to bring some discernment and illumination about the nature of the age in which we live and some knowledge of the God that we profess to serve and something about the character of our own life.

I want to read first from a recent newspaper quotation from the Wall Street Journal of all papers, speaking about your generation. It says, For all the purported saintliness of turned-on youth, their subculture continues to be haunted by violence. Consider the grisly accusations in the Sharon Tate murders or the public killing and repeating beatings at a rock concert in California.

Let it be understood immediately we are not about to charge hippies and their hanger-onners with particularly violent instincts. We see no reason to believe that they are any better or any worse than the general cut of humanity. The problem is not their instincts.

It is that they and the adult publicists who celebrate them are dangerously naive in their attitude toward violence and more fundamentally in their view of man. If there's one great failure in our age, and maybe it's chronic in all ages, it's this failure truly to understand who we are and with that, and it always goes together, the failure to understand who he is. Their community offers an ethic approving any act so long as it feels good and doesn't hurt anybody.

This profundity, the publicists suggest, is a liberating advance on the Ten Commandments. Specific guidelines and moral codes are outdated and repressive in this liberated age. Moral judgments, it is argued, are best left to the individual instincts of each adolescent.

So long as we, quote, love one another right now, unquote, all the age-old problems of morality will be solved. Just let every man do his thing. These sentiments are wonderfully touching but also ignorantly arrogant.

The solution is so simple, so obvious, so elegant, what could all the great philosophers have been agonizing about all those 4,000 years? The answer, of course, is that moral philosophers quickly hit on something like the essence of the hippie ethic, say, do unto others as you would have them do unto you. But as only the barest beginning of morality, the agony has been that left to his own devices, the human beast will not consistently behave in any such fashion. Then in a recent Newsweek article on Arlo Guthrie, a young folk singer, like most of the Woodstock generation, Arlo was not interested in political action.

Here they quote him, All political systems are on the way out. We're finally going to get to the point where there's no more bigotry or greed or war. Peace is on the way.

And you don't seek peace, you use it. In 20 years all that stuff will be over. People are simply going to learn that they can get more from being groovy than being greedy.

And when they find out, it's going to be the biggest surprise party of all time. Unquote. Arlo and his friends laugh knowingly.

Arlo isn't going to change the world. The world is simply going to come around. Now hear the word of God.

Out of the Book of Ecclesiastes, speaking to such generations throughout all time, including you this morning. Rejoice, oh young man, or young woman for that matter, in your adolescence. And let your heart cheer you in the days of your full-grown youth.

And walk in the ways of your heart and in the sight of your eyes. But know that for all these things, God will bring you into judgment. Therefore, did you get the first part? Just continue with this arrogant sense of which that article spoke of having some inside track into truth, looking upon those over thirty as being archaic and out of it, latching on to things that are groovy and hippy and right with it.

Walk in your own way, according to your own heart and in the sight of your eyes. But know this, that for all these things, God will bring you into judgment. Therefore, there's a warning and then here's some counsel for you.

Remove the lusts that end in sorrow and vexation from your heart and mind and put away evil from your body. For youth in the dawn of life are vanity, transitory, idle, empty, and devoid of truth. I think if someone had spoken to me that way when I was in my late teens or early manhood, or even up to my thirty-fourth year, I would have drawn myself up to my full stature and looked with complete scorn at anyone who dared approach me that way.

I was so utterly confident in my opinions why if everybody could reach my state of emancipation and self-realization and truth, we'd have a ball. All of the things that saddle mankind with misery and wretchedness, pain, war and death, poverty, injustice, why they'd be eliminated at a stroke if all could be as me. I like to collect articles about the nature of our age and I just let them grow thick in a folder and then once in a while I just take them out and I begin to scan them.

And when you read them in total like that, there's a considerable impact. I really was quite interested in the Tate murder in Hollywood and I don't believe that it's any isolated event. I believe it's a very deep symptom of the whole nature of our age.

And when the articles began coming out, they were quite revealing that this Charles Manson, who calls himself God and Satan, allows his followers to call that, took these names to himself. The Klan members felt that the stabbings and the brutal cuttings would help release the souls of their victims. And one of the lawyers was told that some of the girls obtained sexual gratification from the stabbings.

One of Manson's followers spoke of black magic. He believes that he and all human beings are God. There is no crime, there is no sin.

The women were the key to everything. The whole thing was held together by black magic, said Watkins, one of Manson's followers. You don't believe it? Well, it really exists and it is powerful, Watkins said.

He believes that he and all human beings are God and the devil at the same time. He believes all human beings are part of each other. You see what that means? It means that human life has no value.

If you kill a human being, you're just killing a part of yourself. So it's all right. But, said Crockett, by Manson's philosophy, you can't kill an animal.

Not a bug, not a snake, nothing. There were snakes all over the desert. They got in the cabin and everywhere.

But you could never kill one. They picked up snakes in the house and carried them outside and turned them loose. I think it's rather, I don't have the right word, indicative about people that can butcher human beings and get sexual gratification at the butchery and yet have a very delicate concern for snakes.

If you don't know what a snake signifies or is the symbol of or the type of, it's Satan, people. I'm going to sound awfully fundamental this morning and probably you're embarrassed for me. And my only hope to sustain me is that the fundamentalism of which I speak is the truth of God.

And you'll either conclude at the end of this hour that you heard some piece of absurdity which you can readily dismiss or that you were spoken to by a servant of the Most High God and that it's His message for this hour, for your generation and for your life personally and that you'll contemplate it and take it to yourself and even be staggered by it and be turned by it permanently and eternally affected. And maybe it's because I'm a Jew that I have that instinctive sense of the corroboration of this age, its correspondence with an age in which God poured out His fury upon the nation Israel. They too, once upon a time, were a chosen people unto the Lord.

They were His instrumentality, His priests and His light unto the world. But they fell upon dark days. And it didn't happen in a moment, I believe.

It was like a kind of a progression or should we say a disintegration. A day by day falling away, probably little small things at first, nuances, shades of things, until the substance was so corroded and so moved from God that they actually had become His adversaries. And He spoke to that generation through the prophet Jeremiah, from whom we've already heard this morning.

And that prophet was deeply stirred for the condition of his people. Oh, that my head were waters, he cried, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people. Oh, that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people and go from them.

For they are all adulterers and an assembly of treacherous men. And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies, but they are not valiant for truth upon the earth. For they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord." I think the world is dying for the want of the knowledge of the living God.

And doesn't that strike you as ironic? In an age in which the word God is so ubiquitous, there's not a word more commonly spoken on the lips of every person in every clime. God. Everybody making reference to God.

God as you know Him. God as a higher power. Well, my God is the thing that I feel.

And that welter of gods, and that profusion of gods, where is the living God and the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? The God who sent His only begotten Son. They're not valiant for truth, Jeremiah cries out. You, you are students ostensibly bent on the search for truth.

I don't know if you've noticed it as yet, and I hope it'll be soon. You have to be valiant for truth. I remember a recent encounter at Greenwich Village where God gave me an occasion to visit, which is my hometown, New York City.

On two occasions out there at the Washington Square Park and Fountain, God had me to have an encounter with Jewish hippies. One of these guys professed to be a seeker after truth. Oh, and immediately my heart was lifted up because that's my kind of man.

Why, my whole life was bent on a search for truth. I even got so intense about it I became a high school dropout because I knew it was not to be found there. I said, oh, you're a lover of truth, are you? He said, yes, sir.

He was a part-time hippie. From Monday to Friday, he worked in a bank, lived in the square world, and made his bread. And on the weekends, he literally let his hair down and put on his bell-bottoms and beads

and went out to the village and had a blast.

Living two lives, quite a moral. I said, do you believe in God, brother? Oh, yeah. Golly, God's everywhere, he said.

Man, he just lit up. He had that euphoric look in his face. I said, is that so? He said, yes.

He said, he's in nature and he's in rocks. Then he pointed his finger at the people who were sitting at the rim of this fountain. I couldn't help but notice them because they were a collection of the most degraded, broken, what can I say, wretched human specimens upon which I'd ever laid eyes.

And people, I don't speak this in any contemptuous way. I'm just giving a literal description of men and women who had come to the utter ends of themselves, so depraved, whose egos had so become their lives that they were in every state of dress and undress, every state of wretchedness and squirming and writhing and noise and raucous laughter, anything to gain attraction and attention. In fact, as I squinted my eyes a bit and looked at them, I could almost imagine that they were squirming, and that what God was giving me was a kind of a vision, a glimpse of a hell in which this isn't just kicks for an hour or an afternoon, but an eternity of utter boredom, of being with others who are equally bankrupt and barren and morally at the end.

He said, God is in them. I should have had that confirmation in my spirit. I said, I'll tell you what, fella, you're Jewish, aren't you? Yeah.

You know that we Jews have a special obligation to know the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And I'll tell you what, I just don't want to bandy words with you today, but God has sent me here to challenge you. How would you really like to know the living God? There's only one, because we Jews, no matter how bad we were, we knew the Shema Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad.

Here, O Israel, the Lord your God is one Lord. I said, how would you like to know Him? I don't mean as an abstraction or a concept or some casual thing to which you can refer, but still allows you the liberty to live your life as you like it. But I mean the God who created the heavens and the earth, whose Bible I hold.

Right now on the pavement where we stand, if you'll put aside your vanity and your presumption and your pride and all the things you think you understand and be willing to follow me in a simple prayer, He'll actually manifest Himself in your life and you'll know Him. Not just as a piece of head knowledge, but as an abiding presence in your life. This guy began to stroke his chin and he grew strangely silent.

I said, by the way, are you still a lover after truth? He said, well, yeah, I guess. I said, this truth is not going to be convenient because you're receiving the one who said, I am the way, the truth and the life. This is the kind of truth that's going to make you make amends, seek the apology of people, ask the forgiveness of others, turn your life around, change the course of your life and its conduct and its habits and your character, even make you go to your parents whom you despise and ask their forgiveness and seek to love them.

Do you still want this truth? Do you still love truth? He stroked his chin, took a moment and then he finally said, well, I guess I'm not that much a lover after truth after all. You really have to be valiant for truth, people. Truth is often painful and compels us to turn our lives around.

It elicits name-calling like fanatic. But they are not valiant for the truth, said Jeremiah upon the earth, for they proceed from evil to evil and they know not me, saith the Lord. Or they may profess to know God, but they don't know me, saith the Lord.

Proceed from evil to evil. I just checked what evil meant. Of course, we all think we know.

We have some inner sense of something utterly vicious and degrading. And of course, we're not involved with any activity of that kind. But it's interesting when you begin to examine the root of the word that it actually means producing sorrow, distress, calamity, mischief, injury arising from bad character.

You know, if you forsake the living God, if you're a coward and seek not the truth, you'll proceed from evil to evil to mischief and injury, inflicting sorrow. How many of you have already done so with complete indifference? They will deceive everyone his neighbor and will not speak the truth. They have taught their tongue to speak lies and weary themselves to commit iniquity.

Their habitation is in the midst of deceit through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the Lord. I just have some fantastic experiences as a missionary to the Jewish people. I meet all kinds of very ethical and moral people, really sensitive about life, loving nature and love and human relationships.

You would think they would be the first candidates to receive the living God when someone would come and say, Brother, I can show you the way unto life. I know Him who is life and I can show you the way unto salvation. But you know what the strangest thing is? The very people whom you would think would be the candidates to receive this truth are the very ones who draw themselves up and begin to bite their lips and hips and actually gnash their teeth at you and what you represent.

I almost get the impression that they will not hear. I say to you, but give me a half hour of your time. Let me open some scriptures.

Let me tell you my experience as a rank and adamant and arrogant atheist until my 34th year, completely indifferent to the things of God, contentious of religion, both Judaism and Christianity alike, who had come to the end of himself, as we all must, and was traveling for 14 months as a bum, drifting without direction and purpose, and was found of the living God. I said, if you'll just give me a half hour of your time, I'll tell you what, you're a Jew and you profess to believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Will you at least call on him and say, Oh God, what this man is suggesting contradicts all I understand.

But nevertheless, aren't those two of the most precious words in all scripture? Master, we fished all night and taken nothing. Isn't that a description of the majority of Christian lives? I would even say they fished, they've dabbled. We've taken nothing, but nevertheless, at thy word, I'll let down my nets.

I said to these Jewish people, if you'll only call on the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and say, but nevertheless, as much as this confounds what I understand and contradicts what I've been taught, if this is your truth, I'm willing to receive it, no matter the cost. You know, I've lost track of the numbers of conversations I've had with sincere, well-meaning, righteous, ethical, and moral, intelligent, cultured Jewish people, and have yet to find one who will pray that prayer. And my last shot is this.

I say, I'll tell you what. The word of God says, I'll in no wise cast out anyone who comes unto me. Call upon the name of the Lord, and thou shalt be saved.

I said, right now, God will take you in your present condition. You don't even need to have any background in scripture. You don't even have to peruse the New Testament.

If you're really hungry for truth, and you'll follow me in a simple prayer, and put aside your vanity, and humbly open your heart, my God will manifest himself, show himself. Because he said that, you go ahead and preach the word, and I'll honor that word with signs and wonders following. And the greatest wonder is the instant transformation of anyone who comes to this God in spirit and in truth.

And I've spoken at the University of Kansas, where students came to heckle and to jeer, and to make sport, thinking that I was representing the establishment religion. But I wasn't. I was representing the cause of the living God, which is the most radical cause on the face of the earth.

I said, you've come to make sport, and you've heard a foolish gospel preached, and it doesn't commend itself to your intellect. But I'll tell you what, just to show you that I've not been representing a philosophy, and that this is just another one in the endless series of debates between conflicting philosophies, each one seeming to have some grain of truth, I challenge you who are radicals, who think yourselves revolutionaries, who think yourselves seekers after truth, to come out of your seat, and come right down to this platform where I stand right now, in this room at the University of Kansas, and follow me in a simple prayer, and I assure you most solemnly, you'll not leave this room the same person that you came. Boy, did that room go strangely silent.

They knew they were being challenged. You see, man can't make a challenge like that. It's a bunch of hokum, unless there's a living God to sustain it.

And there was a real hot, and intense, and earnest exchange for the first time. Those who came to make sport, who were victims of their own masturbation, and uncontrollable appetites, and passions, and lusts, and not even a possession of their own minds, freaking out in one degree or another, wanted freedom, and they wanted life. And there was something in their heart that flickered at this opportunity to know Him who is life.

And after a real exchange, four of them came out of their seats, and were willing to be instructed, and to pray. And God, true to His word, came into those lives. They left not the same persons.

There's hardly a way that you can miss God, unless you willfully seek to avoid Him. And God was speaking to a generation of Jews who had come to that place. And I think God is speaking to a generation now who is rapidly coming to that same place.

Thy inhabitation is in the midst of deceit. Through deceit they refuse willfully to know Me, saith the Lord. Therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, not the God of your own choosing, or the God of your own making, or the convenient concept that you have in your head.

Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink. And if you know anything of the history of the Jewish people, especially in the 20th century, you know that God was true to His word. And I believe that this generation will drink wormwood and gall if they continue in a stubborn and willful refusal to know the Lord.

I'm taking a moment here because oh, there's so many things here. This article about heroin addiction on the East Coast, where a city official said that the heroin use in Newark, New Jersey is now the leading cause of death in the 15 to 35-year-old age group in New York City. I think that the leading cause of death

of college-age students is suicide in our generation.

In another recent article, a man by the name of Carl Haas, it says, Haas tweets his black mustache and describes with pleasure how scantily clad harem girls will entice customers into his new shop. We think the more skin that's showing, the more sales we'll get, he says. We're trying to create an orgy atmosphere.

In fact, promises in advertising for the store, we may just add topless salesgirls to worship at your feet. As Americans become more and more accustomed to the nude look via films, this article goes on, fashion, topless, and now in California, bottomless nightclub entertainment, sex, and the single salesgirl might become as American as apple pie. Well, I don't know what the equivalent was for Sodom and Gomorrah, but I know that they reached the day when this was standard operating procedure and hardly one blinked an eyelash.

I wish we had unlimited time this morning to read out of Jeremiah in greater length, where God speaks of the people who have lost even their capacity to know shame and even their capacity to blush. Now I'm going to my second Bible. How many of you this morning are really children of God? You don't have to show me, people.

Do you really have that confidence and going on as children of God? How many of you are feeling somewhat sullen and resentful at this kind of talk, irritated, making light of it, jesting, taking glimpses at your watch to see when this will be over? How many of you are children of God is really a profound question. In 2 Timothy, God speaks and said the Lord knows those who are His and let everyone who names himself by the name of the Lord give up all iniquity and stand aloof from it. Those of you who were so quick to raise your hand at the initial question, would you have continued to hold your hand up for the rest of that scripture? He says if you name yourself by the name of the Lord, give up all iniquity and stand aloof from it.

So whoever cleanses himself from what is ignoble and unclean, who separates himself from contact with contaminating and corrupting influences, will then himself be a vessel set apart and useful for honorable and noble purposes, consecrated and profitable to the master, fit and ready for any good work. Then the next verse begins, shun youthful lusts and flee from them and aim at and pursue righteousness, all that is virtuous and good, right living, conformity to the will of God, in thought, word and deed. How many of you would like to square your week or your day or your routine with the words that were just spoken? Aim at that and pursue righteousness and all that is virtuous and good and right living, conformity to the will of God in thought and word and deed, and aim at and pursue faith, love and peace, which is harmony and concord with others and fellowship with all Christians who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart.

How many of you this morning would be willing to call upon the Lord out of a pure heart? How many would be willing to call upon the Lord out of a heart that's become impure and call upon him for cleansing and for returning? I don't know how many times you've heard the scripture that I'm about to read, but you know, people, we've become hearers and hearers. We have auditory experiences and we hear familiar words passing through the channel, but there's a kind of hearing which few have ever come to. I call it a kind of an existential hearing where it really bites into the soul, not the indifference, bland tilting of the head and letting the sound pass through.

I love that Old Testament word, and we repeat it also in the New Testament, hearken. Harken diligently unto me, God says, for God's sake. Become a hearer.

Open your inner ear. Hear what I'm saying. I'm not banding loose words.

This isn't a performance. I've not come for entertainment. Really hear and receive the word of God for your own life now.

Understand this, that in the last days there will set in perilous times of great stress and trouble, for people will be lovers of self and utterly self-centered. Haven't you seen that? Aren't you aware of it in your own life? Lovers of money, covetous, King James says. It's not just money, it's possessions and things.

It's even the possession of people and lives aroused by an inordinate greedy desire for wealth, proud and arrogant. Listen people, I was an atheist for 34 years because I never saw any evidence for the living God in Gentile America. I was right to be an atheist for the kind of God that was represented to me, a figure on a cloud with a white beard, looking down with complete satisfaction on this innocuous antiseptic Christianity, people wearing bonnets and calling each other brother and sister and having potluck suppers while the world is dying.

But I had an instinctive sense in my Jewish heart that if ever there is a God, I knew that there was only one place for me, flat on my face before him. I can't think of a message that America and the modern world need more desperately to hear than a message of repentance to turning to God with a contrite spirit and a broken heart. And I don't care how powerful our intellect or how astute our grasp of the nature of things, how deep our insight and knowledge, we see only in part.

We have not even the ability to perceive ourselves according to the word of God. And the only position that God can possibly honor is one who is willing to be humble and contrite and to acknowledge, I'm just a piece of flesh, God. I'm just a 1920, a 21-year-old snot-nose.

I just possess 125 or 130 IQ. I just know things in part. I really, as a matter of fact, don't even know what's right.

And yet I've been making all kinds of judgments and I'm quick to condemn and to be critical. And I think because my heart palpitates that I know what love is, when if I were really more honest, I would admit it's lust. I'm quick to rationalize and justify my conduct and behavior.

You ought to hear me in the backseat of a car. But I have to admit that I'm human, all too human, and I've missed the way. And I see myself amidst the people who are lovers of pleasure and lovers of self more than lovers of God.

You know why it is that God said and gave this as his first commandment, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soul, all thy might, all that you possess, all your mind? Not because he's a vain God. He's egotistical. He gave that for your sanity, for your well-being, for your wholeness, that he should be first and center in your life.

Because I tell you young people that if he's not at the center, if you're just sporting a religious vocabulary, if you're just bandying the word God and know not me, saith the Lord, really know him and really love him, your life is lopsided, out of whack. It's going to be perverse if it's not already. And every relationship in which you engage is going to be out of kilter.

If you don't have that true vertical connection established with God, every horizontal relationship between you and man is going to be perverted and out of whack and out of kilter. You'll be drinking gall and

wormwood, as God says. Lovers of money, aroused by inordinate greedy desire for wealth, proud, arrogant, contemptuous boasters.

They will be abusive, blasphemous gofers, disobedient to parents. Oh my, how did that get in there? Disobedient to parents? How explicit God is in giving us one of the gross symptoms of the malady of our age. And of course, if we can defy parents, what's a teacher? What's a cop? What's a judge? What's society? Let's just everyone do his thing.

It's euphoric. It's exhilarating. At least for the first couple of hours or weeks or months.

There's a way to seem it's right unto a man, God says. But the end thereof is, who knows the last word, death. They will be without natural human affection, callous and inhuman, relentless.

Even those who profess to be lovers of humanity. Listen, I know that scene, people, because I've been there. I carried posters and I distributed placards and I marched.

Oh man, my heart palpitated for mankind and for my black brothers and all of those that were exploited and the imperialists. I drew myself up to my full self-righteous indignation until God made me to see quite clearly that I was something of an imperialist myself. I was quite capable at the same time as I spoke, the liberal rhetoric and the easy slogans of grinding my own heel in the face of those who were close to me.

And I tell you, unless you've had the imperialist of your own heart ousted, stop being the hypocrite. It's the word you use for our generation, right? You know what that word really means? If you look it up in the Greek, play acting. Going through the motions.

Professing to be concerned for humanity. Palpitating over maudlin folk ballads and songs. And all the while being just a container of seething selfishness.

Give me a minute before you barge out of here, will you? This thing is worthy of confidence and sure. If we have died with him, we shall also live with him. That's what Christianity is all about, kids.

It's not a religion. It's not a culture. That's what's turned us Jews off for two thousand years, is the rolling of the Easter eggs and the Christmas trees and all the other bland things that bear the label Christianity.

It's a way of life, unto life, through death. And there's a Jesus who symbolized and exemplified that meaning through his own conduct and life and death. And the offer is open to you.

Those of you who are wearing the label, those of you who come from Christian homes, even ministerial homes, to turn and come to God in spirit and in truth. It's death. It may have to change your lifestyle.

People may look scornfully and say that you've copped out. They'll call you fanatic. But you have a choice of choosing between the things that please men and are tonic and exhilarating to your ego, or the things that please him, who is the author and the creator of life.

Give up all iniquity and stand aloof from it, we read this morning. I want to give you an opportunity right now. I don't know if it's ever been done in a chapel.

And I know that time is running out. But I know that God has been speaking to individuals in this group. He's not been speaking to a mass.

He's been speaking to individuals. And he says, when you hear my word, harden not your heart. Be not hearers of my word only, but doers.

Those people who so quickly and glibly raised arms and lips to acknowledge that they're children of God before. I want to ask you, those who are, and those who want to be, truly, to know God in spirit and in truth. Maybe that you've never done this.

Maybe you've only been the label wearer. The book has been dead in your hand, prayer sawdust in your mouth. You've never felt an urgency to communicate a gospel, which for you is only a set of dead doctrines to anyone.

I say to you right now, if you want life, if you're willing to turn, if you want to respond to the message that God has given this morning, stand, he said. Give up all iniquity and stand. Will you stand right now? Right where you sit? Raise your seat and quietly stand by your feet and follow me in a prayer.

This is no cheap bit about re-consecration or dedication. None of this shallow business of coming to an altar and crying a few crocodile tears. I'm asking something deeply humiliating to stand up in the audience of these people who know you and say, Him? He's going to be a Christian? Why, man, I know this guy.

What a put-on. She? Why, are you kidding? Who is she? What's this false piety? Who is she trying to impress? I'm asking you to stand up, even with the knowledge that there are going to be those looking at you saying those things. And I tell you quite solemnly with the same assurance that I gave those students at the University of Kansas, that I gave to that Jewish hippie on the pavement at Washington Square, that if you'll respond to the living God now and stand and follow me in a very simple prayer, your life will be turned this hour and this day and throughout these days and throughout all eternity for the living God.

Is there but one man in this entire audience who's a believer in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? God bless you, dear ones. I hope you understand me when I say that I'm a believer that I'm almost a little concerned that too many have stood that the pressure will be on the few who remain in their seats to join the gang just to be one of the boys. But that's not the way you come into the kingdom.

You come in freely and voluntarily and willfully despite all evidences to the contrary, despite humiliation. It's a kind of death that you might know life. Now, if you want to die to your vanity, brother, and your pride and your egotism and your shallow opinions and your conceit and your lust, and don't tell me you don't have it.

It's written all over you. And you want to live a new quality of life that's righteous and holy, that will count for the kingdom of God in an age when the world is freaking out and needs to know that there's a God who lives and can only know through your life and the radiance of your face. I challenge you in these last waning moments of this chapel this morning to stand to your feet and not harden your heart to this challenge that God has given you, but to join these precious ones who are standing up for God.

Is there one more? It means putting aside the lust, the vanity, your own selfish desires, the things that you've contemplated, and being all His and walking in a way that's pleasing to Him. You really mean that, brother? You're going to be a new man, and people will see it in your face and in your life. God will give you power to overcome.

Let's turn to the Lord now. I'm going to call on Him and thank Him for this response. No man ever could have done it.

When I begin the words, Dear God, I want you to pray aloud and follow me. If you're afraid to confess Him now, He'll be ashamed to confess you also. And the more honest and open your confession of Jesus now, the more the verification in your life that this day He's received you into life and truly renewed you and returned you to Himself, and you'll be His.

Precious Holy God, I thank you that your Spirit Holy God has taken the words which thou hast given my servant to speak and penetrated hearts and lives and convinced them that you're a living God and that you're a mighty God and that you don't look upon this world with indifference. And you see what's going on on the face of this planet, and you see the bilious hatred and the vile things that are being poured out and the lusts and the vanities and truly these are evil days and men are becoming lovers of self and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God and we're dying. And Lord, I thank you that you've spoken with such authority and power and I know that your ear is tuned to us for your ear always will hear the cry of a repentant and contrite heart that wants to transact eternal business with the living God.

Hear these dear ones, Lord, as they follow me in this prayer of repentance, consecration, and perhaps for many a coming to you in spirit and in truth for the first time. Dear God, repeat that. Dear God, I ask your forgiveness for all the things of my life, my conduct, and my speech, the very inclinations of my heart, which were displeasing to you, cleanse me now by the precious blood that Jesus spilled.

Come into my heart and life truly. Be thou my God that I might know thee and love thee and serve thee. Enter me this day into your eternal kingdom.

Make me thy child. Forgive me if I have been yours and turned away. Renew me and put a new heart within me.

I resolve in your hearing right now to live from this moment on as your child, to walk pleasingly in thy sight, and to put aside all the things that have displeased thee. Bless my life. Be my life.

And walk with me this day and forevermore. And I thank you for receiving me. In the precious name of Jesus, Amen.

God bless you, dear ones.

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