

# Revelation 3

by Damian Kyle

---

*The Church of Laodicea is in danger of being vomited out of God's mouth due to its lukewarmness and self-focus, and the local church must have a biblically-based vision and follow the ministry model of Acts 2 to fulfill the Great Commission.*

**Duration:** 49:49

**Scripture:** Matthew 28:19, Revelation 3:14

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Great Commission"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of conversion and evangelism in the early church. He highlights the role of Peter in preaching the gospel and engaging with the culture. The sermon also emphasizes the significance of baptism with the Holy Spirit and the power it gives to be a witness for God. The preacher then discusses the importance of water baptism and obedience to the Lord. The sermon concludes by emphasizing the Great Commission in Matthew 28 and the need to stay true to the teachings of the Bible in order to make disciples effectively.

---

## Transcript

Good afternoon, let's stand together one more time and let's turn in our Bibles to Revelation, Chapter three. We pick things up in verse 14, this is our savior, and he speaks and writes and declares to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, right? These things says the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning or the origin of the creation of God. I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot, I could wish that you were cold or hot.

And so then, because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth because you say I am rich and have become wealthy and have need of nothing and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire that you may be rich and white garments that you may be clothed that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed and anoint your eyes with ice that you may see as many as I love. I rebuke and chase him and therefore be zealous and repent.

Behold, I stand at the door and knock if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him and he with me to him who overcomes. I will grant to sit with me on my throne as I also overcame and sat down with my father on his throne. He who has an ear to hear has an ear.

Let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Father, we ask that you'd meet with us through your eternal and holy word this afternoon. It means the world to us to hear your voice and help us to hear your voice.

And we ask it in Jesus name. Amen. Please be seated.

One of the things that I do every so often with the church that I pastor is I run it through the grid of Jesus's seven letters to the seven churches, and I just take all of the different areas of of the ministry and the staff and myself and all and and I just run it through what it is that he says in these seven churches. And in order to assess how we're doing in his eyes, because it's it's his estimation that really is the only estimation that matters now and will matter, of course, for eternity. And I look at the the fellowship, I look at the church and I to see are we still operating in our first love? And are we still willing to die for Christ the way that we were when we first came to know the Lord? Do we have we become soft related to false doctrine and the kind of teaching that's going on or who we're giving authority to as leaders in the church? Are we still under the control of the Holy Spirit, maintaining a dependence on the Holy Spirit and these kinds of things to just kind of do a check on on how it is that we're doing in his eyes? And I'm really glad to be able to have him by his Holy Spirit, search my heart and and search our church once again with all the different speakers that will be speaking from these seven churches.

And what is good for a pastor and what is good for church is also good for a movement and to just let the Lord take us through this grid and expose and encourage and all what it is that he wants to in our lives. Jesus's letter to the Church of the Laodiceans contains one of the strongest and one of the most shocking statements found by Jesus in the entirety of the Bible, where he declares in verse 16. So then, because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth.

When I read the Gospels, I can hardly find Jesus saying something that hard even to his enemies, even to the religious leaders that opposed him, even to Pilate on the day of his crucifixion, even to the Romans on the day of his crucifixion. But he says it to this church, because for all of the faults and all of the problems with the religious leaders in Jesus's day and all of the faults and problems that Pilate had and the Roman soldiers and the Roman government had, the one thing they did not do is claim to represent Jesus and then fail to do it. And this church stands up before the whole world and claims to represent Jesus and then fails miserably to do it before a world that is watching.

It is a very serious thing to claim to represent the Lord and then to fail to do that. And I don't know how seriously this is taken anymore. To misrepresent a company that I work for will cost me my job.

To misrepresent the President of the United States can cost you your head. But here, and there is such sobriety in all of these lesser areas in life, but increasingly, pastors seem very free to represent and misrepresent the Lord. According to their whim and how they please.

And in today's ministry environment, I think overall there is a frightening decline in the fear of the Lord. James wrote in James chapter 3, and he didn't put it in the Bible, and God didn't put it in the Bible as sermon fodder. He means it.

He said, be not many masters, you will face the greater judgment or condemnation. Because of the position that we take. Now what is vomit? It means, what does it mean to vomit something out of my mouth? Vomiting is the violent expulsion from a body of something that is making that body sick.

Something that is seriously threatening the health of a body. And there is something about the Church of Laodicea that not only makes Jesus sick, but it is a danger to the health of the body of Christ as a whole. And what nauseates Jesus? He is very clear about it in verses 15 and 16, and it is lukewarmness.

The interesting thing to read this letter concerning the Church at Laodicea is to, when you read it, it is very, very clear that they are not lukewarm about everything. They are very, very excited about riches, about wealth, about materialism, about selfism. But what they lack a zeal for is God and for spiritual things.

And the problem with the Church at Laodicea is they are lukewarm about what they should be zealous about, and they are zealous about what they should be lukewarm about. And how in the world does that happen in a church? I would like us to notice three things this afternoon that contributed to their lukewarm conditions, so that we can learn from their wrong choices and then avoid becoming like them. First of all, this church teaches me the necessity of having a biblically-based vision for the local church, that the church and what we do is defined by the Bible.

And clearly, this church at Laodicea does not have a biblically-based vision for the church. In the 20 years that I have been a senior pastor, I have never known a time when pastoring a church has become so complicated, apart from the Bible. All of the definitions and all of the theories, all of the ideas, all of the expectations.

I feel sorry for pastors today. I feel especially sorry for young pastors today and new pastors today entering into the pastorate. It is a Babylon out there, a babble of all of these conflicting ideas.

And I am very concerned that a significant block of people that are called by God are not going to survive the current definitions of what a church is supposed to be. Several years ago, I was at a pastor's conference and I heard one of the greatest things I have ever heard spoken at that conference, when Don McClure declared that one of the most miserable places to be in all of life is to be in the ministry looking for a vision. And that went off like a bomb inside of my head.

I said, that is exactly right. It is hard enough, I mean it can be miserable enough to be in it and know what you are aiming at and all. If you are in it and you don't know what you are aiming at and you don't know how to get there, it is impossible.

You are just going to crush people. You are just going to kill people. You are going to crush calling in people's lives.

And surely just this one issue alone causes many pastors to burn out. There are enough challenges when you know what you are trying to do, but it is impossible if you don't know what you are aiming at. And of course it is a very common situation given the number of conferences that are offered every year to tell pastors what the ministry is all about and to provide vision for the ministry.

And a lack of a biblically based vision for the ministry creates such a desperation in people that they are willing to glom onto anything for a time and then follow after that. Any and every idea or theory that comes down the line. Now I know of one particular church in terms of watching the history of it and it was very, very sad to watch.

It was completely destroyed under the weight of this. It became like whatever the senior pastor, the last book the senior pastor had written or read. And so six months the church is yanked in this direction.

And then he reads another book and the next six months it gets yanked in that direction. He reads another book, he yanks it in this direction for the next six months. And it isn't long before the congregation is completely exhausted, but it never stops with exhaustion.

Because what happens is it begins to slowly dawn on them that he doesn't know what he is doing anymore than we know what we are doing here. And they begin to drift out from the church. And fortunately for us, the vision for the local church is spelled out for us in the Bible.

What is the purpose of the church? Don't shout out. But just formulate. If you were to take your leadership in your church, you say, what is the purpose of the church? I mean, you might be surprised at how many answers we would get.

But formulate it in your mind. What in the world are we aiming at as a local church? I think that you can't do any better than to go to Matthew chapter 28 and to discover that the Bible teaches that we've been given a commission by Jesus. A commission that is so great it's now known as the Great Commission.

And he declared there, go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I've commanded you. And lo, I'm with you always, even to the end of the age. We are called to make disciples, that is mature followers of Jesus Christ.

Maturity being defined spiritually as it is physically. And that is with the ability to reproduce myself spiritually. And that is the commission that we've been given.

And it is a great commission and the end product, so to speak, that ought to be coming out of the churches that we're pastoring are solid, mature Christians that can then disciple others to become solid, mature Christians. That's what we're aiming at. Not to amuse them, not to get them back and not to serve the greatest coffee in the city that you happen to live in.

So that's our commission. But to know that that's the commission, it just raises the next question in our mind. And the next question that enters into our mind as pastors is, how in the world do we fulfill that commission? There's the commission that we have.

Now, how in the world do we do it? How does a person, how do we make a disciple? I don't know of any better place to turn in all of the Bible for that understanding than Acts chapter two. And specifically verse 42, where here you have the whole background of all of it. You might turn to it.

And here's Peter. He preaches on the day of Pentecost. Three thousand people are saved in that sermon.

But now what do you do with them? He's got a commission. He's got a great commission. He's been commanded by Jesus to make disciples out of these folks.

But how in the world do you do that? And that's precisely the problem that that early church faced. Immediately after that particular sermon. And you notice what they did.

Acts 2 42 tells us that they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine. They placed a tremendous emphasis upon the teaching of the word of God in that local church. You cannot make a disciple.

You cannot make a mature Christian apart from the teaching of the word of God. And why would he tell us that it's something that we need to steadfastly do, except that there would be tremendous resistance to it

in every part of human history to and pressure to move away from the teaching and emphasis of the word of God in the churches that we pastor. Second thing he speaks of is fellowship.

And it's koinonia. It's a local body is a body. And so here is a local church, and it isn't a purely academic center.

It's a place where we're learning what the Bible says about our lives. And we stumble, we fall, we have mountaintop experiences, we have valley experiences, and we walk with one another, we encourage one another, and we stay connected with one another while we walk together from this place into maturity and then one day into the glory of heaven. But that fellowship that goes on, and it's a part of making a strong believer.

So the local church is to be a relational environment to grow together in. Then he speaks of the breaking of bread, of the Lord's Supper. And that's not merely going through the motions of an ordinance.

To me, this is God's way of keeping the main thing the main thing. And the main thing is Jesus, of course. Do this in remembrance of me.

And it's God's way of knowing because he knows he's dealing with knuckleheads. He knows that. And he knows how we go off on all these tangents and all these things, but to keep the most important themes of the Bible always before the congregation.

And he knows he can do it through the Lord's Supper. The theme of redemption, God's love, God's grace. God's love for us.

Jesus' sacrifice there upon the cross in the relationship, not forgetting about him, not forgetting about his return. That what he's done on the cross has overwhelmed my past. It has overwhelmed my present.

It has overwhelmed my future. And we can get so caught up in all of this professional literature that we forget what God never forgets. And that is what the people that are in that church want to hear about all the time and need to be reassured in all the time.

And it's these things that God loves them. He cares about them. He sent his son to die on the cross for them.

Then he's coming back again one day for us. Then he speaks of prayers. And that's just the communication with God.

And prayer is an expression of my dependence upon God. So the prayer and the making of a disciple, just that maintaining a conscious dependence upon God in this church. We haven't figured anything out, God.

We depend upon you for everything and every decision. Would you give us your direction and your wisdom? And that would include, the prayer would include the worship and praise element of our services and our times together. Now, those four things are vital.

But don't forget to notice three other things in Acts chapter 2 that have already been spoken about before we get to verse 42. There needs to be, number five, evangelism. There needs to be conversion.

You can't have converts without having... You can't make disciples without converts. And you can't have converts without evangelism. And you notice there in verses 14 through 40, Peter got up and he preached

a sermon there.

So the early church engaged the culture that they were in with the gospel. And then you notice in verses 1 through 4, the disciples were baptized with the Holy Spirit. The importance of the local fellowship, making a disciple, the emphasis upon the baptism with the Holy Spirit, the power to be a witness unto God in this world.

And then you notice, number 7, in verse 41, they obeyed the Lord in water baptism. They obeyed Him in that. And always being reinforced in front of the congregation or to the congregation, all that this represents and what God has done spiritually that this is a physical representation of.

And then you go into verses 44 through 46, and the byproduct of all of that, when we will make those things our emphasis, then the byproduct of all of that is a love among the saints. It's interesting, they do all of these things, and then they don't put a program together to get one another to share with each other. And I don't think that's to be under the control of man necessarily, not supremely.

But when all these other things are right, the Holy Spirit will be faithful to direct people with their resources on how to take care of one another in the body of Christ. And then in verse 47, as we've been so well taught through the years, when the church becomes what God intends it to be, then He will add to that church daily such as should be saved. There are a lot of ministry models out there today, and it's always been like that, and it will always be like that.

But this is our ministry model. And we can be confident that it will work, because it has worked for God's people and been fruitful for God's people for 2,000 years. So thankfully, thankfully, as we sit in this room, we say, boy, what do we have to be thankful? Thankfully, we are not in the ministry looking for a vision as Calvary Chapel pastors.

We have one, and we have a biblical vision for what God wants us to do. This is how we cooperate with the Holy Spirit and with what it is that He's doing. We are not to do with God's people whatever we please.

That is defined for us by God Himself. We're simply to obey the emphases that He has given to us. And you look at how God has honored that in this movement.

Now, in Acts chapter 2, that whole section of the book of Acts, it is a lifesaver for every pastor in every age. It has saved me over and over again, especially in the early years of the pastorate. Because biblically, I know what I'm aiming at, and I know how to get there from the Bible.

And people come all of the time with different ideas for the church, and why don't we do this, and how about this, and all of that. And what we do is, I run it through that grid of those seven things there in Acts chapter 2. And because what are people doing? Sometimes they don't even know what they're doing. They're trying to redefine the church.

And so I just look at it, and we run it through that grid of those seven things. Does it have anything to do with those seven things? And if it doesn't, then we look at it and say, maybe that's not something we're supposed to be involved in as a local church. Number two, I think that this church speaks to us of the danger of nurturing a self-focus in people rather than a God-focus.

And I don't think you can read this letter without being struck with how self-consumed and how self-absorbed the people in this church are. Notice the first word that comes out of their mouth in verse 17,

I. I am rich, have become wealthy, and I have need of nothing. Here's a group of people who are so self-absorbed that Jesus is on the outside of the church, knocking on the door, trying to get in, and they don't have the foggiest idea there's something wrong with that picture.

They don't get it. It's not put in the Bible to paint a picture that you laugh at. They absolutely do not understand that there's something wrong.

And they don't have the slightest idea that they're missing anything in what it is that they're doing. It's unbelievable. It can't happen.

It does happen, and it did happen in the Church of Laodicea. Certainly, verse 17 speaks to the positive confession heresy that is prevalent all around the world now, that puts the focus upon self, and it reduces God to a genie, and that God is the means to my selfish, self-determined, and self-dominated ends. God is merely used to legitimize the worship of self.

But this whole idea that God is not supremely a Lord to be worshiped and obeyed, but rather the means to an end by which I can continue to worship myself, and my ideas, and my will for my life, and to find myself, and to learn to love myself, and to learn about my best self, and call it Christianity, that is pandemic in the world today. And it's sobering that on the one hand, Jesus is threatening to vomit them out of his mouth, and on the other hand, they are absolutely thrilled with themselves. They think they are deeply spiritual people, and that is a mind-boggling and astonishing level of self-deception, and they are in the middle of it.

Now, notice that they like church, but it's got to be on their terms, not on God's terms. They like the trappings of spirituality, they just don't want to be spiritual. They like church as long as they can use the title or the institution to legitimize their self-centered, materialistic life.

And what they want from a church is that it give the outward appearance of being about worshiping God, but what it's all really about is the worship of self. They like church, they just don't want it to be too much about God, or about God at all. And the scary thing is, they found themselves a pastor who would deliver that to them.

The problem is, is that to the degree that man is exalted in a church, or in a church service, is the degree to which God is not exalted, and indeed dishonored in that church, and in that church service. And to the degree that man is the center of attention in a church service, is the degree to which God is not the center of attention. And He will not share His glory with anyone.

And He won't share His glory with idols, which are merely man-made ideas. He spoke through the prophet Isaiah, I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory I will not give to another, nor my praise to graven images. Now somebody has completely redefined church for these people.

And someone has completely redefined spirituality for them, and clearly the new definitions are not good. And clearly Jesus is not pleased with them. And as a pastor, I need to be careful not to develop a self-focus in God's people, but a God-focus.

And it isn't a matter of not saying, listen, you need to love yourself, you need to get into yourself. It's subtler than that. It's kind of like singing a worship song to God that's, all you're saying is, I, me, and my, and I, and I feel, and I want, and I need, and I, and I... Somebody wrote a song for me, I guess, I don't know, you know, and the whole... And it just, what happens, you're saying it, you say, it just, it's a little God-like here, I'm having some trouble with it, and it's a lot about me, and I really don't come to church to

really, you know, get into me, and it just doesn't sit right.

And the same thing can happen in our teaching in a church. Well, you just get that uneasy feeling that we're no longer majoring in God, and minoring in man, but we are minoring in God, and we are majoring in man. I'm no expert on the current ministry models that are most popular, but of the materials I've seen, there's so much talk about growth, and numbers, and attendance, and people, and meeting people's needs, but almost nothing about God.

What about His glory? What about who He is? And exalting Him, obeying Him, and you sit and you go, where in the world is God in all of this? I mean, it's eye candy, it's ear candy, it's fabulous. But I can't find God to save my life in the middle of all of this. But I think it's good to be reminded of what the Bible has to say about selfism and selfishness.

Remember when Jesus told Peter about how they're going to go to Jerusalem, and he was going to suffer, and he was going to die and all, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him and said, far be it from you, Lord, this shall not happen to you. Jesus turned to him and turned and said to Peter, get thee behind me, Satan, you are an offense to me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men. He said, if anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.

For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Where my selfishness will take me in life, and where Jesus wants to take me in life are two entirely different places. Two entirely different places.

And to nurture and encourage selfism and selfishness in God's people is to absolutely guarantee they will never discover God's will for their life, and that is criminal for anyone to do to another person. It is doubly criminal for a pastor to do that to people. I think of the Apostle Paul when he wrote to the Galatians, and he said, I've been crucified with Christ.

It's no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. The life that I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. I think as pastors, we need to be very, very careful about the fear of man, what they're going to think about us, and will they stay, or will they leave if I do this, or I say this, and all of these kinds of things.

And so much of what's being modeled today, at least in the literature that I read, these are the questions that are being put at the forefront of pastors' minds. And it's not only unhealthy, it's unbiblical. It is unbiblical to be thinking in those terms.

The Bible says that the fear of man is a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord, he'll be safe. And it's a trap, the fear of man. It's not that we don't love people, because we do love people.

It's not that we're not sensitive to people, but we must not become more concerned about what they will think about us than what God thinks about us. Jesus said there are two great commandments, didn't he? He said the first and the greatest command is to love the Lord your God with all of your heart, with all of your mind, with all of your soul, and all of your strength. He said the second one is like unto it, love your neighbor as yourself.

And it's very, very important that we don't get those two commandments reversed, because it dishonors God. Yes, love people. Yes, lay our lives down for the people.

But we must have a greater fear and awe and respect and reverence and love for God than anybody else in all of the world, especially in our calling. If we get that thing backwards so that you can say, yeah, you know, it's right here. We're to love our neighbor as ourself.

And you see that thing, you know, becoming a mountain in the room and the love and awe for God is like a green Gumby over here on the side, you know. And yet, biblically, you can justify in some kind of a verse fight, but there's a sense in everybody's heart something is completely out of order in this place. The name Laodicea, it means the people rule.

Or the rights of the people. And the people ruled this church instead of God ruling this church. One of the things that we can do, you know, as Calvary Chapel pastors, just dismiss that.

Say, well, people don't rule in the church that I pastor. You know, we don't have committees and we don't have congregational vote. And so I'm in no danger of having the people rule here.

What about my heart? When I turn to the next passage in the book of the Bible that I'm teaching and I start to rework it to soften it or to explain it away or to de-emphasize its clear meaning because I'm afraid of what people will think or what it'll do to the size of the church or the offering or my popularity or will people leave and I need to protect them from the hardship of the demands of God's word and His commandments. Then the people are ruling the church. But not from the vantage point of a committee or by annual business meetings.

They are ruling the church from inside my heart because they're setting the tone and the agenda in my heart instead of God. And that then influences everything about the church. And then one day you turn around and you look and the church is all about God and name only and about God, you know, supremely in a very secondary way.

And you start to hear someone pounding on the door and it's Jesus trying to get back in and have the church that he established. The apostle Paul wrote and he said, For do I now persuade men or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a servant of Christ. Remember in John chapter 6 when these thousands began to follow Jesus after his feeding of the 5,000.

What was he? He's just a meal ticket. He's just a meal ticket. He is a means to an end in the minds of the people.

And Jesus, when they come around to Him again, He begins to talk to them about eating His flesh and drinking His blood and internalizing Him in His life into their life. And He begins to talk about the great demands of being a Christian, the hard things of being a Christian and all. And as He's speaking these things to them, the response is that the severity of what Jesus was calling them to, they began to, you know, melt away.

And Jesus responded and He said, Does this offend you? He said, It's the Spirit who gives life. The flesh profits nothing. And that crowd was following Him for all the wrong reasons, selfish reasons, and they began to melt away.

And as they departed, watch Jesus in the departure. He's not troubled. He's not troubled.

Not troubled by the departure of the mixed multitude at all. And you know why? Because He told them the truth. And then what did He do? He turns to the disciples as these thousands are just melting away before

their very eyes.

And He said, Do you want to go away also? And in essence, He's communicating to them. This is the truth. We do not change the truth to keep a crowd around here.

Are you in or are you out? And Peter spoke for all of them. He said, Where are we going to go? You have the words of everlasting life. And also, we've come to believe and to know that you're the Christ, the Son of living God.

And that is a commitment to God that honors Him and is also good for us. When that whole thing was going on with those disciples watching that whole thing early on in Jesus's ministry, I mean, to me, make no mistake about it, the Twelve got the message loud and clear. What we are about here, gentlemen, is supremely about being faithful to the truth and not about numbers.

And then today, I watch increasingly where there is a great effort to attract mixed multitude into the church. Did you read what Moses went through with a small group of mixed multitude? They like the spiritual environment. They like the spiritual happening.

But their heart and their mind is in Egypt. They caused them all kinds of problems. And they were a tiny minority among a million people.

What are you going to do when you get a whole church of that group? It's going to blow up. It has to blow. Somewhere it has to blow.

And then finally, I close with this. Number three, this church is woefully ignorant of the Bible. You notice in verse 17 that the two phrases that Jesus says, He says, You say, and then later in it, He says, You say, and then He says, And you do not know.

And as you read the letter, what they don't know is what they would have easily known if they knew anything about the Bible at all. Now, I'll go from preaching to meddling at this point. I'm very, very troubled and grieved by anything that diminishes the place of the Bible in the minds of God's people.

And of course, and these are qualifying statements, I know you're pastors, so you will honor them. Of course, it's lawful to print the text that we're teaching from and the verses that we're using in our sermons on the screen in the sanctuary. That's great.

That's wonderful. I'm not putting it down. But if the motivation behind that kind of a decision is to make things easier for people so they don't have to turn to their Bibles to follow you, I think it's very dangerous.

How did we learn the Bible? How did we learn the Bible and the books of the Bible? And I'm still working on the Old Testament sometimes. As new Christians, except that we turn to the pages. And how did our Bible get underlined? And how did it get highlighted, except that we turn to the verses? And how did we become familiar with the Bible? And the Bible become a familiar friend to us, except that we turned to the passages.

And when we were witnessing to a friend, we knew that it was in John's Gospel, one of those first early chapters, up on the left-hand column, and I marked it, and I know it's right there, and all of those things happen as we were growing in our knowledge of the Word. And we knew that because we'd turned to it and we had marked it. And I want to be careful not to rob God's people of that experience.

If a pastor flashes the verses up on the overhead with the intent that the people would ultimately not need to turn to their Bibles or not bring their Bibles to church, or to discourage them from bringing their Bibles to church so that seekers will not feel uncomfortable coming to that church because they see all of these Christians carrying their Bibles around and they don't have one. If a pastor does that, I don't know what to say to you. I call you out.

I don't know what to say to that. What in the world are people thinking? This is a very, very serious time in church history in the United States of America. How many Christians overall in the body of Christ have a consistent daily quiet time with the Lord in His Word? How many of them have that in the church that you pastor? Probably a lot less than we think or that we'd like to know.

And if they don't bring their Bibles to church and they don't open their Bibles in the church, how many of them are going to do it at home? We're modeling something to them. And we've got to always model a great respect for the Word of God and we want people to have a working knowledge of the Bible. Why dumb down the church and have hundreds leave their Bibles at home so that 20 new people don't feel uncomfortable? Isn't the obvious solution to give free Bibles to the 20 and have the hundreds bring their Bibles and get everybody else to do the same thing too? I am so glad I didn't get saved in this current insanity in the body of Christ.

There were real spiritual people to look up to in the church I got saved in. Clearly, this church has never been taught from Genesis to Revelation. Teaching all the way through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

It's not just good for the people, it's good for us. It protects us. It keeps us accountable.

It forces us to rightly divide the Word and it forces us to deal with the issues of the Bible in the direct proportion in which they're represented there in the Bible. Why is that so important today? I'll tell you why it's so important today. Because it's not so much what they're saying that is wrong today.

It's what they're not saying, what they're leaving out. And when you look at some of the stuff that circulates today, it's all quite orthodox as far as it goes, but the error is not in what is being taught, but in what is not being taught and the failure to give a complete picture of what the Bible teaches about that subject. So, someone asks you your opinion about a particular book that's been written and in a moment of madness, you declare that you're not particularly impressed with it.

And so, they ask you why you're not impressed with it. And you can struggle with an answer because what the book is saying is accurate as far as it goes. The problem is with what it leaves out and it leaves so much out that a person is left with a very inaccurate understanding of the subject.

And some of these people are very clever. They are too clever. God help protect us from being too clever.

And they know how to package Christ and they know how to package Christianity so as to not offend anyone. They know what to leave out. They know just how to phrase it so that the sword comes out, but it can't cut anyone.

And it can't heal anyone. And what the reader is left with and the listener is left with is neither Christ nor Christianity. And you know what scares me? Is after 20 years of being a pastor, I can do that.

I know how to do that now. And for that reason, more than ever, I want to stay absolutely true to the Bible passage that I'm teaching and to see the truth come right out of those passages. Now, I think with a sense of considerable accomplishment and spiritual joy, the Apostle Paul declared to the Ephesian elders in Acts chapter 20, Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

It was the teaching of the whole counsel of God that made him innocent of the blood of all men. And I don't think you can read Paul in Acts chapter 20 without having that sense that Ezekiel chapter 30 through 31 weighed on his head as God spoke to Ezekiel about being the watchman and speaking the word. Otherwise, the blood is on your head.

And I think maybe it's a time to let God's warning to Ezekiel rest heavy on me and us as pastors once again. It didn't seem to be a bad thing for Paul. In fact, it seems to have helped him to remain faithful to the whole counsel of God in the face of unspeakable opposition, violent opposition to the word of God.

I used to soft-sell Ezekiel 33 when I taught it. Oh, don't... you know, that's... never again. God forgive me, related to it.

We need it more than ever. This is why the whole thing is so insidious. You can't point at what they're teaching and say it's wrong because what they're saying so often is right.

The problem is what they're not saying. They don't speak of woe. They don't speak of judgment.

They don't speak of repentance and wrath and godly discipline and the fear of the Lord and the denial of self and reckoning the old man dead. It is not that they deny the faith openly. It is that they conveniently ignore so much of it.

And you remember the illustration. You've probably used it in your own ministries where you take and you launch that rocket toward Mars. It's one degree off, has no hope of hitting Mars.

Has no hope of hitting Mars. And if we change what the Bible declares to be necessary for making a disciple or for Christlikeness, no matter how small that change is that we make, the people will have no hope of hitting it. And if we model this before our congregations, that we can feel free to embrace what we like in God's Word, ignore what we don't like, explain away what we don't like, then we cannot be surprised when they feel that they have the same freedom to do that with God's Word.

I close with this. Notice that while the church is a mess, he holds the pastor personally responsible for it. He writes to the messenger.

He writes to the leader, the angel of the church. The church is always a reflection of the convictions of the senior pastor. It's always a reflection of the priority and priorities of the senior pastor.

How does a church get there except that it's the condition of the pastor? And we're going to answer to God one day for the church that we've pastored. Do you know he's got a letter written just like that? There'll be an encapsulation assessment. Every church represented in this room from his vantage point.

And I think that that is perhaps one of the single most overlooked things in today's ministry environment, that one day I'm going to stand in front of Jesus himself. I'm going to look him right in the eye and I'm going to give an account to be faithful as someone has already shared to the vision that he's already

provided me here in the Word. And I'll be rewarded accordingly.

And that's a guaranteed future event for every single one of us in this room. And on that day, it's not going to matter not one bit what the world thinks of me or what God's people think of me or my family thinks of me or my peers think of me. All that's going to matter is what he thinks.

And if we give heed to his assessments today and tomorrow and the next day, his exhortations and warnings and encouragements from these seven churches, then we can have the confidence that when we stand before him, it'll be a joyous occasion. Listen, as shocking as Jesus' statement is in verse 16, it's not the most shocking one in the letter. The most shocking statement is found in verse 19, where Jesus declares his love for this wayward church and this wayward pastor, and he calls on it to repent and give him back his church and return to him.

You would think he'd say, enough, you're a dime a dozen. I can raise up a thousand more that look just like you, that won't be numbskulls on these things. He's amazing.

What amazing grace as he communicates his love to that pastor and to that church and attempts to woo that church back to what it is that he has revealed in his word. Thank you, Lord, for your rebuke. We thank you for your chastening that is in this passage.

And sometimes when we're on the wrong side of things, feeling bad feels good. The main thing is to hear from you. But we thank you also, Lord, for the grace that you have, the grace to give a second chance.

And that's what you wanted for Laodicea. Wherever that fits in my heart, the church that I pastor, all of our hearts and where we pastor today. Lord, wherever we need a second chance to get this thing where you want it to be.

Lord, we pray that you talk to us about that and then give us that grace that we need. We thank you that there's always hope in you. And we thank you, Lord Jesus, in your name.

Amen. God bless you.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/12/SID12188.mp3>  
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/damian-kyle/revelation-3/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**